

**ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, WEST DEEPING
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Opening Remarks

This annual report provides the input for the Benefice Annual Parochial Church Meeting in April 2020 and feedback to our local community on the activities of the West Deeping Parochial Church Council (PCC) during 2019 and looks forward to the future. The report provides data from our church services in the past year to help inform future direction and priorities; it gratefully acknowledges the contribution from our volunteers without whom the vibrancy of our church would not be possible; it outlines future plans for our ambitious Restoration & Improvement programme, and reflecting on successes in 2019, looks towards new and exciting events in the coming year.

Our activities continue to be driven by the PCC Vision Statement and Growth Plans for 2020 which were approved in January 2020.

Services

Worship during 2019 continued to follow a similar pattern to recent years with Morning Prayer on the first Sunday of each month, Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sundays and All Age Worship (AAW) on the third Sunday. Attendance at these services is detailed in the table below with the previous two years for comparison purposes.

Service	2019		2018		2017	
	No of Services	Attendance	No of Services	Attendance	No of Services	Attendance
Morning Prayers	11	114	13	253	16	195
Holy Communion	29	483	23	320	23	363
Total 'Regular' Services	40	597	36	573	39	558
Average Attendance	15.0		15.9		14.3	
All Age Worship	10	305	13	529	11	349
Average AAW Attendance	31		40.7		31.7	
Overall	50	902	49	1102	50	907
Average Overall Attendance	18.0		22.5		18.1	

The table shows that overall attendance for all services in 2019 were down by 20% on 2018 but similar to that in 2017. Congregations for Morning Prayers/Holy Communion were down by 5% compared with 2018 but similar to that in 2017. Attendance for AAW was down by 24% but similar to that in 2017. We should emphasise that these figures are only indicators used to help inform PCC decision-making and were part of the annual return to the Church of England Mission Statement plus additional Diocese of Lincoln Return for St Andrew's Church submitted in January 2020. Qualitatively, it is important to highlight that the 'traditional' services (Morning Prayers and Holy Communion) continue to be enjoyed in their current style by a core group of regular worshippers including a few 'regulars' who are not resident in West Deeping.

There is a continuing passionate commitment of our church family to sustain and grow our faith and to share the good news of Jesus with those in our local community. Holding a service every Sunday is proving challenging particularly given that Fr Aran led only 2 Sunday morning services in our parish in 2019: we have few volunteers and the same few people sustain all facets of church

life in our village. We are actively considering how best to improve the quality of what we offer and increasing our volunteer support base or reducing the burden on the few.

We are blessed by our ministry team of Susanna Aldred (Reader) and Allan Crowson (Authorised Lay Minister) who have continued to faithfully serve God in our church and the wider community. To their great credit, Susanna and Allan have also led services in other churches in our parish. This has helped us share experiences about the challenges we face in our rural parishes today.

The support from local ordained/retired clergy has been instrumental in sustaining our joyful worship every week throughout the year and given our ministry team the confidence to develop the vision for our church in the future as articulated in our Mission Action Growth Plan. This document underpins PCC management and direction for the future of our church as an integral part of our village community. The PCC would like to record our gratitude to Padre Stewart Shaw and Canon David McCormack for their outstanding encouragement, guidance and support to our services throughout the year.

All Age Worship

The monthly AAW Services, co-ordinated by the AAW Planning Team, have continued throughout the year. We have tried to identify lessons to apply to future services and that has helped us evolve creativity. The regular involvement of Andy McCormack, Jules Morgan and Katie McCormack to lead our songs has added an enriching dimension to the services.

AAW services have been promoted at the Coffee Mornings in the Village Hall on the day prior to the service. The Coffee Mornings provide an opportunity to engage with the wider community and are linked to the theme for the AAW service the following day particularly from the perspective of children's craft activity. Requests for volunteers to run a Coffee Morning are put in Towers & Spires every month and a list is on the Church Noticeboard inside the porch entrance.

Overall, this 'contemporary' style seems to be working well. The PCC would like to thank all those who contribute to the AAW services for continuing to make them so successful throughout 2019.

The AAW Planning Team will continue to seek the right contemporary/traditional balance which will appeal to all those in our local community and we look forward to the opportunity to share this style of service with others in the Uffington Group.

Festival Services

Attendance figures for our festival services are shown in the following table:

Service	2019	2018	2017
Easter	41	46	41
Harvest	42	44	39
Carol	58	67	50
Midnight Mass	48	26	39

These figures highlight that the festival services continue to be our most popular and have been well received by our local community particularly when part of an AAW-style service.

Special Services

During 2019, there was one wedding and 3 funerals at St Andrew's Church. These special services were attended by an average of more than 80 people. Future interest in wedding services – 2 are

planned in 2020 - indicates their importance to our local community and how we need to respond to this need.

Bible Study

Our Bible Study Group has met regularly throughout the year to provide a forum to go deeper into the bible. We are grateful to Susanna and Ian Aldred who have opened their home for these Group meetings of Christians in our local community. Studies will continue in the coming year. We intend to explore alternative approaches to bible study and to provide wider opportunities for prayer in the coming year.

Safeguarding

The Uffington Group Safeguarding Team was formed under Liz Bender during 2018 to co-ordinate the approach to safeguarding across our Group of parishes. The Group Safeguarding Team also acts as the co-ordinating focal point for interaction between the parishes and Lincoln Diocese. Elizabeth Noble is the West Deeping PCC Safeguarding Officer. The Team has developed practices and principles compliant with Church of England and Lincoln Diocese requirements which our PCC has endorsed. Accordingly, the St Andrew's Church safeguarding policy statement and principles are displayed on the Church Noticeboards in the porch entrance and in the Vestry and a copy is on the church page of the West Deeping website. In particular, the PCC complies with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). Safeguarding training has been completed for all applicable lay members of our PCC and DBS checks are either complete or underway for all PCC members.

Health & Safety/Risk Assessment

The church risk assessment including Health & Safety (H&S) compliance was most recently reviewed and updated in February 2020. Guidance on compliance with H&S regulations has been taken from www.hse.gov.uk and CofE guidelines at <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/>.

The risk assessment confirms that the major risks to which the PCC is exposed have been reviewed and systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Likewise, the PCC is compliant with H&S regulations: the fire safety, first aid, boiler, electrical assessments, asbestos survey, lightning conductor check and employer's liability insurance (displayed on the church (porch) noticeboard) are in date.

The Risk Assessment is held in the Vestry in the Church Folder (Log Book) together with the Master Records of Minutes of PCC Meetings.

Music

The PCC would like to record their thanks to our regular musician Marjorie Lumb for her dedicated support to enrich our holy communion services with music. We also express our gratitude to Andy McCormack, Katie McCormack and Jules Morgan for leading our singing and enriching our AAW.

Flowers

The church is adorned every week, save Lent and Advent, with beautiful flower arrangements. The PCC would like to thank all those who give their time, efforts and thought including Kaye Allen, Sylvia Alpe, Maggie Ashcroft, Linda Blagrove, Anne Davidson, Sue Plant, Elizabeth Noble, Tricia Snell and Moira Small. The Flower Arrangements List is on the Church Noticeboard inside the porch entrance.

Church Opening

The church continues to be opened daily by Sylvia Alpe. The PCC would like to record their gratitude to Sylvia for her commitment throughout another year. The public clearly benefit from the open door as recorded in our visitor's book with some complimentary and helpful feedback. We also now have a digital counter to record numbers entering our church – indicating that we have 10 times the number of visitors to our church compared with those who sign the Visitor's Book. We are participating in the National Churches Trust scheme to analyse church visitor numbers. These records also provide useful evidence to support grant aid submissions.

Bell Ringers

Bell-ringers continue to enjoy the bells of St Andrew's with monthly practices by Deeping St James and 'one-off' ringing by 3 other groups throughout the year. The bells have been rung before every weekly service and for the weddings in our church over the past year.

Church Cleaning

The PCC would like to record their thanks to all those who have cleaned our church throughout the year. Requests for volunteers to contribute to the weekly cleaning of the church are put in Towers & Spires every month and a rota is on the Church Noticeboard inside the porch entrance.

Maintenance

Our most recent Quinquennial Inspection was completed in August 2019. All recommendations highlighted in the Inspection Report have been addressed through our Restoration & Improvement Programme and are tracked as a PCC agenda item.

Our routine Maintenance Plan which is based on National Churches Trust guidance is completed on a monthly basis throughout the year. In particular, the Church bells are oiled and the stays checked regularly in accordance with our maintenance plan. Similarly, the gutters, drains and other areas which require periodic inspection and preventative maintenance have been completed throughout the year. All maintenance work is also recorded in the Maintenance (Red) book held in the Vestry and SPAB Maintenance Survey was last updated at the time of our Quinquennial Inspection in August 2019. The PCC would like to record its gratitude to Allan Crowson for his loving care of our church and the example he sets to others in his diligence in maintaining our church building.

Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

The church inventory dated July 2017, held in the Vestry, was last updated in August 2019 and is available for review through the PCC Secretary.

Restoration and Improvement

Toilet/Servery. The Restoration and Improvement Programme was rolled out to our local community in October 2018. Our priority is to install toilet and servery facilities and reorder the Tower area to support future services, special events and visitors ... and a legacy for future generations to benefit from our beautiful church. Detailed designs, drawn up by our architect, were approved by faculty in November 2019. The PCC has selected a preferred contractor for the installation work and we are well advanced with applications for grant funding. The PCC would like to thank generous grant awards from Allchurches Trust, Marshalls Charity, Garfield Weston, West Deeping Educational Foundation and West Deeping Charities.

Future Improvements. The next phase of improvements to the church will include updating the electrical wiring, improving the lighting, introducing a new sound system, updating the heating

system and lime washing the Nave walls. Still at the concept stage, planning will commence in the coming year.

Roof Repairs. In April, the tile crease course at the Nave/Tower south east abutment was extended, and the cracks in the south aisle copper roof and the Clerestory windows were repaired to satisfy recommendations in the Quinquennial Inspection Report 2014. A new leak has sprung at the north east corner of the Nave roof for which a List B approval is being sought pending repair in Spring 2020.

Installation of Roof Alarm. In October, a roof alarm was installed to protect against the rapid rise in incidents of lead theft in the area. We are indebted to Allchurches Trust for their grant award towards the cost of the work.

Fund Raising

Friend's Group. Under a charitable constitution accountable to the PCC, the West Deeping Friend's Group is successfully generating strong local commitment to the church facilities project. By the end of 2019 almost 100 people have expressed interest in the project. We have raised an amazing amount through local giving and many have pledged donations by standing order. A small management team operates under a constitution to co-ordinate volunteer support, fundraising, grant applications and associated heritage activities to meet grant conditions. The PCC would like to thank Gareth Williams and Andrew Bowman for their support to the Management Team throughout the past year. Quarterly Newsletters have been circulated thanking members for their generous support and summarising project progress. Volunteer support is requested in the Newsletters asking members to contribute to the management of the group.

We held 4 main fund-raising events during 2019 - including 'The Noteables' concerts in April and December, an 'At Home' coffee morning in June and the well supported 'Molecey at Christmas' Festival – raising more than £2,000 for the Restoration and Improvement Programme. We are particularly indebted to Glenn Fuller and Graham Magee at 'The Granary' for their generous support to the church including the magnificent Christmas Tree. These events were well supported and provided an environment for the whole community to come together, for those of all ages to consider their faith and how people feel they would like to see our church develop in the future. Feedback from the local community highlighted that the events were much enjoyed by all. Our monthly Saturday Coffee Mornings continue to be a success.

Further fund-raising events are planned during 2020 as described in our Growth Plan 2020 including events that will be co-ordinated by the Friend's Group management team.

Data Privacy

The PCC has approved our policy to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation which came into effect in May 2018. The policy is displayed on the church noticeboard in the porch and on the church pages of the West Deeping website.

Website

The PCC Secretary maintains the church webpages on the West Deeping Parish website including contact details for church officials, notification of forthcoming services, a brief history of the church, records of PCC meetings, Safeguarding, Friends Group activities and thanks for contributions to our events.

The PCC forwards information to keep up-to-date the St Andrew's Church webpage on the site 'A Church Nearer You'. The PCC would like to thank Carole Martin for keeping the ACNY website up-to-date.

Closing Comments

It is hoped that those in our local community will find this report informative and that it substantiates PCC future direction and priorities as described in our Mission Action Growth Plan 2020.

We look forward to supporting Fr Aran as he leads and encourages us in his ministry in the coming year such as in our distinctive offering of All Age Worship and working jointly with local parishes to share common worship.

Finally, we thank God for the contribution from our volunteers without whom the growth of our church as articulated in this report would not be possible. We are particularly looking forward to building on the initial success of our Friend's Group to support delivery of our toilet/servery project in the coming year.

"The Lord will guide us continually ..." (Isaiah 58:11)

Colin Blagrove

Churchwarden on Behalf of St Andrew's Church, West Deeping PCC
Draft dated: 29th February 2020