The Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Burford

Annual Report

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2017

APCM held on Monday 23rd April 2018

This Church exists to delight in God’s love and to share it with others.
Background
Burford Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Burford.

Membership
Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

Vicar
The Revd Richard Murray Coombs

Associate Vicars
The Revd Cedric Reavley
The Revd Alex Ross

Curate
The Revd Robert Wainwright

Licensed Lay Minister [co-opted]
Mr John Leach
Mr Roy Tarbox

Churchwardens
Mr Andrew Butcher
Mr Andy Netherwood [resigned 23/02/2017]
Mrs Susanna Naylor [retired 24/04/2017]
Mrs Jane Poulson [from 24/04/2017]

Representatives on Witney Deanery Synod
Mr Kevin Rillie
Mrs Susan McCrossan [from 24/04/2017]
Mrs Rachel Vander Elst [retired 24/04/2017]
Mrs Gaynor Taylor

Officers of the Parochial Church Council
Vice Chairman
Mr Andrew Butcher [from 24/04/2017]
Mr Andy Netherwood [resigned 23/02/2017]

Treasurer
Mr Tom Douglas [co-opted]

Council
Mr David Berkeley [from 24/04/2017]
Mrs Jenny Cridge Raven
Mr Howard Dodd [retired 24/04/2017]
Mr Trevor Hames
Mr Ian Johnson
Mrs Penelope Kettle
Mr Robert Lind [from 24/04/2017]
Mr Ian Marshall [retired 24/04/2017]
Mr Kyle McFarlane [from 24/04/2017]
Mrs Angela Netherwood [retired 24/04/2017]

Secretary to PCC
Mrs Sally Ormiston
Mrs Miriam Owen [retired 24/04/2017]
Mrs Janey Petterson [from 24/04/2017]
Mr Paul Petterson [from 24/04/2017]
Mr Roy Tarbox (LLM) [from 24/04/2017]
Mrs Lindsey Worvill

Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Jane Marshall
Bankers: TSB Bank Plc, 4 Sheep Street, Burford, Oxon. Additional accounts are held with CAF and CCLA.

Auditors: Rees Russell, 37 Market Square, Witney, Oxon, OX28 6RE

Review of the Year 2017 – Richard Coombs

2017 has been a year of embedding our new vision and values into the life of the church and wider benefice. Our vision: To delight in God’s love and to share it with others is illustrated in the lovely picture by Charlie Mackesy of the prodigal son returning to the arms of his loving Father. This picture now hangs in the foyer of the Warwick Hall to remind us of our vision. Our prayer for the churches in our benefice is that everyone should experience the Father’s love in this way and will want to share it with others.

Our Vision is supported by four values which underpin all the ministry in the benefice. It has been encouraging to see many of the church’s ministries adopting these values and assessing their ministry by them.

The Bible – Hearing of God’s love in Jesus
We are a church which rightly places a high priority on teaching the Bible in all areas of church life because when God’s word is taught God’s voice is heard. Our aim is not that we should know more about God but that we should love Jesus more and have a desire to serve him. It has been so encouraging to see many people in small group Bible studies, on Sundays and in outreach groups responding to God’s love that is seen in Jesus. The church ministry team works hard at preaching and teaching, studying together every week and preparing diligently. The small group leaders, women’s and men’s group leaders are now meeting termly to learn and prepare together and teaching material is recommended to them. The fruit of people hearing God’s word is that many are active in the many ministries that are reported on below. I am so grateful to everyone who takes their responsibility for preaching and teaching God’s word so seriously.

Prayer and Worship – Responding to God’s love in Jesus
The main ways in which we respond to what God says to us is that we talk to him in prayer and give our lives to him in worship. We are a church which still has a lot to learn about prayer but we have made great strides forward with much better numbers coming to the Benefice Central Prayer Meeting and a real sense of ‘doing business with God’. We have also had an encouraging week of prayer in which the Chapel of the Holy Spirit became the engine room of the Benefice as people gathered for prayer from 7.30am to 7.30pm every day. Our 9.15am service has reverted to 9.30am and has returned to the chancel. We sent 30 people from the 11am service to join others from Asthall, Swinbrook and Widford to begin a new service at Swinbrook which is flourishing but the 11am service has continued to grow. Our most important strategic aim is now to plant another new service. The children’s and youth work continues to blossom and it has been particularly encouraging to see the growth of the youth work amongst church families and in Burford School.

Outreach – Sharing God’s love in Jesus
We have had more outreach events and courses this year than ever before. The new outreach team is doing a great job in making sure that we have a variety of events to invite friends to and we have run courses each term to enable people to investigate Christianity further. Rock-a-tots continues to be a highlight, making contact with many unchurched families in the area and encouraging them to events such as the Advent Wreath Making, Easter Biscuit Decorating, Adventure and Uncover. We have seen a few people come to faith this year for which we thank.
God. It is a constant battle to keep outreach as a priority in the church’s life and I am grateful to those who help us to do that.

**Community – Experiencing God’s love in Jesus**
The development of our pastoral care has been a priority this year with the appointment of Ruth McCalman as our pastoral care co-ordinator. You will see her report below. We look forward to the training courses that she has planned. The Warwick Hall is proving to be a great link with the local community as you will see from the report below. Our vision that it should be ‘the heart of our church’s ministry and the heart of our community’s life’ is beginning to be fulfilled as many community groups use the hall and café and come into contact with the church family. An important strategic aim for us is to develop this further. We are trying to serve the older end of our community well with Friday Focus, Coffee and Company and a planned relaunch of the Monday Day Centre as ‘Time Out’ coming soon in 2018. The small group network continues to be the heart of provision of pastoral care as people care for each other and bear one another’s burdens.

**Ministry Team**
There have been some changes to our ministry team. Tom Feather left us as Ministry Trainee in September 2017 and was replaced by Jon Bright who is also taking responsibility for youth work under Jo Vickers. Ben Turner became Operations Team Leader and Tarnia Usher became church secretary and my PA. Allan Read started as WH facilities manager and Stephen Price and Lynnette Derry took over from Andy Webb as church vergers. Miriam Owen moved on from being Warwick Hall bookings secretary to join Tim Vickers’ new IFES team and was replaced by Rachel Redding. Ruth McCalman joined us as pastoral care co-ordinator. Nicola Coombs took a six month sabbatical from her ministries in September and Becky Eyles and Beth Johnson took over from her. I am very grateful indeed to them for making this possible. We bade farewell to our much-loved curate, Rob Wainwright, at the end of the year as he became Chaplain and Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. Trevor Hames has taken on his responsibility for small group leadership under me. We have two new curates (one full time, one part time) arriving at the end of June but until then, the ministry team is quite stretched. I am very grateful to the whole team for all their support and hard work.

**Sunday Service Statistics**

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There have been 8 weddings, 11 funerals and 7 baptisms.

**Treasurer’s Report - Tom Douglas**
Church finances cover the following three areas:

**General Fund**
This fund is for the day to day running and mission of the church, including income and expenditure for the use of the Warwick Hall. Expenditure during 2017 exceeded income and so the General Fund fell in value over the year, by £34,000. It had been expected, in the budget for 2017, that expenditure would exceed income by over £50,000, so we are thankful that the actual position turned out better than this – due mainly to a grant from the Greening Trust, given to cover the
Operational shortfall of the Warwick Hall in its first full year of use. There was a review of giving in autumn 2017 which has led to a significant increase in regular giving to the church. As a result, the 2018 budget has a greatly reduced shortfall, of £11,000, compared with 2017. Any shortfall is not sustainable over the long term, but we hope the 2018 budget is sufficiently prudent so that the potential shortfall does not happen in practice.

Fabric and Equipment Fund
This fund, originating from various legacies, is designated for the repair and maintenance of the buildings and equipment of the church. In 2017 repair and maintenance costs were £24,000 greater than the income generated by the fund, primarily through paying for the renewal of the paths in the churchyard. We expect there to be some years where major work on the buildings will exceed fund income, and some years where the opposite happens. We are blessed to be in a position where all our repair and maintenance costs, at least for the immediate future, are covered by this fund.

Warwick Hall Project
The Hall opened in 2016 and the great majority of construction and equipping costs have been paid. The fund has now been closed with the money remaining in the fund at the year-end being used for the final payments under the project, expected during 2018.

Secretary’s Report: Sally Ormiston
As representatives of the church family here at St John the Baptist, Burford, the Parochial Church Council’s role is to join with our vicar, Richard Coombs, in bringing God’s love into our community. During the course of 2017, in addition to normal business, the PCC have spent time thinking, planning and praying about how the strategy of the church can help achieve that aim, using as guidance the framework of the four vision values of The Bible, Prayer and Worship, Mission, and Community. PCC members have also engaged with some difficult discussions as the PCC has wrestled with some of the financial issues that the church faced towards the end of the year.

Five PCC members retired at the APCM in April, six new members were elected and the overall membership changed from 21 to 22. (A list of those who served on the PCC during 2017 can be viewed on the first page of this report). Andy Netherwood resigned as churchwarden in February and Susanna Naylor stepped down at the APCM in April, at which Andrew Butcher was reappointed, and Jane Poulson was appointed as second churchwarden.

The PCC met six times during the year. Standing Committee met in the non-PCC months. Standing Committee consisted of the Vicar, Curate, Wardens, Chair of Finance Committee and PCC Secretary. The Operations Team Leader attended meetings but was non-voting.

The PCC’s Charity Commission registration number is 1130342.

Electoral Roll Report - Jane Marshall
The electoral roll at the start of the year stood at 176. We have had several new members join us and, at the end of the year, the electoral roll stands at 188.

Church Fabric Report - Paul Petterson
What a privilege to serve and be part of church which is hungry for the Lord, hungry to be led along the path He has for us. For yet more will be revealed and given to us, as our God is a God of extravagant generosity.
A full on year for the Fabric team, a very big thank you to Geoff Taylor, Lindsey Worvill, Lynnette Derry, Quinton Jones, Simon Chandler, Stephen Price, Roy Lilley, Jon Bright, Jane Poulson. We strive to maintain this beautiful church whilst seeking to improve areas which are appropriate to its standing.

Main works - completed 2017
- Tourists’ walk-around leaflets and welcome cards translated into various languages.
- Church stone conservation works.
- Church bells maintenance works.
- Laying new electrical cables.
- Church heating report completed and has been sent to the PCC for review.
- Maintenance- churchyard railings, gates, oil tank, notice board, bell ringing chamber.

Main works – planned for 2018
- Path works completion (east to the Priest door),
- Improved heating for the church.
- Quinquennial building inspection by our church architects

Friends of Burford Church Report – Penelope Leaf, Chairman

The Friends of Burford Church, founded in 1946, is committed to supporting the Parochial Church Council by the following objectives:

- To undertake improvements which do not come within the normal scope of funds for the maintenance of the fabric of the church building.
- To help with grants towards other essential work in the church, or churchyard, which in the opinion of the Friends, could not otherwise be undertaken.
- To unite those who love and value Burford Church in a Company of Friends.

Funds for the work of the Friends are raised through subscriptions and donations and from the sale of post cards and guides on the Friends’ stand by the south door of the church. Membership of the Friends extends across the globe (132 members) and all receive an annual newsletter. Anyone interested in supporting our aims is welcome to join. Life membership is £40. Application forms are on the table in the south transept and on the Friends’ section of the church website.

We held a summer tea party in the Warwick Hall in June at which during tea music was supplied by Oxford Jazz. After tea there was a quiz based on “church delights” which enlightened guests about lesser known features and curiosities in the church. Our AGM was held on a Sunday afternoon in November followed by tea. Several projects are being considered for the Friends to fund, and a Historical Evening event is planned for June 14th 2018.

The Friends of Burford Church Charity Commission registration number is 280233.

The Prayer Life of St John the Baptist - Charles Hunter Smart

The pattern for the prayer life of the church has not changed very much over this last year.

We continue to have intercessory prayer times through the week on a Monday lunch time and an early morning meeting on Wednesday and Thursday. Numbers are small but attendance is from regular faithful people who have been called to intercessory prayer.
A small core is now meeting regularly for half an hour before the 11.00am service on Sunday to pray for the service.

Prayer ministry continues to be offered after the 11.00 am service with a team of 20 people on the rota. The encouragement that so many feel called to this ministry is not yet matched by the take up from within the congregation. However if only one life is changed by it that is a blessing.

In October Charles Hunter Smart took over the role of overseeing the prayer life of the church. A key part of this is the Benefice Central Prayer Meeting on the first Wednesday of each month apart from when the quarterly North Cotswold Gospel Partnership Central Prayer meetings take place.

Numbers for the BCPM have remained good often with 30 plus attending. Intercessory prayer is the priority but with a slightly bigger emphasis going forward on worship being an important expression of prayer and communication with our Father.

A week of prayer is planned for March 2018 with a focus on our core values which came out of the 24 hour prayer time in February 2017.

Music Report: Charlie Cannell

Therefore I will praise you, LORD, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name. 2 Samuel 22:50

We continue to be richly blessed with opportunities to worship the Lord supported by a faithful group of musicians. I give thanks to the Lord that such a team of gifted and committed worshippers continues to flourish as we walk together as a church family.

As ever, our foundational prayer is that we are able take on the privilege leading of worship in a responsible way: first and foremost, we are there to praise God. Secondly, we are there to lead those gathered in their response to what Jesus has done on the cross.

Please pray for us as we walk together, specifically that - as our fellowship grows in many new ways - we can continue to:

- Play an active and appropriate role in all aspects of church life
- Enjoy the commitment and creative gifts of a growing group of faithful musicians.
- Inspire people to seek more of Jesus through sung praise and worship.

All services and meetings are enjoying the benefits of this God-shaped team of musicians. I am greatly encouraged to hear personal testimonies of God using our times of praise and worship to speak to people of all ages and stages.

We are truly blessed to have so many organists, a wonderful choir, talented singers and instrumentalists, as well as a growing group of leaders for any kind of meeting. From Sunday Services to JAM Praise Parties, from Carol Services (in church and the Golf Club!) to Prayer Meetings we are able to serve the Lord. This is a real blessing and an answer to prayer as God grows our ministry in Burford and across the Benefice.

The richness of a group of musicians with widely varied background is a clear aspect of how God is blessing us – it gives us an amazing range of musical styles by which we can serve Him. However, where are all of one view is that each of us seeks more of Him through worship and has a passion for leading others in this.

Praise God for the amazing richness of our musical life in Burford – please continue to give thanks and pray for this important part of our church family life.
Parish Choir Report: Ruth Reavley, Choir Director

In addition to monthly Book of Common Prayer Mattins services (except for August), the Choir was pleased to support Easter Day and Civic Carols Services, and Carols by Candlelight (working with the Music Group, as a new venture for both sets of musicians). Membership remained fairly stable, though we lost two regular members to the newly established Swinbrook service later in the year.

Thirteen choir-alone pieces were offered as anthems or introits. Choir members were regulars at other 9.15 services, and offered themselves as readers, intercessors, sidesmen and coffee rota members.

The congregation has sung 182 hymns and carols in total this year, which is creditable! A few favourites fitted many sermon themes. Many are sung just once or twice a year. In choosing hymns, priority is given to matching the theme, readings, and liturgical season. Occasionally an unfamiliar hymn tune is a bit of a struggle, but care is taken to match new words to familiar tunes as much as possible. The preacher and leader are always consulted on hymn choice. A limited range of Anglican chants is used for canticles and psalms at the monthly Mattins, to help the congregation’s confidence. Printing the music for chants will be explored in 2018.

Our regular organist is Edwin Wilson, to whom many thanks should be offered. We are very grateful for support from James Grainger, Phil Ormiston, Geoffrey Taylor and Cedric Reavley, in ensuring Edwin does have holidays, and that every service has an organist.

The 9.15 service is helped in many ways: by Phil Ormiston (proof-reading), Tarnia Usher (service sheets), the vergers (post-rehearsal refreshments), Penelope Leaf (all sorts of help), and by Rob Wainwright and Cedric Reavley (liturgy).

At the end of the year, the service returned to the Choir stalls, and many agree that worship is enhanced by a stronger sense of fellowship through closer proximity, and by the sound of the tracker organ.

Children’s Ministry and Sunday JAM - Jo Vickers

We value Prayer and Worship: In September we started the new JAM Praise Service. This is an informal service, engaging for children and with one main teaching point for all to go home with. We have also developed a ‘challenge’ time for the 10-13-year olds in a separate room whilst the younger children have an activity time.

We value the Bible: The focus for our Sunday JAM groups continues to be teaching age appropriate, interesting Bible lessons to the younger generation. We have a wonderful team of dedicated teachers and helpers. They are amazingly flexible as numbers still fluctuate weekly and we have had some very busy weeks with larger numbers than normal. I would like to thank Christine Brown for all her help as our Safeguarding Officer to ensure all the team have DBS checks and attend safeguarding training.

We value Mission: We continue to have a growing relationship with Burford Primary School through the Open the Book assemblies—acting out a Bible story weekly. Building on our link with the school, in December we invited some of the school children to join in the drama and dance for the Adventure Family Fun afternoon. Written by Janey Petterson and choreographed by Julia Jones, it was the highlight of the afternoon and fantastic to see the church packed with families having a great time. This year’s theme was ‘Jesus the Prince of Peace.’

Phil and Sally Ward with help from Jon Bright and Andrew Lentin started Cross-Bar Ball skills on Burford recreation ground. We are praying this will continue to build momentum and become a regular fixture for local and church families. They play various ball sports, have a short gospel talk and we provide soup and snacks. The next one is on the 29th April.
We value Community: The older Y3-Y6 children continue to enjoy the BREAD socials throughout the year. Once again, we had a great camping night at Gigley Farm last July. We have been running the Bread events for over a decade now and can see that these socials have helped the children to make closer friendships and have fun as a larger group. They have helped us keep in contact with children who attend church infrequently, making it much easier for them when they do come along on a Sunday.

Youth Work Report – Jon Bright

Burford Church exists to delight in God’s love and to share it with others … and the growing youth ministry has really caught the vision as we encourage one another and invite new members to the church and to explore Christianity for themselves. We are in contact with around 40 young people aged 11 – 18 throughout the week in various ways and are beginning to see a connection between church family teenagers, Burford School Boarding House students and the wider community.

We have a growing group of 14-18 year olds coming along mainly from Burford School Boarding House. We owe this completely to God as He bought them all to us and for giving us a team of six leaders who have committed to leading the group. They have a hunger to learn about the Bible and we have started two new sessions for them. A weekly Sunday morning Bible study class during the 11am service and a monthly evening session called The Event-where we enjoy supper together, receive teaching from the Bible, discuss the talk and sing praises to our Father.

Our 11 – 14 year are being increasingly confident in prayer and in their faith, praise the Lord for parents who encourage their children to come along weekly and for our leaders who faithfully teach the passage and lead discussions week by week.

The Christian Union at Burford School went through Luke Uncover at the end of 2017 and this year have focussed on one off seminars on topics such as, ‘Has Science Killed God?’ ‘Sex & Marriage’ and ‘God’s View of Life’. It is such an encouragement see young folk commit to a midweek Christian gathering during school hours, as well as bringing along friends.

Our Rock Solid socials have also grown this year, although weather and short terms have disrupted that in 2018. They have been wonderful times of fellowship, hearing short talks, and encouraging the entirety of our 11 – 18s to mix together. We are so grateful for our team of volunteers who help run the socials, as well as the wonderful provision of the Warwick Hall.

We have also held Confirmation Classes in 2018 and have seen 10 young people and 4 adults attend. Even though some are not able to be Confirmed or are choosing to wait, it is such a privilege to go through the basics of Christianity and to see growth week by week.

Overall we are staggered at what God is doing with our youth ministry as He establishes new groups and meetings, encourages long standing members and welcomes in new members. Our prayer is that we keep on delighting in God’s love, experiencing it more and more whilst becoming more missional as we seek to share God’s love with others.

Revive – Trevor and Gill Hames

‘Revive’ is a group for young people aged 18-39, which meets every Wednesday at our home for a meal followed by Bible study or going to the monthly prayer meeting. We have been studying Hebrews and Isaiah, and they also participated in the Fruitfulness on the Frontline course in November to January. Attendance has generally been regular, with about 10 - 12 members coming each week, with an overall membership of about 17 plus University students, who we are delighted seem keen to attend Revive during the holidays.
We have been so encouraged by Revive’s enthusiasm for God’s word and prayer, commitment to the group and involvement in other church activities such as music and youth ministry. One member, interviewed at length about her faith at Durham University mission, spoke with impressive clarity and thoughtfulness.

Revive communicate with each other regularly using WhatsApp, sharing prayer requests and arranging social activities, such as film nights and barbecues. We remain in touch with 3 former group members who send prayer letters from their mission situations (Cambodia, Gambia and Sheffield) and the group are encouraging another member as she prepares to go to New Zealand to work amongst Christian students.

Revive is now in its 3rd year, and we are noticing how the group profile is frequently changing, with people moving on and others taking their place. This is of course normal and healthy for this age group and has the advantage of ensuring new members do not feel they are trying to break into a fixed friendship group, but are quickly absorbed.

Overall we are so thankful to God for Revive, and all He is doing in and through the group.

**Small Groups and Discipleship – Trevor Hames**

Rob Wainwright oversaw Small Groups until he moved to Oxford at Christmas, when Richard Coombs took over overall oversight with myself as his ‘number two’ and Becky Eyles overseeing women’s groups.

We are keen to support, develop and encourage small group leaders in this vital role, and very much appreciate the time and effort they sacrifice to give to it. In January we had a meeting for all leaders aimed to encourage and inspire us all for the year ahead. Richard gave an excellent overview of Isaiah, to help us prepare to lead studies in this challenging and exciting book. It is planned we will meet three times a year to help each other on how to approach a particular passage, how to develop our leading of studies, and how to care and support members pastorally.

Reports from small groups are generally positive. There are currently just over 185 registered members across 20 small groups which vary in size from 8 to 14 members. This is broken down to 79 in 10 evening groups, 72 in 7 women’s groups, 17 in 2 mens groups and 17 in Revive. So it has been encouraging to see some growth in these groups. Two new groups have resulted from Life Explored and Christianity Explored.

Fruitfulness on the Frontline was reasonably successful with between 50-60 coming before Christmas and around 35 coming after Christmas. One of the joys was the church family enjoying fellowship over a meal and getting together to see how we can individually and corporately be effective on our frontlines. We have decided in the future to have some form of discipleship course for no more than five weeks a year.

We see small groups as a key place for us all to grow through understanding and responding to the Bible, praying for and worshipping with each other in a more intimate environment, encouraging each other in our witness to others and enjoying the friendship, support and community a small group can provide. Looking ahead we are keen to see leaders inspired and equipped, more groups forming and even more church members joining a small group.

**Women’s Ministry – Becky Eyles**

In April 2017 we experimented with a new style women’s gathering on a Wednesday morning. Whilst some of the 7 women’s daytime small groups continued to meet in homes, 3 groups started meeting in the Warwick Hall with a combined creche upstairs in the Greening Room. Two Bible
Study groups met in the new hall and we also started a new one term *Christianity Applied* course for 9 newer Christians many of whom had made their first steps towards faith through *UNCOVER* groups and wanted some foundational teaching. It was moving and encouraging to hear their stories of the very different ways that the Lord Jesus had made himself known to them. In the autumn term, those women spread out to join the various Wednesday Bible Study groups. Whilst there are benefits of this gathered model, it is fair to say that we are still tackling some of the challenges of it as well.

We continue to want to give women a variety of opportunities to share their faith and reach out to friends and neighbours. The annual Advent Wreath making parties were as popular as ever, and moved venues from the church to the Warwick Hall with Clare Cain speaking. A small *UNCOVER* group followed on in January to look at the person of Jesus in the book of Luke. In March 2018 there was an Easter biscuit-icing event with Philippa Wallis describing a little of her story and what it meant for her to celebrate Easter for the first time as a Christian.

In September 2017 Nicola Coombs started a 6-month sabbatical from all church ministry and responsibility, and Becky Eyles and Beth Johnson took over the leadership of the women’s ministry.

We are currently thinking about a new way to oversee the women’s work with a small team to share out the responsibilities. We want to enable women to teach and encourage women, and use some of the opportunities we have for sharing the Good News about Jesus.

### Men’s Ministry – Peter Hopkins

The Men’s Ministry is committed to encouraging men across the Benefice to play a full part in the life of the church. Our aim is serve those who care for and depend on us, to participate in the Great Commission to make Christ known, and to enjoy ourselves!

The Autumn Cotswolds Men’s Convention was an excellent day with Vaughan Roberts speaking on “The battle for the heart” and we went deeper with this important topic over a series of three monthly breakfasts up to Christmas. The guest breakfast on 21<sup>st</sup> April with Stephen Blake speaking on “Doubt, Risk and Prison” looks outward and beyond to the wider world.

Prayer has been a continuing focus with a September prayer meal and we are now sharing prayer needs at the Central Prayer meeting. Small group meetings are also available as a source of encouragement and support.

We are aiming to have a number of new developments over the year ahead. There are plans to encourage a deepening shared prayer life amongst the men, initiatives intended to appeal to men with young families and opportunities to invite men to events outside of the usual surroundings.

We continue to be thankful to God for his kindness and mercy to us and look forward to the year ahead with gratitude and joy.

### Pastoral Care - Cedric Reavley

We have conducted funerals in Burford during 2017 for a number of local residents, and each service has been unique, because each of us is uniquely loved by God and special to him. Some services have inevitably been attended by more than others, but every one has had its own characteristics and identifying elements, and every one has been an opportunity for the love of the Lord Jesus to be explained, and that his concern for all is always on offer. The practical working out of this offer is one way of demonstrating Christian Pastoral Care for those around us, particularly when they are at their most vulnerable.
But every encounter which a Christian has with another person, whether Christian or not, is a possibility for Pastoral Care, and I am grateful to everyone who has shown this care in the last year, whether in church on a Sunday, in home groups, at organised events, or by casual encounters during the day.

Encouraging this vital part of our church life has been my responsibility for the first 9 months of 2017, and now that Ruth McCalman has taken over, I urge you to continue the good work, and to support her fully.

... Pastoral Care continued ... - Ruth McCalman

It has felt like a real challenge to take over Pastoral Care from Cedric and I would like join in the thanks to Cedric for the care and time he has given so unstintingly to caring for our community in the name of the Lord.

Since taking on the role of volunteer Pastoral Care Co-ordinator in September, I have talked to church wardens in the Benefice and other individuals who are involved in pastoral care in various ways to find out what is already in place and where the gaps are.

In December 2017, I spoke in Burford Church about pastoral care and asked for volunteers willing to provide a number of services to other church members as well as those who would join a welfare team, both to provide assistance and support at times of distress and those willing to become longer-term visitors to others who are house-bound.

A total of 22 individuals have volunteered for a range of activities. All of these individuals have been invited to two sessions of training for pastoral care work to take place at the end of April and small group leaders are also being invited with a hope that small groups would be centre of most of the pastoral care in our church family.

The initial focus of the pastoral care work is within the church community; Cedric Reavley has agreed to continue to offer care to locals in Burford who do not attend church and some of the church wardens in the village parishes will also continue to do the same although the boundary between church-goer and non-attender is very fluid in our communities. We are blessed to live in an area where the churches are part of the life of the communities and many have at least a casual involvement with church life. Through our demonstrated love and care for each other, we are trusting that the Lord will draw others to himself, warmed by his love.

Our Benefice value statement for Community – Experiencing God’s Love, is that “Everyone feels part of a loving Christian family”. So, as well as direct care offered to individuals, in pastoral care we want to work towards fostering a loving, caring spirit within the church community, resulting in each person feeling themselves to be known and valued.

Thank you for all your support, encouragement and prayers in this work.

Rock-a-Tots – Beth Johnson

Rock-a-Tots continues to thrive and grow through God’s grace, building on a foundation and vision realised by a group of women over seven years ago. We said a sad and fond farewell to one of those visionaries, Nicola Coombs, in July 2017. We are so very grateful for all the hard work, energy and love Nicola has invested in this group. During her time at Rock-a-Tots, she saw the group grow and become the outreach ministry it is today.

Currently, two groups meet each Tuesday morning during term time. A large, lively group meets in the New Hall for a time of singing nursery rhymes, traditional songs and a sprinkled with a couple of Christian songs. Bubbles and the parachute are regular features each week. This group is aimed towards children under age three who are accompanied by parents, grandparents and carers. Since
September we have seen a growth in this group with an average of 69 children and adults attending each week.

A gentler introduction to Rock-a-Tots aimed at infants up to 12 months meets in the Old Hall. This group has been popular with new first-time mums. We have seen entire antenatal groups join all at once! Numbers have fluctuated this term but averaged 18 babies and adults each week.

The most striking thing about Rock-a-Tots is the very real and tangible evidence that is God working. Building relationships over coffee and delicious homemade cakes (made by a generous group of bakers from our church family) is key! It’s here that relationships are built. The adults that attend are amazed by the love and care they are given each week by the simple act of serving them a drink and cake!

Since September the team prayed for several individuals with marriage struggles, sick children and partners. We witnessed answers to prayer and have a renewed boldness in sharing our faith! During the last term we extended invitations to the Advent Wreath Making, Christmas services, the new styled Family service as well as the Uncover course.

Rock-a-Tots could not take place without the support and kindness of a wonderful team listed below. It has become a team-led morning that play roles in setting up, preparing coffee, praying, holding babies, providing a listening ear, playing, singing and cleaning up! Praise God!!

The families that join us each week seem thoroughly at home in the Warwick Hall. Many of them enjoy the use of the Warwick Hall Café for a drink before or after Rock-a-Tots, and several have used the Warwick Hall for children’s birthday parties.

Team: Lindsay McDowell, Sue Sheppard, Jane Price, Philippa Wallis, Miriam Owen, Jenny Miller, Laura Davies, Laura Emmerson, Lucy Warriner, Alex Holdsworth, Anne Anderson, Sally Ormiston, Hana Hendrychova, Livvy Bright and Jiffa Street.

Friday Focus - Sue McCrossan

Friday Focus has now been running for 18 months and has been growing gradually, particularly in recent months. We now have up to 25 guests in the 55+ age range attending regularly. We also have some visitors who come when staying with family locally. The atmosphere is warm and caring and helpers and guests alike enjoy catching up with each other each month.

We are blessed with a great team of helpers, which has also grown during the year as new people have arrived in the church. The team now numbers 15, which means that we have enough people to cover tasks such as serving lunch or coffee/tea and washing up, as well as having people on hand to talk to guests and transport them to and fro.

We continue to provide a varied programme. Craft activities in the morning have included ‘Fun with Letters’ run by Penelope Leaf, clay workshops run by Janey Petterson and bread making led by Jenny Tarbox. New activities for the coming months include a painting workshop run by Jane Poulson and print making run by Lyn Bibbings Burns. Judy Branston has continued to cook delicious lunches for us all single handed, only taking one Friday off to nurse her broken foot!

Afternoons comprise talks, films, and other activities such as Bob Foster's musical quiz and the ever popular Christmas carols performed by the children of Burford Primary school. A new initiative was a Summer tea dance in August, with dancing led by Simon and Kim Paul, who teach ballroom dancing in the Warwick Hall. They were joined by some of our church members who learn with them. Cream tea was served on vintage crockery and everyone literally had a ball!
Another highlight was our Harvest meeting where Charles Hunter Smart talked on his life in farming. People generously brought Harvest gifts and decorated a box in which they were placed for presentation at the Sunday services.

We are very grateful for the time, care and effort that our workshop leaders, speakers, helpers and other contributors commit to Friday Focus — it would not be possible without this. We continue to cover our costs with donations from those attending and a generous grant from the Burford, Upton and Signet Welfare Trust.

At every meeting, just before lunch, a short talk based on the Bible is given. We have just introduced a prayer bowl where people can place prayer requests that the team will then pray for. We pray that through this and the team’s willing service, we are sharing God’s love in Jesus.

Outreach in the Benefice - Alex Ross

We have an excellent outreach team of Steve and Linda Petra, Trevor and Gill Hames, David Berkeley, Peter Hopkins, Ben Turner, Alex Ross.

During this last year we asked ourselves the question — why does this team exist? After some discussion we came up with the following — to get outreach into the churches mindset and to encourage outreach in the church.

To help us get outreach into the mindset of the church we ran a course produced by the London Institute of contemporary Christianity called “Fruitfulness on the front line.” This happened over seven evenings in the autumn and new year.

We continued with our “3S” strategy - social, social plus speaker and signup. This gives us a broad and varied approach in how we reach out into God’s world. A world that God loves so much that he gave his Son to die for it. Can there be any greater motivation than this to encourage us to reach out with the good news.

It is this motivation that led to 29 people going to start a new congregation in Swinbrook. More details in a separate report.

Let’s go back to our 3S strategy - here are some of the main things that happened this year:

Social
We had a Burns night barn dance which was a sell-out. Very easy to invite non-churchgoers and we’re going to do it again next January.

One thing we have learned this year is that there are some very good events happening in the Warwick Hall. These are ideal social evenings to which we can invite our non-churchgoing friends. So for example in the Burford festival we had Jonathan Viera the opera singer. Then we have regular Friday evening jazz nights and tribute bands. Why don’t we use these evenings to develop friendship with non-church friends?

Social plus speaker
We had the play “Women of Lockerbie” in the autumn. Again a sell-out and we plan to do something similar in the future.

Sign up
In the summer we ran Christianity Explored at the home of Andrew and Susannah. This has now become a home group.

In the autumn we had Life Explored in the Warwick Hall run by a Burford home group. From this five people went forward to Christianity Explored in the New Year.
Christianity Explored happened at The Swan in Swinbrook. In recent years we had not held one of these courses in such a venue. One of the great advantages was that our guests felt so at home. At the moment four of the guests are continuing on a new course called Identity at the home of Phil. This is based on John’s Gospel.

We praise the Lord for the open doors that he has given us this last year to reach out with the amazing good news he has entrusted to us.

Please keep praying for the Holy Spirit to be a work in all our lives to bring blessing to our broken world.

Mission Report - Jenny Tarbox

During the past year the committee has continued to develop the Church Mission Strategy, encouraging a congregation that not only supports mission financially but is actively and prayerfully engaged in mission at home and abroad.

In accordance with our strategy, we continue to make partners aware that our sponsorship is dependent upon good communication, appropriate financial and spiritual accountability and alignment of the partner’s aims with the vision of the church. It is due to these requirements that during the first 6 months of 2017 three of our mission partners, Kipepeo, C.O.A.C.H. and Street Hope were informed that we could no longer support them.

This has enabled us to continue support to our 10 remaining mission partners even though our budget for 2018 has been reduced by £5,000 by the finance committee and passed by the PCC. Our requirements also meet the charity requirement of H.M.R.C. The committee keeps a monthly record of communications from mission partners but is sensitive to the fact that some can communicate regularly, much easier than others.

At the A.P.C.M. in 2017 when Kyle McFarlane was elected to the P.C.C. he fulfilled the requirement for a mission committee member to also be a member of the P.C.C.

During the second 6 months of 2017 we continued to support 10 mission partners both prayerfully and financially. We studied the “Five Marks of Mission” as stated by the Anglican Consultative Council. We concluded we were: a) working well towards the 5 marks. b) in a good position to support our existing missions. c) in a healthy position to grow new areas of mission from within the church family.

The current mission matrix is displayed on the mission board in the Lady Chapel.

We financially twinned the toilets in the ladies and gents toilets in the Warwick Hall with a school and clinic in Africa in need of hygienic facilities.

From our contingency fund, we gave bursaries to 1 gap year student on short term Christian mission and 3 adults on one and 2 year missions. We gave financial contributions to others towards study books and an airfare to return home. We contributed towards a more reliable car to enable Wanyeki and Mary to deliver bible teaching to their students in Kenya.

Returning students are asked to give interviews in church. This proves to be an advertisement that prayer and financial support are available and encourages others to apply for bursaries.

Due to an unexpected surplus in our contingency fund at the end of the year, we were able to give “one off” gifts to one adult embarking on long term mission, Erica’s project for deprived young people called sundays@3 and Christians Against Poverty.

We also gave smaller “one off” gifts to all our other mission partners.
This January 2018 the Warwick Hall Café started giving a regular substantial sum from their monthly profit to the Witney Besom, a local Christian charity. The staff at the charity were very touched by this and are enormously grateful.

The partners continue to send regular prayer letters which are put on the mission board or Mission Support table in the Lady Chapel. Missions are regularly highlighted at the church, central monthly prayer meeting.

Mission partners or their representatives continue to be booked and interviewed at both the 9.15 and 11 am services. Feedback from the congregations continues to be positive. Intercessors at both services are encouraged to pray for a mission partner, extracts of whose letters, as far as possible are coordinated to appear in the Friday e news of the same weekend. Occasionally the extracts in the e news may appear rather vague or brief. This is intentional to safeguard those reporting from dangerous areas.

Many members of our church family are involved in both leading and supporting camps. We are encouraging others to take part in this vital and exciting form of Christian ministry. We are eager to give financial support to any who would like to take part but are prevented from doing so.

Miriam Owen has decided to resign from the committee. We are very grateful for all her help and are pleased to welcome her husband, Roger Owen onto the committee.

It continues to be an exciting privilege for us to be part of God’s plan for mission at home and abroad at Burford Church.

Coffee and Company Report - Penelope Leaf

Our Wednesday coffee mornings, combined with the 10.30 service of Holy Communion have kept going well during the year and bad weather did not seem to deter people.

Once again we held our Christmas Special in aid of Crisis at Christmas and enjoyed festive fare and a present stall. We had an informative talk from Chris Neal of the Oxford branch of Crisis and raised £328 which would fund Christmas meals and help for those in need. The Vicar gave us an inspiring Christmas message.

A Bring and Buy with a spring theme was held in March to mark what we hoped was the end of the winter and the proceeds from this, £82.50, was given to Burford Primary School.

We are always glad to welcome new people and visitors and look forward to the summer ahead. With quite large numbers every week we are able to give about £1000 a year to the church funds. Thanks are due to those who take turns with making cakes and hosting: Julia Ritchie, Sue Sheppard, Jenny and Gordon Cridge Raven, Stephen and Jane Price, John and Jacky Harrington.

Warwick Hall - Andrew Butcher and Rachel Redding

Awards
The redeveloped Warwick Hall was opened in September 2016 by the Right Reverend Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester. From the outset, the redevelopment project had been seen as ’big, bold and scary’; so much so that the church knew that it would only succeed if God enabled it in his goodness – which He did.

With the Bishop’s encouragement at the opening of the building, we regard the facility as God’s gift to the church and the church’s gift to the community. The building has not only become a well-used
facility, but it has been assessed as of high quality design and construction, which has been recognised by the following 11 awards won in the face of many other very worthy schemes:

- **Royal Institute of British architects (2017)**
  - RIBA National Award – Winner
  - RIBA South Award – Winner
  - RIBA South Conservation Award – Winner

- **Civic Voice and Civic Trust**
  - Civic Voice Design Awards 2017 – New Build Winner
  - Civic Voice Design Awards 2017 – Contribution to Conservation Area, Winner
  - Civic Trust Award Winner 2018 – for design, sustainability, inclusiveness and accessibility

- **Architects’ Journal (2017)**
  - AJ Retrofit Project of the Year Award – Winner
  - AJ Retrofit Listed building under £5m Award - Winner
  - AJ Architecture Awards Heritage Project of the Year – Winner
  - AJ Architecture Awards Design of the Year – Winner

- **Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association (EASA) and the National Churches Trust**
  - President’s Award – Winner

In addition, the Warwick Hall was Highly Commended for Community Benefit in the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) South East awards

The award citations refer variously to:

- *the previous dilapidated building, its inadequate size and state for the growing work with children and young people;*
- *the design team, contractors and representatives of the client side working closely together for six years and continuing to do so through the snagging phase.*
- *the differently sized internal spaces which allow a very wide range of uses for the church and for the wider community*
- *the café which is a quiet and safe space where people can meet just for company or for an informal meeting, and where tourists can rest.*
- *the redeveloped Warwick Hall now being a facility which exceeds expectations.*
- *a project that makes an outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the built environment, demonstrating excellence in architecture or design, whilst being sustainable, accessible and providing a positive civic contribution.*

The full citation for the RIBA national Award is included below.

**Bookings and usage**

Since the opening of the Warwick Hall eighteen months ago we have seen a huge variety of users and events making use of our fantastic venue.

Church use is of course a key part of this, with rooms being used for Sunday JAM, Bible Study Groups, Men’s Breakfasts, prayer meetings, Youth Club and various other church groups.

The church events have been a blessing to many, but our vision for the Warwick Hall has always been to open our doors more widely than this, so that others in the community can also benefit from the space and perhaps glimpse God’s presence through those they meet here. The programme of regular events continues to flourish, with visitors coming for Aerobics, Antenatal classes, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and Arts Society lectures (to name just the ‘A’s’!). Further to the regular clubs and societies, many others have chosen to hold one-off events at the Warwick Hall, including Alpha away days, training courses, craft fairs and wedding receptions.
Current key users are:

- The church
- Fitness classes (aerobics, Pilates, ‘stretch’, ballroom dancing, ‘Fitsteps’)
- Other clubs and societies (e.g. NCT, AA, Calligraphy, Jazz Club, Arts Society, WI)
- Those needing meeting spaces (including charities such as Blue Cross and OSJCT, small businesses and individuals)
- Those holding one-off events (generally private, though some open to the public)
- Café visitors

Many of those who have visited or used the Warwick Hall have been kind enough to send positive feedback. A flavour of this is:

- “Thank you so much for all your help with our hire of Warwick Hall on Saturday. The team had set everything up really well, everything worked perfectly, and we were greatly blessed by your wonderful facility.”
- “We have been to look at the hall and WOW what a beautiful building.”
- “We had a fantastically successful evening on Saturday. The venue and Allan were just brilliant and all our guests had a really superb evening. Most guests hadn’t been to the venue before and were super impressed with how lovely it was.”
- “What a beautiful setting and lovely rooms! The venue is ideal for the groups I am hoping to run.”
- “Thank you for all your help in organising everything - it couldn’t have gone better. Everyone loved the Warwick Hall!”

Over the course of 2017, Warwick Hall regular bookings generated a total income of £13,036, with a further £22,153 generated through one-off bookings. The summer months saw raised levels of income, particularly due to the Burford Festival and other one-off events.

2018 has started positively, with projected income for the first quarter up 13% on 2017. We hope to build on this positive start to maximise the potential of the building and its benefit to the Church and Community.

We pray that God would continue to bless and guide us as we use the Warwick Hall to delight in God’s love and share it with others.

Conclusion

The Warwick Hall Church and Community Centre has become the ‘heart of the church’s ministry and the heart of community life’. It is a beautiful building and a wonderful facility with a usefulness that ‘is immeasurably more than all we [could] ask or imagine’ Ephesians 3: 20.

We are right to celebrate and rejoice in that which the Lord has done in our midst. Thanks be to God and to him be the glory!

The citation for the RIBA National Award 2017 reads in full:

Impressively well-considered major extension and intervention within the curtilage of the Grade I listed church of St John the Baptist, to create much needed community facilities which were constrained within the existing building. The extension is to Warwick Hall, which is Grade II and the adjoining almshouses are Grade II*. The interventions went through extensive design development in terms of scale and massing, informed by the understanding and discovery of the histories of the buildings and place.

The design was unlocked by moving the access point into the churchyard and entering via a new access point through the old stone wall, allowing central entry to new facilities offering the flexible use of a range of community facilities for old and young. The well-considered new interventions and details work with the sensitive restoration and repair, revealing earlier uses of the retained and restored Warwick Hall building.
Intelligent client commissioning has resulted in a vibrant and bold community facility, enabling wider engagement with a meaningful work of architecture. The scheme works hard to understand and respond to the significance of the place and the built fabric: analysis of key aspects of that significance, and the value of any built fabric to be lost, was undertaken at an early stage to inform the design. This not only minimised any harm, but also informed the designing-in of added value to enrich users’ experience of the historic context through the clever additions of the new elements.

The setting was all the more interesting, in that the Grade I listed church of St John the Baptist had been ‘restored’ in the 1870s in such a way that it was one of the cases that led William Morris to form the ‘The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings’, so the wider site has some added history and sensitivity in terms of the positive or negative impact of quality of work to the asset.

Warwick Hall Café – Steve & Sally Colter

No-one said it would be easy – and it hasn’t been!

In Spring 2017 we started our 6 month plan to make the Cafe & Catering operation viable. It had become clear at the end of 2016 that there were not enough Church members to achieve this given that 75% plus do not live locally.

Firstly, we decided to make sure that once our menu and service was up to scratch, we would then be in a position to confidently extend our vision for the Cafe and align this with the Church’s vision.

Rather than embark on a complicated and potentially expensive marketing effort we went back to basics. We started to talk to anyone and everyone who came to visit the Church. We invited them to visit the Cafe, read a free newspaper and relax. They did not even have to buy anything.

We spoke to thousands of people over several months. Many came into the Cafe – the overwhelming majority of them were hugely enthusiastic about the Cafe. Things started to happen. We held a couple of successful events and people started to use our catering services.

We estimate that since then several thousand people have visited the Cafe. Not everyone has bought something – they don’t have to - but everyone has seen what the WH has to offer. We have been particularly heartened by the increasing numbers of the local community that have started to use the cafe.

There have been challenges. It is difficult to establish a commercial operation within a church building without problems. These issues are being gradually resolved.

We are now ready to further align the Cafe operation with the Church’s vision. An initial meeting with Richard & Ben showed that essentially all parties want the same outcome and a second meeting is planned.

Other positive things are now happening almost daily. New ways of maximising income for the Hall using a joint approach are being explored and a new web-site is being implemented.

Some of the events that we have organised may be a little left field - but they represent a genuine opportunity for Outreach. As a result we are now seeing people from the local community in the Warwick Hall who we never thought we would.

It is incredibly difficult to start an off-High St Cafe and in-house catering operation and make it work as quickly as this one has. We have received a great deal of prayerful support from Church members and elsewhere and we are thankful for this.
We are now quietly confident that we are heading in the right direction. If you have ideas that might help us achieve our vision then come and see us. You will be most welcome.

Operations - Ben Turner

2017 was a year of new appointments with Allan Read as Facilities Manager, Tarnia Usher as Church Secretary and PA to Richard, Stephen Price and Lynnette Derry took over from Andy Webb as joint Vergers, Jon Bright started as Ministry Trainee taking over from Tom Feather, Rachel Redding was appointed Bookings Manager in place of Miriam Owen, and myself as Operations Team Leader. With it being the first full year of operations of the Warwick Hall, with itself exceeding expectations for bookings, usage and footfall, this new team has provided a very positive start to the running of the church and hall. There is of course always more to be done and many lessons have been learnt about the operations and expectations particularly of the new Warwick Hall. Everyone has been rightly proud of the many awards which the hall has won.

We have also recognised that our role, throughout the operations team, as we read in Acts 6, is to support the roles of all those within the ministry team and in particular to enable Richard to focus his energies and time on the ‘ministry of the word of God’ and leading the church and benefice. This should mean that those within the church have confidence in us as a team to handle all the operations of the church and hall. In areas where this has not been the case we are resolved to improve the situation so that the ministry of the church no longer has to be neglected in order to intercede in operational matters. We would value your prayers for the effectiveness of the operations team as a whole in seeking to achieve this goal.

With all that has been learnt about the Hall, a 52 point plan has been drawn up and is now being actioned jointly by the team and others whose support is being gratefully received. Simultaneously we produced a Café Vision Paper which has led to a very helpful meeting between those involved.

GDPR – the new General Data Protection Regulations come into effect in May 2018. I have attended a Diocesan training session on GDPR and there will be a number of requirements for the PCC to approve over the coming year in order that we comply with the new law. GDPR replaces the existing law on data protection (the Data Protection Act 1998) and gives individuals more rights and protection in how their personal data is used by organisations. In particular we must actively seek specific consent from “Data Subjects” (people to you and me!) in order to store and use information about them.

Similarly, there are revised Safeguarding Guidelines which have been strengthened, so that far more training will have to be done by a far wider spread of the congregation. See below.

In both these areas it is essential that these new more stringent requirements are given the full backing of the church membership.

Safeguarding Report – Christine Brown

Safeguarding focuses on protecting people’s health, well-being and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

All those working with children and adults have to go through a screening process recommended by the Diocese which includes Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The Diocese recommends that those who work with children and adults should receive training every three years. Three training sessions were held last year using the training guidelines from the Diocese. The Church of England has now developed new Core and Specialist Safeguarding Training
modules and these are mandatory for all Church officer positions. A Church Officer is everyone appointed by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. Previous training included the term vulnerable adults, however the new training emphasises that all adults are vulnerable in some ways and at certain times.

The Diocese of Oxford is working towards creating a Church which is safer for everyone. Active engagement with safeguarding training supports all those who have a role within the Church to effectively recognise and respond to all types of possible abuse and implement best safeguarding practice. Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility.

Bell ringers’ Report - Nigel Harrison

1. Service ringing
We have generally been able to ring before 11am Services at Burford, often ringing all eight bells. We continue to ring the bells for weddings and other special occasions.

2. Practice night
Our weekly practices continue to be on Friday nights from 7.30 – 9.00pm, except that we normally practise at Fulbrook on the first Friday of alternate months.

3. The bells and the ringing chamber
The bells are maintained annually by Whites of Appleton. Shortly before Christmas, the major repairs recommended by Whites have been carried out: these were the first major repairs and improvements (apart from emergency repairs) since 1950. We are most grateful to the fabric committee and the PCC for financing these works and others in the ringing chamber. We believe that the repairs to the bells should result in significantly improved ringing.

4. Cameras / Video displays
Plans are well advanced for the installation of cameras in the belfry and ringing room. These will provide video links in the church for viewing the bells and bellringers in operation.

Flowers - Rosamund Leach

Our friendly, enthusiastic and dedicated flower team have continued to arrange fresh flowers for the church on a weekly basis, except in Lent and Advent. For the big festivals, Harvest, Christmas and Easter we all come together to enhance the worship in the church with extra floral decorations. These occasions are also enjoyable get-togethers. A huge thank you to the entire team.
New volunteers are always needed and will be warmly welcomed. Please consider joining our team. It is very rewarding and fun to do, especially when you can work with others.

The Burford Benefice Bartholomew Trust - Ivan Hall

Objectives & Responsibilities
The objectives of the Trust are the advancement of the Christian religion and of education, and such other charitable purposes that are beneficial to the community in the Burford Benefice with Fulbrook, Taynton, Asthall, Swinbrook and Widford.

The Trust’s responsibilities include the provision of assistance to the clergy within the Benefice by various charitable means. In this respect, the Trust holds a part share (with the 4 PCCs in the Benefice) in 20 Oxford Road, Burford. The property provides accommodation for the Curate, Rob Wainwright, during 2017.
2017 Financial Year
Total payments were £3813 and this included £1653 on repairs and maintenance to 20 Oxford Road. The latter costs related to the contractor’s retention on the new central heating boiler; the boxing in of the boiler and its separate control unit; the painting of external fascia boards; and the creosoting of the front gate.

Total receipts were £3148 which included £2420 from regular donations. However, donations were £1470 less than the previous year resulting from the full year effect of the termination of two donor agreements in 2016 plus a further two agreements in 2017.

There was a small deficit on the year of £665. Detailed accounts are available on request.

Future Commitments
The Trustees have prepared a schedule of continuing repairs on 20 Oxford Road. Planned works in 2018 include the external painting of the property and purchase of white goods for the kitchen prior to occupation by the new Curate, Oliver Strange.

Available Funds
At 31st December 2017, the available funds of the Trust were £32578. Whilst this is a healthy balance, the Trustees are mindful of the need to maintain sufficient reserves to cover potential future spending. Such spending could include any structural work at 20 Oxford Road and the support of future ministry needs.

The Burford Benefice Bartholomew Trust’s Charity Commission registration number is 1079450.