

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 2022 - St. Peter's Draycott

Agenda

24th April 2022 at 11:00 a.m. Draycott church.

Agenda

Item	Report	Presented by/ on behalf of
1. Welcome		<i>Stuart Burns/ John English</i>
2. Attendance and apologies		
3. Minutes from meeting on 26 th May 2021 (confirmation of accuracy)		<i>Chris Green</i>
4. Vestry Meeting – election of church warden(s)		
5. Statutory Reports		
Electoral Roll	A	<i>John English</i>
Report on PCC proceedings	B	<i>Chris Green</i>
The financial report and accounts	C	<i>David Cheetham</i>
The churchwarden's fabric report	D	<i>Chris Green</i>
Deanery Synod Report	E	<i>Tricia Lumley</i>
6. Other reports		
Worship report	F	<i>Chris Green</i>
Covenants	G	<i>John English</i>
Safeguarding	H	<i>Thea Oliver</i>
School	I	<i>Nicola Devitt</i>
Health and safety	J	<i>Richard Oliver</i>
Supporters of St Peter's	K	<i>Karen Percival</i>
Church magazine	L	<i>Rob Walker</i>
7. Appointment of Laity to the Parochial Church Council		
8. Appointment of sides men/ women		
9. Appointment of independent financial examiner		
10. Remarks from the rector		<i>Stuart Burns</i>
11. Any other matters of important to the Parish		

Reports

Statutory reports

A. Electoral Roll

John English (Electoral Roll Officer)

Although there have been some changes in the last year, the electoral roll remains at 35.

B. Report on PCC proceedings

Chris Green (PCC Secretary)

PCC membership has been as follows:

Stuart Burns (rector); David Cheetham (Treasurer); Gill Dury, John English (covenant secretary, lay chair, electoral roll officer); Chris Green (churchwarden, secretary); Tricia Lumley (Deanery representative); Pat Mullan; Thea Oliver (Deanery representative, safeguarding officer).

After a couple of years suffering much pandemic-related disruption, the PCC has thankfully been able to function more normally since the previous APCM. We have held seven face-to-face meetings in church, albeit socially distanced. Some time was taken at each meeting reviewing anti-Covid measures in the light of government and church advice, but this has not dominated in the way it tended to previously.

Nikki Devitt was invited to our June PCC meeting to help us move the church environmental agenda forward. We agreed to use the A Rocha 'Eco Church' survey as a starting point. This has sections on Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement, and Lifestyle. We formed small working groups to cover its different sections, and report back. We have subsequently spent time each meeting discussing environmental issues. Initiatives flowing from this are the 'rewilding' project in the churchyard, the celebration of 'Creation Sunday', the expansion of recycling in church, and the creation of the Draycott Churchyard Management Group (DCMG). There are other ideas in the pipeline.

The PCC are as ever on the lookout for more members!

C. The financial report and accounts

David Cheetham (Treasurer)

(Please see separate report)

D. The churchwarden's fabric report

Chris Green (Churchwarden)

Highlights:

- The quinquennial survey has not revealed anything major or unexpected
- Our new PA (sound system) has been installed and is working well
- We have started our 'rewilding' efforts in the churchyard, as part of our environmental sustainability journey.

Quinquennial survey

This is a five-year assessment by our church architect, covering both church and churchyard. The survey was done in October 2021. The report was received at the end of March 2022.

The report will be considered in detail by the PCC over the coming year. The jobs that would be most costly are not urgent – indeed, not new. These include redecoration of the nave ceiling, and re-covering of the curved roof (over what is now the WC). Some more urgent issues fall into health and safety, but these are not major works. Some less urgent ones need to be addressed during the summer, such as repointing and attention to rainwater goods and gullies, and replacement of damaged tiles. We have continuing problems with damp in the church, but probably nothing new.

PA system

Early this year we replaced the ageing church PA system, with one similar to that installed at Rodney Stoke (and subsequently at Cheddar), supplied by Intek Electronics. The bill for this was £2,845. It is generally working well, and is a big improvement.

Environmental sustainability

Our objectives have been focused by the 'Eco Church' survey (see PCC report). It has two sections that impinge on the 'Fabric' agenda, those of 'Building' and 'Land'. For the first we have improved in some small areas, but our major impact is probably through heating (gas), which is relatively hard to mitigate in an old building. Our score on this section is 'Bronze'. We contacted a diocesan-approved consultancy to survey our premises, but they have only given us a preliminary report so far. For 'Land' we have made more progress, and with additional measures that are in hand (described below) we should score 'Silver'.

Churchyard

To further our environmental agenda (see above) we have instituted a number of measures:

- Designating a 'no-mow' area to allow wildflowers to grow and set seed this year
- Installing wildlife habitats (log piles, bird boxes, bug boxes, compost heaps)
- Putting up signage and enlisting the help of the school
- Inviting the local community to donate benches, to encourage visitors to linger and appreciate nature in the churchyard (two people are donating memorial benches)
- Commissioning a botanical survey (not yet carried out)

Trees have been causing issues of different kinds. Mendip District Council have surveyed them, and a tree surgeon has trimmed some. However they have left alone those we felt to be the biggest risk (the cypress by the entrance to the car park, and the lime trees in the avenue). Also Weston Power has removed branches from various trees that were deemed to be a danger to power lines. Their severe pollarding of the limes near the gate to the avenue has led to a very unbalanced appearance however.

E. Deanery Synod Report

Tricia Lumley (Deanery representative)

The Deanery Synod has again started meeting in person instead of ZOOM and it was lovely to be able to see people in person and mix with people from other parishes.

The first Deanery Synod meeting of the year was held on 7th July at St Johns, Highbridge. Its theme was “helping hospitality”. We were addressed by Tom Ashton, Chairman of the Burnham Tourist Information Office, and his grandson Sam. Tom spoke about the challenges that have faced the hospitality and tourism industry as a result of the pandemic, the ways the Deanery can best support those involved in hospitality and what the churches can learn from those to whom it is their livelihood. We discussed how we are to minister to those who work in hospitality and those on holiday. Places like Brean and Cheddar have huge variations in

population depending on the time of year. Some parishes don't feel this is relevant to them, but hospitality is what we are all about, offering a welcome to all.

The next meeting, on 12th October, was held at Flourish House in Wells. This was the first opportunity for most of us to see the Diocese's new base. Flourish House offers excellent facilities for all sorts of meetings and events. It is an open, attractive and versatile space.

David Maggs gave a presentation on "Living in Love and Faith", a course about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. It aims to help us think more deeply about what it means to be human and about how to live in love and faith.

For the January meeting it was back to ZOOM again, due to Covid Omicron.

We were focusing on what sort of church God calls us to be, particularly after Covid. We were to look at how ministry is offered and what ministers we need for churches to flourish. The Diocese is in a difficult time financially so we need to look realistically at how our resources are used. Thea attended this meeting but I have no feedback as yet.

Generally, the Deanery Synod meetings are interesting, engaging and sometimes challenging. Though I am a committed congregant of St Peters it is very worthwhile to see how we fit into the bigger picture of Deanery and Diocese. If anyone would like to be a Deanery representative, I would thoroughly recommend it.

Other reports

F. Worship Report

Chris Green (Lay Reader)

Worship highlights in 2021:

- Worship in church took place on 31 Sundays, despite the continuing pandemic. Numbers have bounced back somewhat after our 2020 post lockdown low
- Thea was ordained, and has now taken her place in leading all types of service
- The worship team has been further extended with Ruth Motion becoming a curate
- We heard sermons from eight of the team members in 2021, and a still wider team led our services. This variety is much appreciated by us.

Covid

After just one service, the churches were shut once again at the start of the year, for a twelve week period. We shifted to worship on ZOOM, using our well practiced format (including hymns recorded by Barry and David). We were however able to open in time for Easter, even having refreshments (outside). This was a very joyful occasion. The church has complied with varying Covid measures, including mask wearing and social distancing, with no refreshments after the service (with the exception of Easter). Congregational singing was allowed again following easing of national rules in August. School did not have weekly assemblies in church, although some of their larger gatherings have still taken place there.

Church attendance

Since being back in church, Sunday worship numbers have averaged 15.8 (not including Easter or the carol service). This is up from the low of 7.7 post-lockdown in 2020, although still less than the 18 plus pre-Covid. During the year we decided to try two services of Morning Prayer each month with a revised order of service, on the second and fourth Sundays. It was well received though not been quite as popular as the communion service (14

versus 17.2 average attendance, respectively). We resumed our Second Sunday Service in September, with the discussion held during the sermon rather than afterwards, due to Covid precautions. However this has proved the least popular of our services, and attendance at these has declined still further in the current year. Accordingly, the PCC has decided to abandon that format for the time being. For the moment, the second Sunday will be Morning Prayer, and the fourth Sunday holy communion.

Attendance at Easter was 34, lower than in 2019 (50), but still appreciable under the circumstances. Christmas attendance was low – 16 for our evening service (it was 37 in 2019), and 17 for the family service on Christmas Day (compared with 38 in 2019).

Music

Our musical tradition has been maintained under difficult circumstances; special thanks is due to David and Barry. We held a carol service before Christmas, with 30 in attendance - reduced compared with pre-Covid, but an improvement on last year. There was a much-appreciated return of Barry's Christmas concert, and we still manage a small choir to lead Sunday worship most Sundays. We also enjoyed a welcome return of our Taizé style worship on Advent Sunday, with Ian and Ruth Ames-White resuming their lovely duets of piano and flute.

G. Covenant Report

John English (Covenant Secretary)

Gift aid claims totalling £2,452.34 have been received. As of the end of December we had 20 covenanters, two less than the previous year.

H. Safeguarding

Rev. Thea Oliver (Safeguarding Officer)

The Safeguarding officers for the Benefice of Cheddar Draycott and Rodney Stoke met with the Rector to evaluate and assess the progress that has been made thus far in meeting the Diocesan safeguarding requirements for our Benefice and discover what more still needs to be done. Unfortunately I was unable to be at this meeting. The next is planned for after Easter.

All church members who may come into contact with vulnerable adults or children are required to have regular safeguarding training. In practice, that covers most of us. An online version of the training is available. Jim Reeve, the St Andrew's Cheddar safeguarding officer, supplied details of this to me. I have passed these on to the PCC.

I. School

Nicola Devitt (School worship team)

Our ministry to Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School continues, although for most of the year in question, we have chosen to continue to do assemblies via ZOOM online, for Covid safety reasons. However last term we were invited to start going into school at 2.30 on a Thursday afternoon for assembly, and finally on 3rd March this year, the children came back into church after 2 years' absence. It felt like a very festive occasion, especially as it happened to be World Book Day and the children were all dressed up as their favourite characters!

We have been delighted to have Rev Ruth Motion join the team providing collective worship in the school. Hence we now have four leaders on our rota: Stuart, Thea, Ruth and Nikki. The senior teacher, Matthew Perrett is very keen to work with us and is good at communicating to us the themes they are covering in school, but is also happy to accommodate any suggestions we might have. This allows us to keep the children in touch with the seasons of the church year, for example. The end of term Easter service was held in church; parents were invited.

We have also involved the children in the 'Wilder Churches' initiative, which is led by our Diocese in partnership with Somerset Wildlife Trust. Our churchyard turns out to be a good resource for spotting and naming wild flowers. We talk about the ways we can care for God's creation with the children, but it also just enables them to feel part of what goes on in and around the church.

The children are an important part of the life of our church, and we're very happy to have finally re-instated the best-attended regular service in our church!

J. Health and safety

Richard Oliver (Health and Safety Officer)

Immediate issues

1. Footpath from road needs monitoring due to the growth of moss this is a slip hazard (this matter has been raised by Funeral Directors)
2. Step in porch and boot scraper need repainting (this I suspect will be an ongoing issue)
3. Broken roof tiles need monitoring
4. Left hand door on shed appears to have come off its rollers
5. There is a tree down in the upper graveyard near to the pond
6. Cross on the West roof needs monitoring (as all the others have fallen)
7. On my last two visits to the church for services or events I have found boxes of matches left out in the main part of the church (pulpit and near gate up to the altar)
8. When the shelf for the urn etc is finished with, it needs to be collapsed in case someone tries to put something on there when it is not fully up. (Left recently with only one support partially in place)
9. Control to the chandelier left in full view.

Up and coming issues

10. The tree next to the bins in the car park appears to be dead
11. A tree survey may be required in relation to rot in the crowns of the lime trees along the church path
12. The fir tree next to the gate to the car park needs to be monitored due to previous issues
13. Continual monitoring of the rainwater hoppers and down pipes is needed to check for blockages due to jackdaws
14. Chains around the area for burial of ashes needs to be straightened to make them more visible
15. Wall between school and church will need maintenance in due course, due to the ivy growth
16. Likewise, the growth of ivy on some of the trees may cause an issue
17. There is a hole in the east wall the left of the window which has been used by nesting birds (this has grown in size since last year)
18. Inside damp on walls may result in mould, such as in the area above the safes
19. Choir stall pew fronts loose, options secure, remove or make removable
20. Electrical sockets must not be overloaded

21. The wooden flooring (main part of church on the left looking towards the alter) 3rd board in is loose
22. Monitor the contents of the shelves in the vestments cupboard and consider alternative arrangements. (The shelf is bowing and the top of cupboard very deformed)
23. P.A.T testing of electrical items needed. It may be worth contacting the Church Wardens of St. Leonard's Church Rodney Stoke to arrange a joint visit, as there are few items.

K. Supporters of St Peter's

Karen Percival (SoSP member)

SOSP had a fairly quiet year due to Covid restrictions. Our monthly coffee and cake mornings were put on hold until February 2022, but we are now very pleased to be back up and running on the first Saturday of each month. Throughout 2021 until now we have had to curtail many of our usual activities. However, we did have a Tombola Stall at both the Strawberry and at St Leonards Christmas Fayres. SoSP had plans to help Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School with their Christmas Fayre, but the event was cancelled due to a rise in Covid cases in school.

We also were very pleased to help with the refreshments at Ruth's service as she became our new curate alongside Thea.

For Christmas we decorated St Peter's with 'Animals of the Nativity', made by school and members of the community. We also supported Barry Rose by serving refreshments at his annual Christmas concert.

Following on from the success of the Easter Trees in the Glebe field last year, this Easter we decide to decorate a cross with posies from the community of both Rodney Stoke and Draycott, which seemed well received.

This year we have held a successful Lent Soup Lunch and raised £170 for Christian Aid. There are plans in place to repeat the Big Breakfast in May to raise funds for Christian Aid Week, to have a stall at the Strawberry Fayre, to hold a Treasure Hunt with BBQ, and a wildlife talk. More events to be confirmed.

Christian Aid

With the crisis in Ukraine, Christian Aid joined with DEC to raise emergency funds. We held a collection in both churches at a Sunday service along with a collection bucket at coffee and cake and the SoSP Lent lunch at St Peter's. We were able to send a total of £561 to the Christian Aid Ukraine Appeal.

For Christian Aid Week this year, we will try to repeat the success of the 'deliver only' envelopes last year. The Community Shop has again agreed to be a collection point for those wishing to return envelopes. This can also be done at both St Leonards and St Peter's churches, or at the 'Big Breakfast' (May 14th St Peter's church, 8.30-10.30am). The collection will be for the Christian Aid General Fund.

L. Church magazine

Rob Walker (Editor)

Overview of the year

Despite Covid, the magazine has continued to appear ten times a year and copies have been delivered 'as normal' to all our regular subscribers, thanks to volunteers in both villages

Some key points.

1. The magazine is now being printed in the Benefice Office in Cheddar. The print run has been increased to 195 copies as we have re-instated the ‘back of church’ sales.
2. The advertising has increased a little over the year and the advertising revenue is now being collected in on a more regular basis.
3. The subscriptions for 2020 were collected later in 2021 when the Covid restrictions were relaxed. Collections have already been made for 2022 in Draycott.
4. Because Cheddar is now generously footing the bill for all the printing and most of the paper costs at the Benefice Office these days, the magazine is generating a much bigger surplus than in the past. This may not continue and, in the real world, printing costs are going up significantly. If Cheddar were to have a re-think on the allocation of the Den’s costs, we would have to increase our cover price to about a £1 to stay afloat.
5. Thanks to the relaxation of the Covid restrictions, announcements of social events etc. have started to re-appear which is greatly welcomed. By the mysterious mechanism that I still do not fully understand, our flow of copy from contributors – regular and occasional - has seemingly automatically re-adjusted itself so we continue to have sufficient copy for each edition. As the editor, I remain eternally grateful.
6. As measured by its position in the annual national Parish Magazine rankings, our magazine is now ranked 32nd out of about 350 entrants. It is good to be in the upper 10 per cent of such a listing and it offers some reassurance that, on slender resources and with a small population base, we continue to produce a good quality magazine that meets the needs of our readers.
7. I would like to reiterate that each edition remains the work of the many people involved in writing, printing and distributing the magazine. They all ‘know who they are’ and I would like to thank them one and all for their support.

Editorial Policy

The magazine serves the needs of two parishes so it is especially important to have a common, agreed Editorial Policy. Unchanged since 2013, this is to

- *Inform, intrigue, inspire and amuse the readership in roughly equal measure*
- *Aspire to be more than a glorified bulletin board while reflecting the interests and concerns of the parishes*
- *Provide a platform for the views of the readership.*

Remarks from the Rector

Stuart Burns, Rector of the benefice of Cheddar, Draycott and Rodney Stoke

It seems strange still to be reflecting on a pandemic that has now lasted more than two years. We are trying to recover the lively life of our churches as it was pre-pandemic, and yet we are still told that infection rates are higher than ever! Social gatherings, church meals, coffee mornings, Messy Church, Breakfast Services, special family services etc. have all started again, and as I write we expect a “normal Easter”, after two years of Holy Week being done on ZOOM. Thank you to all those who have willingly taken the risk to their health to run these restarted church events and also to come along to support them.

A legacy of the pandemic is our competence to hold worship online, and we are one of very few benefices still doing this. Evening Prayer stills happens three nights a week, as well as a monthly Sunday Eucharist service, led by a group of Ministry Team members and other much-appreciated church members who have stuck with ZOOM. We are aware that this provision is still very important to those who like or need (through self-isolation) to attend it.

Our three churches have managed (just) to keep their heads above water financially through two years of pandemic, which had inevitably caused reduced collections and also reduced occasional offices and their associated fees. Diocesan financial shares (i.e. what the diocese asks each church to give centrally) have not reduced of course, and great credit is due to all our members, friends and supporters, who have so generously given to their parish church, very often sacrificially, throughout Covid-times.

My most sincere thanks are extended to everyone who leads, organises, assists and gives, in so many ways and roles – too many to list here – to keep our churches in good order, in terms of the buildings, the worship, and our outreach and desire to make new people want to join us in the fellowship of the Church. There is such a variety of gifts in the Body of Christ, as St Paul says, and St Andrew's, St Leonard's and St Peter's are extremely well-blessed with so many people who do so much in myriad ways to keep their church alive and with the potential to thrive. I do thank God for you all, often. I know that the abundance of lay support and giftings that we are blessed with is often far from the norm.

I am especially fortunate to be surrounded by a large and diverse Ministry Team, and all its members did even more, and happily, during the pandemic, to enable our church-life to continue. We have three retired clergy, two self-supporting curates, one Reader, one Reader-emeritus, four Lay Pastoral Assistants (LPAs), four Lay Worship Assistants (LWAs), and more LPAs and LWAs currently in the pipeline! How lucky we are to have this blessing and provision from God. However, people may have noticed that we have in the last year lost Ben Buse (LWA) from our Team, due to his other commitments, and we have also lost Tim Eldridge (LWA), who moved to Cornwall. We have also recently lost Dr Richard Dingley, a Reader in our Team, who has sadly died, after 90 years of incredible service and love for the Lord.

Our curates, Thea Oliver and Ruth Motion (also chaplain at Kings of Wessex Academy) have continued to enrich our benefice in exciting ways, giving so much, and so gifted in different areas of ministry. They have especially strengthened our presence and witness in our local church schools, and also expanded our ability to reach children and teenagers, and for this we give thanks.

In the past year on which I reflect, I can think of at least ten of our most faithful and long-time church members we have lost right across the benefice, and we trust that their loved-ones know that our churches (i.e. people) care and want to be compassionate friends to them, and that we miss those who have been lost, and that our churches have big holes without them.

As I write, we are still waiting to see if Ukrainian refugees will arrive amongst us. We hope that they do, so that we have a chance to make up a tiny bit for the appalling and grotesque suffering inflicted upon them by the invaders of Ukraine. Dozens of our church members have offered to give help and friendship to refugees and to those who have offered to host them, and it will be good if there is the opportunity to do this. Jesus said, “when you do this for the least of these, you do it for me”.

I conclude by thanking you for the friendship and support I receive from being a co-member with you of the rich and wholesome family which makes up our three churches. Thank you, and “Beloved, let us love another” (1 John 4.7).



Stuart Burns, Rector
April 2022