

Churchwardens: Steve McCann and Philippa Rooke were elected as Churchwardens at the last APCM.

Deanery Development Plan: Plans were developed by our Rector, when he was Area Dean, along with the Archdeacon and Bishop, to encourage closer working between us at St Martin's and the Parish of St Mary's, Green St Green and All Souls, Pratts Bottom (St Mary's).

It was agreed that, following the retirement of Rev Ruth Murfitt from St Mary's a replacement would be recruited not only to be Priest in Charge of St Mary's but would also become the leader of the new combined benefice when John Tranter retires. St Mary's kindly included a St Martin's representative in the recruitment process and Rev. Susan Atkinson-Jones was licensed to St Mary's in December 2019 (and as associate priest at St Martin's).

Initiatives were undertaken during 2019 to bring the parishes to a closer working relationship, with varying levels of success.

Choir: On behalf of you all, we express our thanks to Chris Mead for leading the Choir and to Gwen Bowen for providing the organ accompaniment at most services. Thanks are also given to the members of the choir, who usually outnumber the congregation at Evensong.

Fete: Once again the Fete was organised by Paul Gosling – thanks Paul. The Fete requires significant effort to be the success it undoubtedly is and involves most of us in some way or another. The 2020 Fete was scheduled for June, as always, but we all know that it had to be cancelled.

Church Fabric:

The work to the spire that had to be halted last year (2018), due to the unexpectedly poor condition of the shingles making it impossible to work at that level, is still outstanding and will require a major investment to complete. An appeal will be launched as soon as the financial conditions are more stable.

Work to repair the water damage to floor in the choir/flower vestry was completed to a very high standard. The Rector's Vestry floor will soon receive similar attention. The external side of the emergency exit door to the Brass Crosby was repainted in August. The copper external handle to the Vestry broke, leaving us with a Heath-Robinson solution for a week or so, but a new iron one was sourced from Darenth Valley Blacksmiths. The main Church carpet, which has been prone to 'creeping' has been stuck down (with special glue and avoiding the various brasses and monuments underneath).

The push button switches on the south radiator in the chancel have proved to be unreliable and have now been replaced by toggle switches similar to those used on other radiators some years ago. Sadly David Jones, who has serviced our boilers for many years, was unable to continue to do so through ill health, but another company were found who could cope with such an old system. Considering their age, thought is being given to plans for replacement, although this will be an expensive project.

Edward Sargent continues to support us in the role of Church Architect and we greatly value his expertise and guidance in this area of crucial importance.

Routine servicing of the organ and fire extinguishers took place in order to meet our statutory Health and Safety obligations. The Annual Inspection of the Electrical Installation was also undertaken, and PAT testing was carried out in the church, Parish Room and at Well Hill.

Parish Room:

The parish room is being used on a regular basis by the charity 'Living On'. The security required by an organisation handling sensitive personal information is such that access is strictly controlled.

The room was decorated externally during the year, significantly improving its external appearance.

Services

Weddings, funerals and interments went smoothly with the efficient help of Ann Blatcher and Jim Rooke, allowing the Rector to relax knowing that things would be prepared when he arrived.

Sidesmen: The Sidesman rota operated smoothly during 2019 on the basis of one Sidesman at each service, with 4 people on each of the 8am and 10am rotas, and 5 for Evensong for most of the year, until the sad passing of John Barnes in October. Might you be willing to be added to the list of Sidesmen for any of our Services?

Servers and Assistants: While many Communion services have an Assistant and a Server, we have a single person fulfilling both roles at 8am on three Sundays each month. An additional Server and Assistant would be of great assistance – could you be one of them?

Rector: Our thanks go to John for his diligence and leadership. His key priority for 2019 was working with Rev. Susan Atkinson-Jones on the parish reorganisation referred to above and this led to them each becoming more involved the other's parish; taking services at the churches and also in the governance (PCC meetings etc). Although he'd stood down as Area Dean his replacement went on sabbatical in Q2.2019 so John had to hold that fort again for a few months.

As always, we also offer our gratitude to 'Mrs Rector', Janet, who does so much behind the scenes both for the life of the Church and in supporting John.

Churchwarden: Norman Bailey stepped down at last year's APCM, with our thanks for his diligent work during the previous three years. Philippa Rooke agreed to replace him, and was appointed at last year's APCM

Finally: as always, St Martin's is only as good as it is due to the tireless work of people who give so much of their time to make things happen (Services, with bells, choir, sidesmen, servers and assistants. Social functions with organisers and helpers) or stop things happening (maintenance of the Church, Churchyard etc and those who clean and/or 'simply' keep things in good working order). Some have been named herein, but a massive amount of work is also done by 'the unnamed'. Finally, particular thanks are due to our Treasurer, Barry Foale, for his stewardship of our finances and all the other work he undertakes.

Heartfelt thanks to you all!

Philippa Rooke + Steve McCann

Presentation of the Church Log Book and Terrier / Inventory

The Church Log Book and Terrier / Inventory would normally be made available for viewing at this meeting, but as it is being held online this is not possible. They will therefore be made available for viewing following the 9.30am Holy Communion service on Wednesday 21st October. If you would like to view them at this time, please contact the Churchwardens on churchwardens@stmartinchelsfield.org.uk