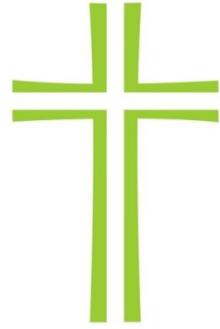


Annual Report 2019



ST MATTHEW'S
H A R W E L L



Registered Charity No 1158861

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1. Introduction

This is the annual report of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the Church of St Matthew's in Harwell, Oxfordshire. It covers the last financial accounting year, which was the calendar year ending 31 December 2019.

The primary aim of our church and its PCC is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

Specifically, our church vision, which was adopted during 2015, is:

“Growing God’s church, wider, deeper and closer”

The PCC works with the Rector, the Rev Dr Jonathan Mobey, to fulfil this vision.

The details of what our church has been doing over the last year to further its vision are given in section 2.

This report was approved by the PCC at its meeting on 4 February 2020 and is signed on their behalf by Rev Dr Jonathan Mobey, Rector and Chair of the PCC.

Signature

Date 4 February 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Mobey', written in a cursive style.

2. Review of the year – Benefice activities

Our church forms part of the Benefice of St Matthew's, Harwell with All Saints', Chilton. These two churches, in neighbouring villages, share a ministry team of one full time stipendiary member of clergy, two part time non-stipendiary ministers, two clergy and one Licensed Lay Minister with Permission to Officiate, and two authorised preachers. The churches also share three paid lay members of staff covering one full time and one part time post.

Some people from Harwell attend and support church services, events and groups in Chilton and vice versa – either regularly or occasionally. There are many other areas of sharing and co-operation between the two churches, such as safeguarding, engagement with world mission, and publicity and communications. For these reasons, the lives of our two church communities are somewhat intertwined and it is not always possible to delineate strictly between them in practice. This report therefore covers activities in both churches.

2.1 Worship services

Every Sunday we meet together to worship God, hear from His Word, pray together, and encourage one another. Our services range from the quiet, traditional ones from the Book of Common Prayer, to contemporary, family-friendly ones.

The majority of services are organ- or piano-led. In addition, St Matthew's has an all-age orchestra, which accompanies on average two services a month and at festivals such as Christmas and Easter. St Matthew's also has contributions from a harp-led string group, a brass group, and a guitar-led band. All Saints' has a small

regular choir with additional members at festivals.

In December, Christmas services included:

- Toy Services in both churches with gifts to Oxford Women's Refuge and monetary donations to the charity SeeSaw
- Two services of Carols by Candlelight in St Matthew's – one at 4pm aimed at families and the other at 6.30pm in the more traditional "Nine lessons and carols" format. Mulled wine and mince pies were served
- A "travelling crib" service around Chilton village at 4pm, starting and ending in All Saints' church followed by a traditional Carol service at 6.30pm in the church. Refreshments were served at the end of each
- A Crib Service on Christmas Eve at St Matthew's
- Christmas Night Communion Services at both churches.



Photo: Travelling Crib in Chilton; Steve Hale

In Chilton, Christmas carols were also sung around the village and in the Rose & Crown pub, and in Harwell at Cherry Tree Court. At Easter, All Saints’ held a Good Friday procession with prayers and hymns at various places through Chilton village. The procession started in Chilton Field and finished at All Saints’ in time for the 9.30am service. Average attendances at services are shown in Table 1.

	St Matthew’s, Harwell			All Saints’, Chilton		
	2019	2018	2017	2019	2018	2017
Sundays						
8am	8.4	7.8	7.7	7.9	8.0	7.5
11am/ 9.30am ¹	85.2	91.6	90.0	47.7	52.6	54.4
<u>Of which:</u>						
Aged 16+	64.8	69.7	69.2	40.1	44.0	45.7
Aged <16	20.3	21.9	20.7	7.6	10.5	9.5
6.15pm ²	13.9	12.6	14.2	14.8	9.3	9.0
Average Sunday attendance ³	99.3	104.5	104.0	63.8	59.4	58.7
Christmas						
Christmas services ⁴	150.6	153.4	131.8	76.5	90.0	64.3

Table 1: Average service attendances

¹Including normal Sundays, Easter Sunday, and special services e.g. baptisms, Christingle, Education Sunday, Mothering Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance, Toy Service.

²The All Saints’ service is once a quarter only.

³Including Pebbles Family Service in Chilton. Special services **not** included in the averages: Good Friday 'At the Cross' and Easter Eve Vigil; Songs of Praise (2018, Harwell); School Harvest (2018, 2019, Harwell); Chilton Toy Service 2018 (not counted); Chilton Christingle 2019 (not counted); Special evening services e.g. Licensing (2017, Chilton); Churches Together (2018, Harwell); Ash Wednesday; Maundy Thursday; Ascension Day

⁴Including Carol services, Travelling Crib (Chilton), Crib Service (Harwell), Midnight Communion, Christmas Day

There are also the following 'Fresh Expressions' services which are proving increasingly popular:

- Generation Gold (see section 2.7 for more details). This is held quarterly and had an average attendance of 46.0 in 2017; 49.3 in 2018; and 60.8 in 2019
- Pebbles Family Service (see section 2.5 for more details). This is held monthly and had an average attendance of c.40.0 in 2018 and 54.0 in 2019.

2.2 Baptisms, weddings and funerals

Baptisms, weddings and funerals are important occasions – both in their own right, and as pastoral opportunities. The number of these services can vary enormously from year to year. Figures for the last three years are shown in Table 2.

Each baptism involves at least one pastoral visit before the service and follow-up as appropriate. Most baptisms are for children of families who are not regular attenders at church.



Photo: Full immersion baptism;
Sue Denton

Each wedding involves several meetings with the couples and a rehearsal, and much liaison and administration, including with the Church Administrator, organists and vergers/sidesmen. Most wedding couples live locally, but some have a connection through family or having previously lived in the parishes.

Each funeral involves at least one meeting with the next of kin, liaison with the family, the Funeral Director, organists and vergers/sidesmen. Pastoral follow up is carried out by the officiating minister as appropriate. Where possible, the next of kin is invited to an All Souls service held in November.

	St Matthew's, Harwell			All Saints', Chilton		
	2019	2018	2017	2019	2018	2017
Baptisms	5	7	9	4	2	3
Thanksgivings for a child	2	2	0	0	0	0
Weddings	4	2	6	2	2	0
Funerals in church	7	15	5	7	2	0
Thanksgiving services in church	2	2	1	1	0	2
Funerals at crematoria	3	4	2	5	0	2
Interments of ashes	2	2	2	3	1	0

Table 2: Numbers of baptisms, weddings and funerals

2.3 Prayer

Prayer continues to be an essential part of the life of our churches, with a weekly prayer meeting held at 8.30am on Saturday mornings at both churches, and a once a month night prayer led by the choir and held at All Saints' on a Wednesday evening at 8.30pm. All are very welcome to join these times of prayer. There is also a group of people who are part of a Benefice Prayer Chain. This enables emergency and continuing prayer for anyone within the church or for issues known to church members. In addition, both churches maintain a list of individuals to pray for during the times of intercession in Sunday services.

2.4 Bell-ringing

St Matthew's Church tower has eight bells, and All Saints' tower has six. Both churches have enthusiastic bell ringing teams. The bells are rung on most Sundays and for weddings, some funerals, and on other occasions such as quarter peals.

2.5 Youth and Families

Provision for youth and families is an aspect of the Benefice's work into which significant resource is invested. This reflects the acknowledged importance of reaching the young, not least in growing our churches.

Children & Families Worker (C&FW)

The initial three-year contract for our first C&FW came to an end in August 2017. During 2017, a successful appeal secured funds to support the C&FW post for a further three years. The initial post-holder was in post until August 2017, and in January 2018 we appointed two jobsharers to the role for another three years. The plan for 2020 is to extend this contract again for a further five

years, i.e. from January 2021 to December 2025.

Children and Young People's Sunday groups

Between our two churches we provide facilities for children of all ages on a Sunday.

Both churches have provision for babies and toddlers. All Saints' has a **family area** within the main body of the church which provides space for parents to participate in the main service with their little ones. St Matthew's now has a **crèche** area at the back in the vestry. Crèche activities are led by helpers on some weeks.



Photo: Crèche area at St Matthew's; Vicky Johnston

At All Saints' the **Pebbles** group provides a weekly session during the 9.30am service for children "graduating" from the family area. A monthly **Pebbles Family Service** takes place in Chilton Village Hall, next door to the church and runs concurrently with the 9.30am Sunday service held in All Saints' Church. This is proving increasingly popular. Refreshments are served in the Hall both before and after the service, attended also by the by the congregation meeting in the church.

Photo: Monthly Pebbles Family Service;
Sarah Barrett



In St Matthew's, **Kids' Church** continues to provide a weekly, child appropriate group for all those in primary school, running concurrently with the adult service. Crèche children now join Kids' Church for the first prayer and worship session, which seems to work well.



Photo: Kids' Church;
Vicky Johnston

For those of secondary school age, two weeks out of every four, **Pathfinders** at St Matthew's provides a Bible study during the service. Pathfinders' attendees regularly take on serving roles in the service on one Sunday a month. This age group also benefits from **YF**, a weekly Sunday evening youth fellowship program. The number attending YF grew during 2019 to around 12-14 per week. In 2020 YF also had a weekend away with fun activities combined with talks on Christian themes.



Photo: YF weekend away;
Sarah Barrett

Summer Holiday Club

Holiday Club is now an established annual event in the Benefice. In 2019 it was held from 29 July to 2 August at Chilton Primary School. It continues to be one of the most significant events in the calendar of both our congregations - not only in the scope of its outreach, but also in terms of the level of volunteer investment and service.

Holiday Club was organised and run by over 70 volunteer leaders and helpers, including some parents who do not attend church.

The Club was free to attend and open to all children of primary school age, plus those who had just completed secondary school years 7 and 8. A total of 124 children attended. The week was based around the Old Testament story of Daniel.



Photo: Summer Holiday Club;
Peter Shields



Photo: Fledgelings visit to
Princes Manor Farm, Harwell;
Melanie Shields

Fledgelings

Fledgelings is a group for pre-school aged children and their parents/carers. There are two morning sessions per week – one in Harwell and one in Chilton. The group provides play and activities for the children and company and conversation for the adults. The “See & Know” sessions – with their structured singing and story-time with an explicitly Christian curriculum – have proved no barrier to recruitment and are appreciated by all who come.

In 2019 the Harwell group moved from the church hall to the church and this change has proved popular. We trialled an additional session in the afternoon in Chilton but ultimately take up was insufficient to warrant it continuing. We will consider this again if the pattern of demand changes.

Schools



St Matthew's and All Saints' have continued opportunities to collaborate with both Harwell and Chilton **Primary Schools**.

A Children and Families' Worker, along with the Associate Minister, have regularly taken assemblies in both schools. A team of volunteers join with the Associate Minister to lead a well-attended weekly after-school club, **Y-Club**, in Chilton School. A volunteer team of adults from both churches ran the annual **Prayer (or Reflective) Spaces** event at Harwell Primary School. St Matthew's Church played host to Harwell School's annual Harvest celebration in October, and the Little Pippins pre-school Christmas Nativity Play in December.



Photo: Prayer Spaces wall;
Sarah Barrett

We held services for **Education Sunday** at both our churches. Church members also provide both schools with informal support through offering their time and talents to assist with practical activities such as being reading partners, musicians, community governors, Full Circle volunteers, etc.

Scout groups

In Chilton, the Scout group parades annually at All Saints' for the Remembrance Sunday service. In Harwell, the various sections of the 1st Harwell (St Matthew's) **Scout Group** meet in St Matthew's Church Hall and parade at church services several times a year, as well as at the village War Memorial for the Remembrance service. Both Scout groups have other contacts with and visits to the churches throughout the year.

Community & Special Events for children and families

Looking for further opportunities to share the Gospel and to have a positive impact on the community, we provided a number of special events this year:

During Lent, one of the Children & Families workers ran a **parenting teenagers course** using material from Care for the Family. At Easter we put on an **Easter trail** around both Harwell and Chilton. On 31 October we held a **Light Party** in St Matthew's church for children plus their parents. On 11 November, following an act of **Remembrance** involving Scout groups in each village, children in Chilton and Harwell attended a talk and activity led by a Children & Families worker in their respective village hall.

In December we held **Advent Doors** in both villages where accompanied children visit a different house front door each evening on 1-24 December to hear part of the Christmas

story and to get a sticker and a chocolate.



Publicity for Advent Doors

We had a stall aimed at families at **Harwell Feast** in May and at **Chilton Fun Day** in June. The stall encouraged children to contribute a prayer to a prayer tree and provided 2 simple craft activities.



Photo: Stall at Chilton Fun Day; Melanie Shields

2.6 Evangelism & Discipleship

Our churches seek to fulfil the Great Commission to make disciples through loving service, evangelism and discipleship – sharing the good news of Jesus in word and deed and helping

individuals to grow in faith. This is done through our worship services but also through other groups and activities.

In 2019 we ran an **Alpha Course** in St Matthew's meeting room and two Christianity Explored Courses: one at St Matthew's and one in a home in Chilton.

Home groups play an important part in nurturing the spiritual development and pastoral care of church members. These groups meet regularly (usually weekly) to read the Bible together, to pray, and to support one another in the Christian life. Most groups have members from both parishes. There are groups meeting in the mornings, afternoons and evenings, covering all ages, from mums with toddlers to those who are retired. The groups are always happy for new members to join.

In 2019 we ran two new "central" Bible study groups during Lent and Advent. These were held in St Matthew's Church on Thursday evenings. The format included refreshments, worship, videos, and discussion in small groups. Around 30 people attended Lent Central and around 20 attended Advent Central. Some attendees were Home group members who switched temporarily to the "central" group. Other attendees were people who do not currently attend a Home group.

Our churches part-fund the Didcot and Wallingford Area **CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Debt Centre** which was set up in January 2015 to cover just Wallingford, but expanded in January 2017. The Centre's formal aims are:

- The relief of poverty by providing a debt counselling and debt management service
- The advancement of Christianity in Didcot, Wallingford and the surrounding area.

The Centre employs a Centre Manager and a Debt Coach who between them are currently able to take on three new clients each month, supported by church members who befriend and support the client families. In 2019 we saw 17 individuals and families go completely debt free and no longer needing to deal with the stress of creditors chasing them, feelings of guilt, shame and inadequacy, or trying to hide their situation from loved ones. Others were on management plans working towards that day. In 2019 five people that we know of have prayed salvation prayers to Jesus - and we saw five client baptisms in our churches. Many more clients are being loved, blessed and supported - and many are exploring further on the Money Course, Alpha Courses or coming along to church.

A highly committed team of trained Money Coaches (complemented by those with welcoming/hospitality talents) in our churches also offered eight **CAP Money Courses** during 2019. Take-up has been relatively low, although higher than in 2018. In 2019 we had a total of 13 delegates across the year (vs 9 in 2018) with some coached on a one-to-one basis. A taster session for the CAP Money Student course was relatively popular with four young people attending. This should encourage the students to access the full course while at university. The team also runs a least one "re-CAP" session a year to which "graduates" of the previous 12 months of courses are invited to drop in for individual help or to share successes with others.

Booking in advance on CAP Money Courses is encouraged but is not mandatory and, indeed, delegates do occasionally arrive unexpectedly without any prior contact with the Coaches. Courses are publicised through a variety of media in the local area and via the national CAP website.

In 2019, delegates increasingly hailed from some distance away. Churches, statutory or voluntary agencies have all

referred delegates to the course and the latter channel looks likely to bring a steady stream of delegates in 2020.

2.7 Pastoral Care

The **Pastoral Care teams** (and many individual members of our churches) take on quiet practical support for those in need of help, whether short or long-term, at home or, for example, in hospital. Oversight of pastoral care in the Benefice is the responsibility of Rev Pam Rolls. There is a pastoral care team in each parish. In Chilton, the team operates under the leadership of Mrs Audrey Slater. In Harwell, the team has become very small and we are still prayerfully and carefully seeking a new leader for it.

Pastoral Care to our parishioners is much enhanced by the involvement of Rev Jan Radford through her chaplaincy role in the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

Funerals provide special opportunities for ministering to our parishioners. Funeral ministry is usually carried out by our clergy or by licensed or approved lay leaders, with follow-up visits to bereaved families taking place wherever possible. As well as ministering to recently bereaved funeral families, we welcomed large congregations to our All Souls services at the end of November when we remembered our loved ones who have died. The services were emotional but it was good to be reminded that we were grieving together in a prayerful, safe and supportive environment. A number of people fed back that they were uplifted by the services.

Home Communions are taken four times a year to parishioners who are not very mobile – Easter, summer, Harvest and Christmas. During 2019 there were between five and eight Home Communion services in private homes each quarter.

Generation Gold services, initiated by Rev Jan Radford and Rev Pam Rolls in 2015, were continued in 2019, with the enthusiastic support of teams of people in both parishes, and the venue alternating between St Matthew's and All Saints'. The services are quite short (about 35 minutes) and informal. They explore a different theme each time - 'New life in Jesus' (explored through the theme of butterflies) in March, 'Pentecost' in June, 'Harvest' in September (with delicious lunch!) and 'Advent' in December. Members of the congregation each take away a card containing a relevant Bible text and a visual aid as a gift. Worship is followed by tea and cake and an opportunity for members of the congregation to have fellowship afterwards. The numbers attending have steadily increased to around sixty people and there is a growing core of people who are enthusiastic about the services and the fellowship they afford.



Photo: Generation Gold at St Matthew's, June 2019; Vicky Johnston

Both our Churches have continued to collect non-perishable food for **Didcot Emergency Foodbank** throughout the year, with a special collection in both churches at Harvest time.

2.8 Social and Community

Our churches host various social events for the benefit and care of the church and wider community.

Harwell Evergreens is an afternoon social group for older residents and the **Women's Group** in Chilton offers evening fellowship. Both groups serve both parishes and invite speakers on a wide variety of subjects. The Women's Group hosts a very well attended annual quiz night in aid of charity, an annual plant and cake sale for Christian Aid and a monthly market stall in aid of various charities. In 2019 the Quiz Night raised £1,317.00 for Hamlin Fistula UK (Hospital in Ethiopia) and Chilton Church path; the Plant and Cake Sale £1,897.70 for Christian Aid; and the charity markets raised £6,483.50.

The Benefice **Walking Group** has continued to provide local walks. These are open to all and are typically 4-5 miles long. In 2019 there were few walks due to the leaders' various family commitments. One of the most popular walks was in May and was attended by c.25 people. More walks are being planned for 2020.



Photo: Benefice Walking Group; Steve Hale

St Matthew's Church hosted **Repair Cafés** in February and October, with logistical and hospitality support provided by the Explorer Scout Unit.



Photo: Repair Café; Andy Wells

Church members opened their homes for lunch on **Hospitality Sunday** in May.

A **Car Treasure Hunt** around the neighbouring villages occurred in July.

There was a **Trip to Bournemouth** in September.

A **Barn Dance** was held in Chilton Village Hall in November.

Christmas Together, a Christmas Day lunch for anyone wanting company, was held again, this time in Harwell at St Matthew's Church Hall. The event was organised and run by members of both our Churches and their families. It was attended by c.30 people. The traditional Christmas meal ended by watching the Queen's Speech.



Photo: Christmas Together; Sid Gale

2.9 World Mission

The World Missions Group is a small group which proposes to each PCC how each church could spend its World Mission budget. There were additional appeals and collections during the year focused on Tear Fund and Didcot Emergency Foodbank at Harvest in October and Oxford Women's Refuge at the Toy Service in December.

As we have done for the last two years, we have focused our World Mission financial support and prayer in 2019 around the Anglican Five Marks of Mission. The Marks and the corresponding organisations are:

1. **To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom:**
Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). The work of MAF enables mission workers to reach difficult and isolated places to share Christianity
2. **To teach, baptise and nurture new believers:**
Scripture Union (SU). Through Bible studies, resources and camps SU aims to share the Christian faith and disciple, in particular, children and young people.

3. **To respond to human need by loving service:** The Leprosy Mission (TLM). TLM diagnoses, treats and offers specialist care such as reconstructive surgery, as well as rehabilitation programmes and health education in communities.
4. **To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.** Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW). CSW is a Christian organisation working in over 20 countries across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, defending everyone's right to freedom of religion or belief.
5. **To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.** A Rocha, a Christian Conservation organisation who work in the UK and internationally.

During 2019 we continued to support a number of mission personnel: Christine Perkins who worked until recently for Pioneers; Heather and David Sharland with Church Mission Society; John Abu Bakker with Fellowship For Neighbours, India. We also established a new long term partnership with Endri and Dyshi Tabacu of The Light of the World church in Albania.

We have an annual programme to provide a focus on each of our mission personnel and organisations through prayers, showing a video where available, and by giving people information in the notices at services.

2.10 Staffing

Over the last five years or so, the Benefice has increased its investment in paid staff. Currently it funds two paid roles:

- A Benefice Administrator and PA to the Rector –

20 hours per week (see section below for more on this)

- A Children & Families Worker – working 40 hours per week – currently a job share (see section 2.5 for activities).

This investment reflects the following factors:

- The strategic decision that young children and their families should be a key area of focus for us
- The increasing administrative and communications workload
- The gradual reduction in availability of volunteer time due to societal trends.

The employment of paid staff is a large responsibility – both financially and in managerial terms. In recognition of this, the Benefice established an Employment sub-committee of the Joint PCC in April 2017.

Administrative support

The Benefice has a paid Administrator working 20 hours per week. A key focus of the role is communications activity. There are also various records, documents, bookings and practical arrangements to organise.

On a routine basis, the Administrator creates and prints service and notice sheets each week and the Ridgeway Broadsheet magazine 8 times each year; produces an Easter card and a Christmas card to promote special services and events; updates the calendar, rotas and news items on the church website; posts Facebook messages; manages St Matthew's Church Hall bookings, prepares various reports for the Diocese, Christian Copyright Licensing International, and the County Council; manages the office; and provides PA support to the Rector.

In 2019 the Administrator also advertised and co-ordinated arrangements for an Alpha course. 2019 also saw the Administrator involved in several professional development activities:

- Updating the Church Office Handbook and creating a calendar of Church Office tasks and events for 2020
- The organisation and leading of 2 meetings for around 12 local Church Administrators
- The preparation of a short video consisting of interviews with 4 members of the congregation about their experience of the Bible which was shown at services on Bible Sunday.

3. Looking forward – key plans and challenges

As part of our vision-setting for 2020 and beyond, our churches have been using the 'Parish Planning Tool' to discern "where God is at work and join in", with the aim of carrying those things forward "in new and transformed ways".

The process is ongoing, but the key finding is that we are loving, inclusive church communities, with diverse activity and services, active in outreach to the community, with a desire to make, nurture and deploy disciples of all ages.

In keeping with the national picture we are seeing a slight decline in attendance at our more traditional worship services, but alongside that we have seen encouragements in the growth of Pebbles Family Service, Fledgelings and Generation Gold, and the ongoing success of and engagement with Holiday Club and home groups. We are keen to build on all that is good, recognising the challenges of engaging with sectors of the population with which we currently have limited contact, e.g. the socially disadvantaged, and younger adults and teenagers. Of the many 'good' things we could be doing, seeking to meet the many needs of those around us, we need to be clear which of these are 'God' things for us to be focussing on at this time, and how to resource them.

Our beautiful, well-maintained buildings are significant assets, and developing these for wider use is likely to be a priority in the coming years. We also need to explore possibilities for

and developing these for wider use is likely to be a priority in the coming years. We also need to explore possibilities for collaborative work with other churches/organisations in certain areas/ministries, such as we have been doing with CAP, which serves those in debt; a significant possibility is work amongst young people/secondary schools. Raising and stewarding both human and financial resources is an ongoing challenge, but we are mindful that where we are following God's lead, he will provide the means for his work to be done.

4. Governance and structure

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

St Matthew's, Harwell and All Saints', Chilton each has its own PCC. St Matthew's PCC met six times and All Saints' PCC met five times during 2019.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The membership of the PCC consists of all clergy licensed to the Benefice, churchwardens, Deanery Synod members and other lay members elected by those on the Electoral Roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

Given its wide responsibilities, the PCCs operate through a number of committees. Each committee deals with a particular aspect of parish life. The committees report back

regularly at PCC meetings, with minutes of their meetings or their decisions and recommendations being received and discussed as necessary. The Rector is automatically a member of every committee.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by Church law. It meets or liaises occasionally when there are urgent decisions to be made between PCC meetings. It consists of the clergy, churchwardens and the Treasurer plus the Vice-chair and the Secretary.

Combined PCC

For efficiency and convenience St Matthew's, Harwell PCC and All Saints', Chilton PCC regularly hold Combined PCC meetings, where members of the two PCCs come together to discuss matters that are common to both parishes. Meetings of the Joint PCC (see below) are held as part of Combined PCC meetings. As such, voting by Joint PCC members on any decisions required by the Joint PCC generally follows discussion by the Combined PCC.

The Combined PCC met four times during 2019.

Joint PCC

The Pastoral Measure provides for a Joint PCC in addition to the separate PCCs of our two churches. It comprises the clergy, churchwardens and the Treasurer plus the Vice-chair and the Secretary of each PCC.

The two PCCs can agree to place in the hands of the Joint PCC any matters involving both parishes. So far, the PCCs have delegated responsibility for the following matters to

the Joint PCC:

- Safeguarding
- Staffing
- Data compliance.

Safeguarding

The Benefice complies fully with national and Church of England law on safeguarding. In 2019 the Benefice's **Safeguarding Officer** was Mr Mel Gibson and Mrs Judy Gold was **Deputy Safeguarding Officer**. The Joint PCC reviews and approves the **Safeguarding Policy** annually.

Staffing

The Benefice **Employment Committee** is concerned with meeting the statutory regulations around employment, ensuring the performance and development of staff employed by the PCCs is carried out, and recruitment procedures.

Data compliance

In 2019 further work was undertaken to ensure that the churches are compliant with new data governance legislation (GDPR).

5. Finance

Setting a budget and monitoring the income and expenditure of the Church are key responsibilities of the PCC.

The **Finance Committee** oversees the finances of the PCC by monitoring income and expenditure, budgeting and reviewing the planned giving.

Financial position

The financial position of St Matthew's Church for 2019 was £21,811 worse than budgeted. This is largely a result of unexpected major repair costs to the church tower and roof and because planned giving was lower than budgeted.

Planned giving has fallen for the last three years. In 2017 it was c. £63k; 2018 it was c. £61k; 2019 it was c. £55k (excluding gift aid).

Income in 2019 was £120,576. **Expenditure** in 2019 was £142,390.

At 1st January 2019 there was an opening balance in the General fund of £19,564. On 31 December 2019 the closing balance was -£2,248 to take forward into 2020.

We are grateful to all who continue to support the three-year extension of the C&FW post. The restricted fund shows a current balance of £27,831, sufficient to cover salaries for the coming year.

See Appendix 4 for a summary of income and expenditure for the years 2018 and 2019 and the budget for 2020.

Reserves policy

Reserves are held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on free reserves which equates to at least six months' unrestricted payments. In the case of St Matthew's Church this would be around £75,000 for 2020.

At this point, reserves in the General Fund are -£2,248 and in Designated Funds £78,228. The Stringer Legacy has been correctly reclassified as Designated rather than Restricted since the 2019 accounts.

6. Buildings

The PCC is charged with the care, maintenance and insurance of the church buildings, including St Matthew's Church Hall. The property and movable goods of the church are vested in the churchwardens, who are also responsible for inspecting the fabric of the church and making an annual report (the Fabric Report) first to the PCC and then to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

A key area of activity for the PCC is **developing our buildings** to accommodate our own activities more effectively, and to enable us to better connect with and serve the wider community. At St Matthew's in 2019 these strategic improvements have included upgrading our heating system and planning improvements to the entrance area. The aim is to have a building that is flexible, comfortable and accessible, whilst maintaining and even enhancing its beauty.

St Matthew's church building

St Matthew's church is a Grade 1 listed building, parts of which date back to 1190. It is kept in a good state of repair by the **Buildings Committee** and other volunteers. Some of this work is maintenance and general repairs that continue in a very similar fashion year in year out.

The Buildings Committee maintains an Action List of ongoing tasks and monitors progress in following the recommendations made by the Church Architect in the Quinquennial Inspection Report, the last of which was made in 2015. The detailed Fabric Report by the churchwardens is provided in a separate document.

During the last year there have been several major projects or issues:

- The church heating has been improved by replacing the twelve old radiant heaters in the nave and aisles with new heaters. The new heaters involve a slight increase in overall capacity, but the main advantage should be greater efficiency. The operating mode of the whole system has also been set up so that different areas of the church can be heated separately if needed for smaller services or meetings, and the timing system re-instated so that the whole system is switched on earlier for the main Sunday morning services



Photo: The new nave heaters in place, February 2019;
Tony Hughes

- The re-rendering of the central section of the west face of the tower was completed in May 2019, and associated stonework repairs completed
- Nearly all of the lead on the roof of the north aisle was stolen in July 2019. This necessitated immediate steps to protect the roof with polythene sheeting. There was some water ingress into the north aisle in September and the wet weather unfortunately prevented remedial

improvements to the roof covering until late October. Options for repairing the roof have been investigated and actions are in train to see if the roof can be repaired with coated steel rather than lead, at the same time taking the opportunity to replace the ageing felt covering of the extension roof with the same material. This will though entail a more complicated process of Diocesan approval than if the roof were repaired with lead and it is unlikely that we shall be in a position to have the new roof in place before the spring of 2020



Photo: The north aisle roof stripped of lead, July 2019;
Tony Hughes

- The small toilet has been re-furbished and work is continuing to complete all the stages, including redecoration, and to see what improvements can be made to the larger disabled toilet.

Examples of other work are in the Fabric Report.

A PCC Steering Group is also working with the Church Architect on options for replacing the inner porch doors with glass doors, under the terms of a legacy. The next Quinquennial Inspection of the Church by the Church Architect is due in 2020.

The **Friends of St Matthew's** scheme to stimulate interest in the church building, and ultimately help to provide for the costs of keeping it in good order, has continued in 2019 through a Facebook page: www.facebook.com/HarwellChurchFriends. This is aimed particularly at descendants of the Harwell family lineage in the USA. The Facebook page has had a lot of visits and interest and consideration is now being given to how this interest can be used to increase donations to help with the cost of maintenance of the church.

St Matthew's Church Hall

The Church Hall is located on the corner of The Park and Wellshead, approximately 100m south of the church. Its fabric is generally in good order.

The Hall is used by church groups and church-affiliated groups. Some further groups and individuals also rent the Hall, which helps to offset the cost of its upkeep. The use of the Hall by a range of organisations means that it has different day to day management requirements than the church building. The Hall is therefore managed by a Church Hall Manager, Brian Zimmerman, who liaises with the Rector and Church Administrator, and by Alison Gale, who helped with booking management during the year. The Hall has a paid cleaner.

The aim of allowing the Hall to be used by non-church groups is to

- Bring the broader community into contact with the church
- Defray the cost of running the Hall
- Provide an economic venue for church or church-affiliated groups.

All bookings are managed via the calendar on the church website. The biggest single user is the Scout Group, who make a significant contribution to the paid cleaning which helps to

sustain the Hall as a venue for all groups. There are also a number of other regular users, e.g. dance classes, Evergreens, Fledgelings (until autumn 2019 when it relocated to the church) and YF.

The income for the Hall in 2019 (not including the Scout cleaning contribution) was £4,211; expenditure was £6,082 including £531 internal decoration costs.

Appendix 1: Administrative information

St Matthew's church is situated on Church Lane, Harwell. It is part of the Wallingford Deanery in the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

The Rectory
Church Lane
Harwell
Didcot
OX11 0EZ

The Rector is Rev Dr Jonathan Mobey.

The Independent Examiner of the PCC financial accounts is:

Mrs Jane Moreton
Harrow House
Burr Street
Harwell
Didcot
OX11 0DT

Appendix 2: St Matthew's church membership

The Electoral Roll is a list of those entitled to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. It is also a crude indicator of church membership. However, church service attendance figures are another indicator of this (see Table 1 in section 2.1).

The Electoral Roll is maintained by Mike Pepper. The roll was completely renewed in March 2019, as it is every six years. The number on the roll in March 2019 stood at 44, down from 111 in 2018. However, this does not really indicate that the membership of St Matthew's is a third of what it was in 2018.

During 2019 we made contact with all those who had previously been on the Electoral Roll and who attend St Matthew's regularly. By November 2019, the Electoral Roll had increased to 65.

Appendix 3: St Matthew's PCC membership

During 2019, the membership of St Matthew's PCC has been:

Clergy

Rev Dr Jonathan Mobey (the Incumbent)

Rev Pam Rolls (Associate Minister)

Rev Janet Radford (Assistant Minister)

Churchwardens

Rebecca Lewis

Allan Macarthur

Elected Deanery Synod representatives

Gordon Gill

Sid Gale

Other elected representatives

Tony Hughes (Vice-Chair)

Jane Woolley (Secretary)

Eliza Wheaton

Michelle Walker

Andrew Keene

Co-opted representatives

Phill Johnston (Treasurer)

Appendix 4: Income and expenditure in 2018 and 2019 and budget for 2020

The full and independently examined Accounts for 2019 are published separately. They should be read in conjunction with this report.

	2018 (actual) £	2019 (actual) £	2020 (budget) £
INCOME			
Envelopes/planned giving	61,489	55,299	57,800
Gift Aid recovered	16,453	12,886	14,000
VAT reclaimed (LPW grant)	1,559	5,676	3,300
Loose Alms	4,166	4,066	4,200
Donations/legacies/other	1,939	2,889	2,000
Fees	2,646	2,498	2,500
Church Hall income	5,693	4,211	4,500
Transfers from Restricted/Designated funds			
Children & Families Worker	18,354	17,152	18,000
Administrator	7,972	10,973	11,000
Chilton Joint Account		(3,850)	
Insurance Claim – roof repair		(4,142)	
Major Repairs		11,005	15,000
Youth Fund		623	
CAP Debt Centre			3,100
Holiday Club	1,591	669	500
Excess of seating receipts	1,977		
Interest	409	621	652
Total income	124,248	120,577	136,552
EXPENDITURE			
Parish Share	49,830	49,994	49,855
Mission Giving	8,795	8,402	7,800
Joint PCC	40,935	41,114	41,886
Harwell PCC	27,449	42,881	50,400
Total expenditure	127,009	142,390	149,941
Surplus/Deficit	(2,761)	(21,814)	(13,389)

Fund Balances

The balance on the General fund at 31st December 2019 was -£2,248.

Designated funds (designated by the PCC for particular purposes but which could be otherwise spent if the PCC so decided) total £78,228.

Restricted funds (which can only be used for the purpose for which they were given) total £47,440 including £27,831 for a 3-year extension of the C&FW post.

If you would like to see a copy of this Annual Report in large print, or to discuss any parts of particular interest, please contact the Church Administrator on 01235 83 42 56 or via our website:

www.harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk