

The Parish of St Mary's Church, Rattery, Devon

Address for correspondence

Mrs Linda Jopson
PCC General Secretary
Ashbourne Farm
Rattery
South Brent TQ10 9JZ

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Of the Parochial Church Council

For the year ended 31st December 2024

Team Rector:

Reverend Prebendary Professor Gina Radford

Bankers:

Lloyds Bank, Totnes

Independent Examiner:

Ian Fraser
Rupp & Fraser
7 St. Paul's Road
Newton Abbot
TQ12 2HP

Web site:

www.stpetrocsandstmarys.org.uk

The Parochial Church Council is an Exepected Charity

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary's church, Rattery, Devon

Part of the Dart and Avon Mission Community

Aims and purpose

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) is aware of its responsibilities of promotion of the whole mission of the church within its locale, of caring appropriately for the Grade I listed building and the intangible heritage it represents, and of ensuring integrity and value for money in its financial dealings.

The parish is part of the Dart and Avon Mission Community in which Rev Preb'd Professor Gina Radford is Team Rector. She is officially on duty on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday each week, but does amend her timetable to fit in with funerals and weddings particularly. She lives at the Vicarage in South Brent.

Objectives and Activities.

St Mary's Parochial Church Council has continued in carrying out its duties of stewardship of the Grade one listed church. At the same time it has facilitated the provision of regular services of Christian worship. It has also made sure that the church remains available for the conduct of weddings, baptisms and funerals. However, it has also recognised a further need namely making the building available for use by the wider Parish community. To that end St Mary's continued to play host to the Village Voices Choir and provided a venue for three well supported music concerts.

The church also has a rich heritage to share and we have been able to continue to ensure that this can be enjoyed by visitors on a seven day a week basis. In addition we are exploring with the local history archive ways in which our story can be shared with a wider audience.

Our biggest long term challenge remains the state of the fabric of the building and in particular the degrading effect, on our walls, of damp and the impact this continues to have on our unique wall decoration Sgraffito.

To begin to address this challenge we were able to secure grant funding, through the good offices of the Church of England's Churchcare fund, a substantial contribution towards the cost of a full Conservators report on the state of the Sgraffito. This has detailed the steps that will have to be taken to conserve it for the long term.

In addition with generous help from the Diocesan Building Department we have been able to secure full grant funding for a schedule of small works aimed at

reducing the amount of water reaching and being retained in the walls when heavy rain occurs.

We are also in discussion with Churchcare about the possible funding for a project to investigate further ways of reducing damp the walls closest to the endangered Sgraffito.

Plans are now in progress to assess the feasibility of making a bid for a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant to take forward our long term ambition of conserving St Mary's heritage, sharing the building with a wider audience and developing facilities within the church that would help sustain it for the future. These plans are being drawn up in partnership with our other Parish partners namely the Parish Council, the Rattery Village Hall and the Church House Inn.

During the year we were able to demonstrate to our insurers that we were complying with the terms of their policy and to that end we have updated our fire extinguishers, adopted new equipment storage arrangements and purchased a new first aid kit.

This year the church demonstrated its value to the local community when 145 people came to the funeral of a much respected local resident. On the afternoon in question St Mary's became the focal point for Rattery's collective emotion and sadness at the passing of Oliver Fogden.

The funeral was an emphatic demonstration of why we will continue to do all we can to maintain the church as a key part of life in Rattery.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

PCC is committed to holding worship regularly but as seems appropriate to the community. We discuss and review services and service patterns for forthcoming seasons to re-assess what we do rather than assuming that what happened last year at the same time should be repeated. Our current service pattern is two services a month, with occasional extra services for special occasions and festivals (see below), and we encourage members to join with St Petroc's and other churches in the Mission Community either in person or virtually for the other 2 weeks. We also join with the whole Mission Community on the 5th Sunday of a month for worship in our various churches on a rotating basis.

Our regular congregation are not great in number (6 – 20) but are enormously supportive and adaptable, having become accustomed to a variety of service leaders, liturgies and styles of preaching. Our congregation increases very considerably for festivals, particularly at Christmas. Our services most usually

follow the Common Worship pattern, with occasional BCP Holy Communion. We are led by clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers or lay-persons (Church Wardens and others). Members of the congregation read scripture and lead intercessions, and all-age worship is often a chance for many to get involved in various imaginative ways.

We have a Pastoral care team jointly with St Petroc's. Home Communion is offered to house-bound individuals and is conducted at two of the Care Homes in South Brent on a monthly basis. Home visiting is also undertaken for those not well or house-bound. Posters on noticeboards around the church inform and encourage members of the community to seek pastoral visits for themselves or those they know.

We have 21 parishioners on our electoral role. We are enormously grateful to our volunteer organists for all their dedication and support. Our bells can be set to chime, and two members of our congregation frequently play the chimes for our regular Sunday and occasional pastoral services. Coffee after services continues to be very popular, with almost everyone staying to chat. We see this as an important part of our fellowship, and a wonderful way to welcome those visitors and new people who come to the service.

We are committed to being part of the Mission Community which has developed an exciting vision for our collective future direction with staffing, to enable us to connect with our communities more effectively, particularly in Buckfastleigh, where the local church runs a Foodbank. This has been an exciting time for us, with all our PCCs coming together to share and explore ideas and opportunities. To this end we are delighted that we have appointed a new Team Vicar (0.5wte) who will join us in May 2025, and will be based in Buckfastleigh, though serving across the whole Mission Community. We hope to develop our vision further in the area of pioneering and are exploring opportunities for this.

Families & all-age worship We hold various Family services during the year, including at Harvest and Christingle.

Baptisms. No baptisms

Weddings. No weddings

Funerals 1 funeral, 1 memorial service, 1 interment of Ashes

Life events services are seen very much as part of our mission, and the church members work hard to make sure the church looks and is as inviting and welcoming as possible.

Our services are promoted via the Mission Community Newsletter, our website, Facebook, hand bills, notices at the lych gate and inside church, and via the established village news email.

A combined SPARX for South Brent and Rattery children has continued during the year. St Mary's PCC are kept apprised of South Brent's youth outreach (Youth bus etc).

A well supported Harvest Supper was held in the Village Hall, and was very much appreciated as an opportunity for the community to meet together.

Prayer Group

Members attend the weekly Wednesday Morning Prayer at St. Petroc's and the virtual Morning Prayer on Fridays, as well as the weekly Thought for the Week virtual discussion group.

A group of adult members meet every first Wednesday of the month as a house group. This New Way of Being Church involves prayer, scripture reading and sharing.

Deanery Synod

One member of PCC sits on the Deanery Synod with an occasional deputy.

Church Fabric

PCC remain committed to keeping the church unlocked during the day. The entries in the visitors' book confirm how much appreciated this is. We have second-hand replacement wooden altar candlesticks and a wooden altar cross thus the main brassware, including the processional cross and church wardens' staves are locked in the vestry during the day.

Churchyard

Our churchyard continues to be wonderfully tended and maintained by our Associate Churchwarden Rob Needham, together with a small band of volunteers. It is a beautiful and sacred space, and much loved by the community. We encourage people to enjoy it and to engage with our re-wilding endeavours in part of the churchyard.

Financial Review

For the year ending 31st December 2024 the total balance of funds stands at £17,692. This is a deficit of £5,744 from the previous year. Of the total balance the unrestricted General Fund stands at £15,343 and the total Restricted funds £2,349.

Total receipts on the General Fund were £4019 and payments from this fund totalled £8817, leaving a deficit of £4798. Incoming resources from services and parishioners are down 32%. Total General Fund receipts are down by 39%.

Grants totalling £1000 were received, £200 from Exeter Diocese Trust EDBF and £800 from Archbishops CBC towards the Sgraffito condition report.

Fundraising this year raised a grand total of £2544 and included the plant sale, harvest supper, music evening and sponsor a bauble. The majority of fundraising goes towards the Fabric Fund.

Reserves Policy

PCC is aware that it is prudent to maintain a level of ‘special contingency funding’.

Sustainability

We are starting to consider our use of resources in order that our worship and building become more sustainable. These will also be aspects that the PCC will think about carefully as the building project progresses.

Safeguarding

Our PCC safeguarding representative is a member of the Mission Community Safeguarding Group. PCC continues to monitor training requirements and also to promote personal responsibility, helping to ensure that situations which might cause problems are avoided (such as children in church with a single adult, or lone working in the church during the week).

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to comply with the House of Bishops’ guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Volunteers

St Mary’s continues to be so well supported by volunteers who clean, arrange flowers, maintain the churchyard, provide refreshments and play the organ, as well as those who take part in services (readers and intercessors). There are also those who take active part in fund-raising for the church. Our amazing group of volunteers have continued to support the church as and when it has been possible. The PCC is so grateful for their tireless work to support the church.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The PCC comprises the Rector, Church Wardens, Deanery

Synod representatives and other members elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

The PCC met 2 times during the year. The Ministry Team of the Mission Community meet monthly to plan services, and there are regular meetings of the Church Wardens from across the MC. The Mission Community treasurers also now meet twice a year.

Administrative Information

The Church is situated in the centre of Rattery village. There is no church office. Correspondence may be addressed to Mrs Linda Jopson, PCC General Secretary, Ashbourne Farm, Rattery, South Brent, TQ109JZ

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, and the Church Representation Rules 20) and a Charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2024 until the date this report was approved were:

Team Rector/ Chair: Revd Preb'd Prof Gina Radford

Church Wardens: Dr John Dean

Rt Hon Michael Jack, CBE

Assistant Church Mr Rob Needham
Warden

General Secretary: Mrs Linda Jopson

Deanery Synod rep: Mr Rob Needham

Treasurer-bookkeeper: Mrs Elaine Barrington

Elected members: Mr Arnold Barrow

Approved by the PCC onand signed on its behalf

By:

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Revd Preb'd Prof Gina Radford (Chair)

Dr John Dean (Vice Chair)

