

# **The Parish of Bishopstone with Stratford Tony**

## **Annual Report and Accounts of the Parochial Church Council**

### **for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

#### **Objectives and Activities**

The general functions of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are set out in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and include the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibilities for the maintenance of the Bishopstone church building and churchyard and the Stratford Tony churchyard .

#### **Achievements and Performance**

In addition to the ministry of two stipendiary clergy in the Chalke Valley Team, all the activities in this report rely upon the support of volunteers: our non-stipendiary Team Vicar, The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor, who is responsible for the pastoral care of the Parish, two Associate Priests, retired Clergy, Churchwarden, Lay Worship Leader, Lay Pastoral Assistant, PCC members and all who give of their time, energy and financial support to ensure that services take place in a well preserved building, the Churchyard is maintained and the Church is able to serve the wider community.

**Policies** The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). All policies on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Financial Management issues are reviewed annually, in line with Church of England policy.

**Worship** The pattern of two Parish Communion services a month has continued. In addition, five 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Morning Services were led by our Lay Worship Leader, Mrs Sally Leaver. We hosted the St John's Singers on Good Friday for a performance of Stainer's Crucifixion. The Carol Service was held in the Village Hall again with increased numbers and the "Carols round the Crib" on Christmas Eve proved as popular as ever. A Carol Service and an Evensong were held in Stratford Tony.

**Organists** We were saddened by the death of Mr John Powell in April. We continue to thank Mr Arthur Willoughby and Mrs Shelagh Lamb for their support for our Communion services and Mrs Margaret Barter for supporting our Morning Services. The church organ restoration began, to be completed by April 2025.

**From the Registers** 8 Funerals and 1 Interment were conducted at Bishopstone. There were 4 Weddings in Bishopstone and 1 in Stratford Tony. There were 2 Baptisms in Bishopstone.

**Mission and Outreach** Pastoral support to individuals in our community continued to be provided by the Team Vicar and Lay Pastoral Assistant. 2024 Mission Giving was: £600 to our Deanery Chalke-Cueibet Link, £300 to Salisbury Foodbank, £200 to Morning Star. Participation by volunteers in the annual Ride & Stride raised £910 for the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust, of which £435 was returned for the North Transept Roof Appeal. The Augustus Montgomery Coal Trust funds administered by the PCC have provided financial assistance to individuals in need in the Parish. Two Coffee Mornings were hosted in support of the Lent Appeal for Rise:61.

Our magazine, STaB, continues to play a valuable role in the life of our community. The PCC is most grateful for the work of the Editorial Team in maintaining such a high quality magazine, for the contributors and for the team of volunteers who deliver it to every house in the Parish.

**Fabric** The PCC is very grateful to the Friends of Bishopstone Church for their support in ensuring that the building is well maintained and secure. In 2024 this involved repainting the interior Nave walls and cleaning the Nave windows. A detailed survey of the North Transept Roof identified the need for major repairs with costs later estimated to be £150,000. The Friends' Committee and the PCC began the process of fundraising for this project. A much needed clearing of the overgrown areas of the Churchyard was undertaken by a team of volunteers and a tree surgeon was commissioned to secure the safety of a Beech tree overhanging Church Lane.

The day to day care and welcoming appearance of the building and churchyard, cleaning, flower arranging and refreshments after services are undertaken at no cost to the PCC. These and other items of maintenance could not happen without the generosity of finance and time of a small number of volunteers.

#### **Financial Review**

In 2024, activities in the PCC's General (undesignated/unrestricted) Fund were: Total Receipts: £42,406.73 (2023 £31,863.50) against Expenditure of £38,680.45 (2023 £33,172.78), a surplus of £3,726.28 (2023 deficit £1,309.28). Expenditure has again increased and the PCC will need to continue to encourage further financial support to offset this. The PCC is grateful to the Parish Council for its ongoing financial contribution to the maintenance of the Bishopstone churchyard.

#### **Reserves Policy**

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain, where possible, a balance on our unrestricted funds which equates to one year's running costs to cover any emergencies that may arise, particularly bearing in mind the significant costs that can be incurred when work is required to the church building.

**Electoral Roll** 47 members.

## Structure, Governance and Management

PCC Members are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), or co-opted in accordance with Church Representation Rules 2020 (CCR 2020).

During 2024, the PCC held four meetings. The APCM was held on 28 April.

## Administrative Information

The Parish of Bishopstone and Stratford Tony is part of the Chalke Valley Team Ministry in the Chalke Deanery, Diocese of Salisbury. The Team address is: Church Office, Byworth, Meadow Close, Dinton, Salisbury SP3 5HY.

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. PCC members (trustees) who have served during the period of this report are:

### Ex Officio:

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipleigh  
Team Vicar: The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor (Chairman)  
Churchwarden: Mrs Sarah Seal (also Deanery Synod & Team Council)  
Deanery Synod: Mr Geoffrey Taylor (also PCC Secretary & Team Council)

### Elected:

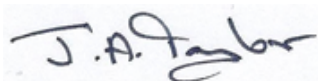
Mrs Margaret Barter  
Mrs Jill Ford  
Mrs Sally Leaver  
Mrs Alix Ricketts  
Major James Thompson  
Mrs Louise Vincent (from 28 April 2024)  
Mr George Brutton (Treasurer)

### Co-opted:

Electoral Roll Officer: Mrs Anne Stutchbury

**Resolution:** At the 2024 APCM, it was resolved that, in accordance with CCR 2020, M15(9), the total number of elected lay representatives on the PCC may be 9 irrespective of the total determined by the number of names on the Electoral Roll. To take effect from the 2025 APCM.

**Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by the Chairman**



**The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor**

## Team Council

Team Council is formed of clergy and lay representatives from each of the parishes in the Benefice. It met four times in 2024. The Revd Kate Woolven was licensed as a part-time Associate Priest on 29 January 2024. The Revd Alison Waterhouse was licensed as Team Vicar on 1 May 2024. The Revd Maggie Metcalfe was licensed as part-time Associate Priest on 28 October 2024.

**January 2024** The 2023 Annual Accounts and 2024 Budget were approved. Members were encouraged to consider parish or benefice wide projects that would benefit from support from the Benefice Mission Fund. Updated Safeguarding policies were circulated. The 2024 Lent Project was confirmed as Rise:61.

**May 2024** Derek Brown retired as Team Council Lay Chair and was replaced by Sian Cooper (Bowerchalke). An Accounts update was shared and PCCs were encouraged to appoint Assistant Treasurers to help with duties and understand the role for ease of handovers. Feedback from a discussion group held at Lee Abbey regarding potential Mission Fund projects was shared and a Benefice Planning Day was scheduled for September 2024. The Lent Project raised £6444.25 and a Pilgrimage Walk was announced for Lent 2025.

**September 2024** A benefice planning workshop highlighted opportunities and ideas for parish projects. Presentations were given on fire extinguishers, PAT testing equipment and Arty August – the children's workshops held throughout the summer. Members were asked to consider a suitable project for Lent 2025.

**November 2024** Feedback was received on the benefice planning workshop. Presentations were given by SAT7, ShelterBox, CRESS and the Chalke-Cueibet Partnership as prospective Lent projects for 2025. The Chalke-Cueibet Partnership. 'Save Our School' project was selected. Clare Penny gave a presentation on Eco-Church and what Charlton All Saints Church had done to reach their Bronze Award.

## Chalke Deanery Synod

Chalke Deanery Synod is formed of clergy and lay representatives from the Benefices of Chalke, Nadder Valley, St Bartholomew, Western Downland and Wilton. It met three times in 2024.

**February 2024 – Wilton** Diocesan Synod representatives were elected. A report on the last Diocesan Synod was circulated. The group received a presentation 'Understanding Dementia' from Alzheimers UK.

**June 2024 – Chalke (Bishopstone)** A report was received on the trip made by Geoff Taylor and Revd Ali Alexander to Cueibet. Feedback on the Spring Deanery Conference was shared. Jill Hockham resigned as Lay Co-Chair and volunteers were sought to fill the post.

**October – Western Downland (Martin)** A report on the Diocesan Synod was shared. A new format Cueibet Newsletter was circulated. David Pain, Diocesan CEO and Secretary gave a presentation 'Making Jesus Known' which looked at the Diocesan Vision and Strategy.