

Annual Report & Financial Statements

TO: 31st DECEMBER 2023

CHARITY NO: 1134020



**The Parish of Ewhurst
with Okewood & Forest Green**

CONTENTS

Page

| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 3 | Parochial Church Council |
| 4 | Electoral Roll |
| 4 | Minister's Report |
| 5 | Churchwardens |
| 8 | Deanery Synod |
| 9 | Ministries |
| 11 | Youth Team |
| 12 | Baby & Toddler Group |
| 13 | Music |
| 13 | Bell Ringers |
| 14 | Flower Guild and Charities |
| 15 | "Friends" Reports |
| 18 | Ewhurst C of E Infant School |
| 18 | Safeguarding |
| 19 | Finance |

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Parish Administrator: Liz Coleman

PCC Secretary: Jackie Avery

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

Ewhurst with Okewood & Forest Green PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. It has the responsibility of promoting to the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for the Church and the Church grounds. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission.

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. During the Year the following served as members of the PCC:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Incumbent | Vacancy |
| Churchwardens | Martin Lockwood, Tom Murphy, Liz Tingley |
| Representatives on Deanery Synod | Liz Tingley, Janet Templeman |
| Elected Members | Mike Brady, Graham Childs, Shirley Dighton (Pastoral Assistant), Clare Harding, Val Henry, Jan Jesson (Pastoral Assistant), Michelle Matthews (Treasurer), Jan Moir, Chris Owen, Janet Templeman, Angie Thomas (Safeguarding Liaison), Clive Ward, Amber Wood |
| Co-opted | Jackie Avery (Secretary) |
| In attendance | Rev'd Rosemary Mason, Liz Coleman (parish administrator) |

REPORT

The PCC, drawn from members of the three churches within our parish, meets every other month. The Standing Committee, comprising the Church Wardens, the PCC Treasurer, the PCC Secretary and two members of the congregations, meets every other month, prior to the PCC meeting.

The current PCC comprises three Church Wardens, two Deanery Synod representatives, twelve elected members, and the secretary. Rev'd Rosemary Mason and the Parish administrator also attend.

The method of appointing PCC members is set out in the Church Representation rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

ELECTORAL ROLL

The total number of people on the combined electoral Roll is 157 which is 1 less than last year. (last year 158)

The loss is due to 1 death.

The total is made up of:

97 people at St Peter and St Paul Ewhurst (last year 97)

52 people at St John the Baptist Okewood (last year 53)

8 people at Holy Trinity Forest Green (last year 8)

Before our APCM in 2025 we will be required to completely revise our Electoral Roll as we do every 6 years. Everyone will need to re-apply to be on our Parish Electoral Roll.

(Please keep the Parish Administrator abreast of any changes in contact details).

Liz Coleman, Parish Administrator

MINISTER'S REPORT

The Rev'd Clare Shepherd resigned as rector of this parish and left on 19th February 2023 to take up a post as interim minister at St Stephen's Church, Canonbury, Islington, having served over 4 years as our rector. We are currently in a period of vacancy, but are fortunate to be supported by the ministry team of Rev'd Rosemary Mason, Rev'd John Marsh (both non-stipendiary ministers), John White (retired lay reader) and with Amber Wood and Sarah Murphy in training as lay readers, backed up by others from the Cranleigh Deanery.

Not Just on a Sunday

It is just over a year since Rector Clare moved to her new parish in north London, and during that time, it has been a real privilege to be asked to lead three of the four Sundays each month at Ewhurst, especially as each of these is a Eucharist.

It is also a great joy to take a weekly assembly at Ewhurst school, as I did in the previous vacancy, and to welcome the pupils, staff and parents in their regular visits to and services in the church. The children are always so enthusiastic and responsive – they are so relaxed

and at home in the church building. It has been very special this year to welcome into the church and to be with the Rainbows nursery , to see how happy they are and to sing along with them. Judging their Easter bonnets was a real delight! Telling the Christmas story to the Toddler group with their beautiful knitted Nativity figures, is also very special.

Last September, I started a Confirmation class. We had 4 candidates, and rejoiced with them as they were confirmed by Bishop Peter Hancock in Cranleigh church on Easter Eve this year. We pray the Lord will continue to guide them in the years to come.

The monthly Communion service at the Old Rectory is also very special. It is something I have done now for the past 8 years. It is always well attended and is so special to the residents, most of whom can no longer come across to church, both the main service, and also when I visit those in their rooms who dearly wish to have the Eucharist, or prayer, or just a friendly visit. It is an enormous privilege to be alongside these older people when they especially need it.

Other visits are those to the homes of the bereaved, to offer prayer and to arrange the funerals, and also to help couples sort out the complexities of the marriage service, and again, the delight of baptisms. There are always a few people in the parish who cannot get to church and who need Communion in their own homes, and this too is a great privilege. Saying yes a year ago to a couple of services seems ages ago, and the “couple” seem to have grown, but I delight in this. There are already 2 weddings and 3 baptisms on the cards for the weeks ahead, but as I have so often said, if the Good lord has work for me to do, then “Here I am”.

My thanks to Rev Roy Woodhams for giving me his permission, and to each and every one of you for your help and support. I feel very blessed to be able to serve the Lord in this special way, and with God’s grace, I hope to be able to do so for as long as it is necessary. Thank you. With every blessing, Rosemary.

Rev’d Rosemary Mason

FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Church Warden Report - Tom Murphy

Our parish has been in vacancy since March 2023, when our Rector, Clare Shepherd, left to take up a post in London. Although these have been challenging times, we thank God that we are coping well. We have a strong team who are working hard to look after our parish during the vacancy, with Rev’d Rosemary Mason, Rev’d John Marsh and lay readers John White, with Amber Wood and Sarah Murphy in training, backed up by others from our parish and the Cranleigh Deanery. The PCC and churchwardens have made progress towards filling our vacancy, and an advertisement is now live in the Church Times and online. We look forward to interviewing prospective candidates in May, with the expectation of welcoming a new incumbent by September 2024 at the latest. We are praying for God’s provision of the right candidate for Ewhurst, Okewood and Forest Green.

The next Rector will work under a different model from previous incumbents. We are advertising a ‘House for Duty’ post. This means that the priest will work for us on Sundays and two other days each week. We offer the rectory for free, but without a stipend. This is

APCM Report 2023

an increasingly common ministry model for rural parishes. As detailed in the 2023 wardens' report, we are entirely self-funding, and we cannot meet the £90k parish share which the diocese would demand should we employ a full-time incumbent. We have to plan for a model which we can afford. Our giving has held up well during the vacancy, and there have been some new regular givers. We are very grateful to all those who give generously, and to the Friends' charities which are so supportive of our churches. We are confident that the House for Duty model (which reduces our parish share by more than 50%) is one which we can afford going forward.

We have not stood still and marked time during the vacancy. The full range of services we offer has continued in all three of our churches, and there have been many highlights in the past year. Christmas saw full churches for excellent Christingle and Crib services, as well as '9 lessons and Carols' services in Ewhurst and Forest Green. All-age services have begun successfully in Okewood. Rev'd Rosemary Mason has led assemblies in our local school, which have been very well received. A 'Night at the Musicals' at Okewood saw the church packed, and we welcomed Canon Andrew White to speak at a Sunday service, again drawing a good congregation.

As ever special thanks are due to Liz Coleman, our excellent parish administrator who works tirelessly and patiently to keep us all on track. Thanks also go to our team of dedicated helpers who maintain the buildings, clean the churches, care for the gardens, arrange flowers, run the pastoral services and many activities of the parish and those who support our services: lay preachers, organists, singers, vergers, sides-people and our faithful worshippers.

Thanks are due to Martin Lockwood who is standing down as church warden at the APCM. Martin's contribution during his year of service has been immense, and he will be much missed. We are delighted that he has agreed to stay on as a Deputy Warden, with responsibility for Ewhurst church fabric and its restoration.

Vacancies remain for churchwarden or deputy warden (for Okewood and Forest Green) and a PCC member for Okewood and Forest Green. We also need a volunteer to assist with News & Views, our parish magazine, which is distributed to over 1000 households. Peter Bennet took this over from Will Shepherd and he has done a fine job expanding the magazine and making it profitable, but he feels it is time to pass on the editorship to a younger candidate. Please contact the parish office if you can assist us.

Please continue to pray for our parish and for guidance for the future. We are very grateful for your support.

Tom Murphy, Church Warden

Church Warden Report – Liz Tingley

My responsibility has been mainly with the day to day working of the church, rather than the fabric which Martin has taken on, and liaising with Rosemary Mason and Liz Coleman the Parish Administrator on the services and any special events that may be occurring. Liz has been an essential part of running the churches and sorts out our needs and problems with answers and a smile.

We have been incredibly blessed in having Rosemary as our ordained minister as that has allowed us to continue to hold Holy Communion services, Baptisms, Marriages and funerals without having to constantly search for priest who is willing and able to hold these services. She has provided a secure and loving base for the church to continue to serve the parish.

In addition to looking after the church buildings and fabric – (see additional report) - Martin has completed the mammoth task of the preparation of the all-important Parish Profile, Statement of Needs and The Church Development Plan all of which has to be submitted to the diocese and The Church Times for publication of our vacancy. Tom and I have added and subtracted bits on what Martin had spent weeks researching and putting together. Moreover, he has collated the church paperwork, insurances etc all of which is examined by the Archdeacon on his annual Visitation. All of this essential information is safely online and easily accessed when required. The Archdeacon was well pleased. Unfortunately, Martin has had to stand down through health issues, but fortunately he has agreed to be a Deputy Church Warden and will continue to oversee the building and restoration work required at St Peter and St Paul for which we are heartily thankful.

Something I think we have all found somewhat difficult from time to time is that when in a Vacancy, the Church Wardens are in charge and responsible for everything, a situation that in the normal running of a church and parish falls to the rector who hopefully has had some years' experience – and is insured! This temporary change of leadership has at times been difficult for some of the community to accept but by and large that has now eased. The other responsibility I have had is the Rectory which was vacated on 01.03.2023. It was left empty, but not cleared, and cleaned. The diocese decided to let it through Savills but in the event there was concern as to the length of time for which it could be let, questions of if and when we would get a new incumbent, so it was left empty. The state of many of the trees in the extended garden were a cause of concern and had to be dealt with. The diocese had a firm of tree surgeons to do the work, however since the gales further work needs to be carried out but happily that problem is one for the diocese. At the end of March a family moved in on a short term let.

The Question of having a defibrillator for the church and Wilson Room has been brought up and will need to be discussed at PCC since money has to be available in order to get a grant towards it. Information on this is being sought and will be presented to the PCC. There are still a number of PCC members who have not completed the Safeguarding levels set by the diocese. The Safeguarding Officer for the parish has resigned owing to family pressures so we are now looking for someone in replacement. Any offers? The diocese expects the churches to have First Aiders available for help if necessary. Requests have been made at meetings and although there have been murmurs of interest unfortunately there has been no action.

So now we wait to see who likes the look of our parish and comes to have a look at us.

Liz Tingley, Church Warden

Ewhurst Church Fabric Report

Over the past 12 months we have had the following remedial works completed:
Restoration of 4 raised brick tombs, south of church building
Removed dangerous asbestos insulation in boiler room.

APCM Report 2023

Insulated all exposed heating pipework in boiler room.
Insulated the below floor heating ducts in church to reduce heat loss.
Installed HIVE remote operating control to church heating system.
Rebuilt the brick lined drainage channels on south side of church.
Removed loose wall plaster and rebuilt on chancel south side wall
Removed defective mesh outer covering to nave south window.
Repaired the roofing and parapet to boiler room building.
All inspections and testing of services completed satisfactorily.

Five yearly Quinquennial inspection carried out in March.
Current works include repairs to tiled flooring, continuing work to drainage gullies around the church, repairs to boiler room stonework, rebuilding west porch entrance paving and drain channel.
Quinquennial report now received with long list of repair / restoration works to be carried out over the next two years, including the proposed south transept roof and stonework repairs.
Our grateful thanks to Jamie Barnet and Jon Rapley for all the excellent work they do on our church.

Martin Lockwood, Churchwarden

DEANERY SYNOD

CRANLEIGH DEANERY MEETING HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, BRAMLEY Thursday 6th July 2023

Rev'd Andy Dean opened the meeting with a prayer.

- Canon Roy Woodhams, Area Dean, welcomed all to the meeting.
- Nicola Craven Smith was voted to the appointment of Secretary to the Synod. Bryn Jones was elected to join the Diocesan Synod as a lay member and Jill Parrott was voted on to join the existing 5 members of the leadership team.
- The Dean of the Local Ministry Programme, Rev'd John Valente, spoke about the new initiatives in LMP, a non-residential theological college where they train ordinands and LLMs serving the whole diocese. Small groups of attendees discuss what they felt our churches would look like before feeding back to the meeting. Rev'd John introduced the 2 year Foundations in Ministry course. Attendees were encouraged to look in their congregations for potential candidates and to contact Rev'd John for further information.
- Proposal to re-instate annual subscriptions - £20 per lay member -All in favour.
- Proposal to reduce the number of formal meetings per annum to 2 -July and January – Carried.
- News around the Deanery: Rev'd James Forward Alford and joined Loxwood as the new rector on 14th September 2023.
- Canon Roy closed the meeting with a prayer and the Grace.

CRANLEIGH DEANERY MEETING HELD AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, WONERSH. January 2024

- Rev' d David Peters welcomed everyone and introduced the first time attendees.
- Rev'd Canon Roy Woodhams updated us on the 'comings and goings' in the Deanery

- House for Duty priest at Ewhurst, Okewood and Forest Green.
- Bramley now in vacancy, exploring the option of reuniting with Grafham from whom they separated 5 years ago.
- Dunsfold and Hascombe now vacant and advertising for a part-time stipend. Rev'd Rutton's interim ministry has ended after the planned 2 years.
- Rev'd Andrew Pearson retires from Albury in June.

By 1st July. More than 50% of the parishes in the deanery will be in vacancy. We are lucky to have support from retired clergy; Rodney Hill has moved to Cranleigh and is awaiting his PTO.

- Reports received from Wonersh and Blackheath, Shamley Green, Cranleigh, Chilworth and Grafham .
- Rev'd Sarah Hutton introduced Alistair Etheridge who is the Programme Lead for the Youth Catalyst Project which is aiming to be a fresh way of approaching youthwork in our communities.
- The Project is starting with, hopefully 4, hubs in secondary schools in the diocese.
- The diocese has approved funds for 16 trainee youth ministers to be employed in the diocese.
- Alistair then welcomed Oli, Hub leader at Christ College who was in his 3rd week. He takes part in assemblies, R E lessons, after- school clubs, Youth Alpha sessions, in chapel, PHSE lessons etc. His aim is for pupils 'to know me, like me, then trust me. His vision is mission work, preaching the Good News and creating disciples. Oli then answered questions from the synod.
- Alistair then asked the synod to take 10 minutes to discuss the 4 questions posed at the end of his power point presentation – this is available for PCCs.
- The meeting closed with the Grace.

Janet Templeman, Liz Tingley

MINISTRIES

MEN'S MINISTRY

The quarterly Men's Breakfast programme has not continued following the retirement of Barry Thomson and Peter Bennett. It is hoped that it will continue at some time in the future.

However, a men's Bible study group is held every week in Forest Green and we are using material called "tactical Comms" produced by Christian Vision For Men.

Our meetings are informal and accompanied by refreshments kindly provided by Peter Bennett and we would welcome new members.

Anyone interested in joining us should contact Barry Thomson, barryjthomson1@gmail.com.

Barry Thomson

GLEBE COFFEE MORNING

The Glebe Coffee Morning has had another very successful year. We have had several new friends join us over the course of this year and they have now become regular participants. There are 30 plus people in attendance each week.

The Committee is ably supported by a rota of loyal volunteer helpers. They provide transport, friendship, support and a delicious assortment of cakes to accompany the tea and coffee each week. We were delighted to welcome a new cake maker recently to join our happy band of helpers.

In addition to our usual weekly meetings, we have a short service taken by Rosemary Mason and Ben Scadden (Baptist Minister) leading up to Christmas and Easter. Val Henry kindly provides the music. We very much enjoy the Year 2 children , from the Infant school, who each year come and sing their Nativity Play songs to us.

We have had two outings this year. In August, we visited Newbridge Nurseries for a cream tea afternoon, which was enjoyed by 29 people. We liked the service that we received at the garden centre so much, that we made a return visit in November! This time we had coffee and mince pies and most people stayed to start their Christmas shopping. 28 people enjoyed this outing.

In January, one of our number had a special birthday and very generously invited us all to a light lunch in the Glebe Centre to celebrate the occasion. 38 people joined the party. Last month, facilitated by the Cranleigh CAB office, we had a speaker visit us to discuss Scam Awareness. It was an interesting morning and we all gained knowledge about this very prevalent subject.

The aim of the weekly coffee mornings is to reach out in Christian love to provide friendship and care to villagers of all ages, especially those living alone, the elderly, isolated and those new to the village. We also have some friends from Cranleigh and Alford, who join us each week.

If you know of anyone who might benefit from the friendship or our coffee mornings or you are able to help, please let me know.

Sally Thompson (Secretary) Tel: 277368

NEWS AND VIEWS

The quarterly Parish Magazine has continued to be published throughout 2023 and into 2024. At the end August 2022, when Will Shepherd left to train for ordination, a new production and editorial team was set up. This consisted of Amanda Elsdon-Dew, Josh Root, Barry Thomson, Robin Stride, Ozzie & Harriet Hunter and myself. Their dedication and enthusiasm has been wonderful and it has been a delight to operate with all of them. They have all done a really good job for the Parish and we should give them our heartfelt thanks.

Over this period our Parish has grown as new houses and occupancy has increased. We also cover all pubs, clubs, shops and businesses. Therefore our print production run has grown from 1,500 to 1,700 copies (and continues to grow). This, together with substantial increase in paper costs has necessitated an increase of our charges for commercial advertising. We must also give grateful thanks to our printers, Top Print (Andrew Lock) as he really does give us preferential rates thus keeping our costs down.

We all must remember that we would not have a magazine if we did not have commercial advertisers. Our turnover in costs has grown dramatically over the last two years, just to keep pace with inflation. Generally all our advertisers have been very loyal to us and as nearly all of them are local businesses which we should support whenever we can. Our turnover for 2023 was just under £7,000. We now have approximately 40 commercial advertisers.

There have been some changes to the production and editorial for 2024 and I intend to stand down after the 2024 Winter edition. We need more people to step up (especially from the west end of the Parish), and we will need a new Editor for 2025.

Finally, it must be always remembered that this is a Church Parish magazine. It must, at all times, ensure that Church Faith is at the forefront of the production.

Peter Bennett, Editor

YOUTH TEAM

The YT have continued to work together, sharing God's love to the children and families in our parish.

SCHOOL/NURSERIES

Michelle, Bella and Dude the puppet led a weekly assembly at Ewhurst School from February through to the end of the summer term

From September the Reverend Rosemary Mason has been leading a weekly assembly at Ewhurst School and been a part of the special school services held in Ewhurst Church.

Reverend Mason has also been visiting Rainbows End Nursery and the Friday morning Mother and Toddler Group run by Rosie Smy and her helpers, getting to know the children and families. **Please see additional reports for more information.**

Outreach Bags

The YT continue to put together 'bags' for Okewood Nursery, Rainbows End Nursery and Ewhurst School. These bags contain an activity/booklet/colouring sheets and of course an edible goody!! All relevant to the 'season' with God's story being told. These bags are distributed three times a year – Christmas, Easter and at the end of the school year term, being sealed with a parish logo sticker. Over the past year we have given out over 300 bags, another way of keeping this important connection between church and the parish

SERVICES

Amber Wood, Ben Scadden from the Baptist Church and a leader from Sayers Croft run the once a month **Forest Church** in the woods behind Okewood Church, using the Ark when needed. Focusing on nature and the elements to learn more about God.

After two years of having a wonderful time making lots of mess, getting to know families in the parish and making new friends, sadly June saw the last of our **Messy Church**

meetings. Although we met 19 families, which was fantastic, unfortunately numbers did not grow as we had hoped and after much prayer and discussion, we decided to put our energies into once a month All Age/Family Services. This meant that we would be offering something in church on a Sunday for all ages, with an opportunity for the regular congregations to welcome, get to know and care for these families, sharing God's love in the best way we can.

All Age Services started in September at Okewood and continue to run successfully, once a month, with lots of fun, activities, drama, videos, all helping us to experience God and know Him better. Youngsters take part, 'wowing' us with their acting skills and putting their own dynamic take on bible readings. Lots of opportunities for everyone to be involved if they wish to.

The team decided to try something different for the **Christingle Service** last year. It was held on a Friday in December at 4pm in Ewhurst Church, with drinks and a tea in the Wilson Room from 3.30pm. This meant parents of school children could come straight over to the church from picking up their children. We were also joined by more adults on their own and other children from the parish. It was a really happy time, chatting to parents and children before going into the church. Parents were really grateful for the food and drinks and it set a very relaxed, informal atmosphere in church. This new idea worked really well, with over seventy children and adults taking part.

The **Crib Services** at both Okewood and Ewhurst Churches were planned and run by members of the YT, with additional help from members of our congregations. The churches looked stunning in the candlelight with the Christmas trees shedding a warm glow. At both services the children were invited to come dressed up as a nativity character and be a part of the Christmas story with extra costumes on hand so that all children, who wanted to, could participate. Yes, we had several Mary's, yes, we had several Joseph's, and yes, it was a bit chaotic BUT we all had lots of fun telling the story of Jesus birth. At both churches there was definitely '**no room at the inn**'. We pray that one day our churches will be full each Sunday and not just at Christmas.

The **Mothering Sunday** Service at Okewood was led by the YT.

It has been great for the team to worship and support each other in both of our churches. We are a small team who are committed to sharing God's love with the children and families of this parish. Our hope and prayer is for the team to grow, so enabling us to do more for those whom God has entrusted to us.

Jan Moir

BABY & TODDLER GROUP

We have had a very successful year, with lots of new families, they have brought babies of different ages and young toddlers. They are a friendly group always keen to welcome new people and quickly making new friends.

We have been able to offer a welcome with friendship, fresh filter coffee and tea. We then encourage free play with lots of different toys, great craft with Mary celebrating Christmas, Mothering Sunday, Red Nose day, and Easter. This last Christmas we had a party, plus the Nativity story told kindly by Rev Rosemary Mason followed up with Away in a Manger and Jingle Bells. We had our Easter egg hunt in the church with our yearly fire drill.

Each week we have a fruit snack and the toddlers are all encouraged to sit at the table. This is followed up with a singalong with shakers, the children are again encouraged to sit in a little chair to be given a shaker. We celebrate any birthdays with the children, parents and grandparents.

Mary, Kate and Jan have continued to be a great asset to the group. Graham has helped set up each week, with Pam offering cover when needed.

The numbers of families attending varies each week, they come from Ewhurst, Cranleigh, Horsham, Bramley and Dorking. I am happy to offer any parenting advice and support when requested.

Rosie Smy

MUSIC

The past 12 months have, seemingly, flown by. I distinctly remember a dear friend of mine, long since departed, who said to me, *Val as you get older, time moves very fast*, I now understand.

The Church Wardens, Liz in the Parish Office, the Reverend Rosemary Mason and the army of auxiliary people that plan and enable services to happen each week in all 3 churches is nothing short of amazing. EOFG have much to thank God for. *Father God, we thank you for all who enable our Services. Amen.*

Ewhurst is fortunate to maintain a church choir. Nationwide village church choirs are an endangered species and The Royal School of Church Music are busily trying to make sense of a recent survey relating to dwindling resources.

Our Choir is enthusiastic, friendly and adaptable; willing to embrace the various styles of musicianship and warmly welcome visiting singers and musicians who join us on an *ad hoc* basis to enhance our musical offerings. They are a caring and fun group and their enthusiasm and support for singing together with other contributions to the church and the wider community – bell ringing, coffee making, church cleaning, flower decorations etc etc shines out in their personalities.

After a very busy week, leading into Easter, we are looking forward to summer and whatever that season may bring to us.

The Choir meets each Friday, during term time for an hour and newcomers are most welcome. For more information, please speak to me, Val Henry.

Val Henry, Director of Music Ewhurst

BELL RINGING

Thanks to the commitment of our regular ringers we have been able to ring for most 10.30am and 6.00pm Sunday services. Practises have taken place on nearly all Wednesday

APCM Report 2023

evenings throughout the year. Our three young ringers who learned to 'Ring for the King' have made excellent progress and ring confidently on their own. One of the mums has also decided to learn and is doing well. Graham Lucas from Cranleigh, who has given us such a lot of help, organised a mini outing for Cranleigh and Ewhurst young ringers to give them an opportunity to experience ringing in other towers. Bells of different weights or different lengths of rope can often feel very different to those in your own tower.

Several groups of visiting ringers have come to use our bells during the year, mostly on a Saturday but one group made up of retired people come on a morning in the week. There have been two visiting groups to ring a peal. We don't allow too many of these as not everyone wants to listen to the bells for nearly three hours! We also arrange for them to come in holiday times so that the school is not disrupted. The Guilford District practise was held at Ewhurst on a Saturday morning in April.

We held a tower open day for Heritage weekend that coincided with the church fete. We had a number of groups of all ages visit us and it was good that our own young ringers could demonstrate their skills. School parties from Sayers Croft come to learn about the history of the church. With the help of Jane Harry we take them up to the ringing room to tell them a little of the history of our bells and bellringing.

We have rung for weddings during the year. This is sometimes difficult as couples are choosing to have their weddings during the week rather than a Saturday. Other towers have a similar problem and sometimes advertise for wedding ringers.

Rob Matthews is our steeple keeper and checks the bells regularly to see everything is in order in the bell chamber. He also puts on the muffles when we ring for All Souls and Remembrance Sunday. Thank you very much Rob for all your work.

Many thanks to Graham Lucas for all his work with the young ringers and patiently trying to improve our ringing.

Visitors are always welcome on practise nights. The article in News and Views may have given you an interest or you may just want to see what goes on. If decide you would like to learn there is plenty of help available. We start at 7.00pm.

Jan Jesson, Tower Captain

FLOWER GUILD

A big THANK YOU to the ladies who skilfully help and provide flowers throughout the church year. The church looked splendid for Easter and we are most grateful to the many parishioners who gave money towards the Easter lilies. Thank you all.

If you would like to join our small team of volunteers please seek me out. Extra contributors – flower arrangers, flower providers would be hugely welcome.

Val Henry

CHARITIES GROUP

The Charities Group was founded many years ago by Anne Barrett Lennard, with the purpose of providing the church's charitable giving by means of fund raising events, and a number of charities were identified to receive the funds, including Chase Shooting Star Hospice, Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice, the Bible Society and British Humanitarian Aid.

Two of the events that became a fixture in our calendar were the Lent Lunches and Winter Warmers and these have continued to this day. The lunches consist of delicious home-made soup, home-made rolls, cheese and fruit, tea and coffee, all for an extremely reasonable £7.00, and this last year all the proceeds went to Cranleigh Food bank, which we believed was most relevant, being close to home and supporting local people.

Our other effort this last year was to support the Quiz night in February, which raises money for Vaughan House and the Friends of St Peter and St Paul. The Charities Group provides and serves the Ploughman's supper at this lovely evening which raises a lot of money for charity.

The Charities Group continues to support British Humanitarian Aid by collecting clothes and other essentials for transport to Ukraine, together with gifts and toiletries for the families who are so badly affected by the war.

We are a small but enthusiastic group and would welcome anyone who would like to join us or has ideas for new fund raising events.

Joanna Cadman

FRIENDS REPORTS

Friends of St Peter & St Paul, Ewhurst

2023 has been a very successful fundraising year for The Friends, with some exciting and profitable events. The first event of the year was Geoff Harry's Quiz, well attended as usual, with the food provided by the Charities Group and an excellent raffle. The money raised was split equally between the Friends and Vaughan House in Guildford.

Our Easter Market was held on 28 March. Sadly, the weather was decidedly wintery which was very unfortunate for the stallholders on the decking outside the Parrot. They, and their customers, got rather windblown and wet. Our footfall was lower than usual but we had 23 stalls and all those who came enjoyed the day.

The Bulls Head very kindly sponsored a Quiz Night for the Friends on August 1st. This was well supported by 52 people who also enjoyed a meal and a significant amount was raised.

August 5th was the date of the Ewhurst Carnival and again the weather was not on our side! We set up our gazebo in a howling gale and were pleased to have so many visitors during the day. Special thanks go to Connie Watson & Mary McMath who made all the crocus

APCM Report 2023

decorations for the gazebo. We offered people to guess how many how many crocuses were donated over the day.

The crocus bulbs were to be planted later in the churchyard by children from Rainbows End Pre-school and Ewhurst Infants School. Residents from the Old Rectory were invited to watch, a few residents did planting too. Unfortunately, it looks as if the squirrels have enjoyed many of the bulbs before they had a chance to come up but there have been some flowers.

The Friends and the Ewhurst History Society had a joint stall at the Rectory Fete in September and our banners and activity packs were on show in the church as it was also Heritage Weekend.

Our big fundraising finale was the Spanish Evening held on November 29th in the suitably decorated Village Hall. Plenty of wine, good food, music, a premier raffle and the support of the village community, all helped make this an excellent evening for those who managed to book a table. A very significant sum of money was raised at this event.

Our Christmas card sales were good this year, with two original cards painted by George Yates. The cards were sold after our services and at the village school Christmas Market where we had a shared stall with the Ewhurst History Society.

Four schools have visited our church this year together with a group of instructors from Sayers Croft. Trustees showed the children around the church and helped them complete our activity sheets. The Bellringers took them into the Bell Tower to find out more about the bells. These tours are an important part of the outreach, essential for our original grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.(HLF)

Our Supporter base remains much the same, but there have been changes in our trustees. Martin Lockwood, as churchwarden, replaced Clive Ward as the ex-officio Trustee, Clive was voted on as a full Trustee. Jackie Avery was also re-voted as a Trustee as her tenure as Founder trustee had come to an end.

Our grant application to HLF has had a few hiccups. Firstly, they failed to inform us that FSPSP had been accepted to start an application and then FSPSP were given the wrong form to complete. The closure of HLF for three months over Christmas did not help, but we have finally been given the correct form. However, we have lost three months of the year allocated to complete an application.

Work is well underway to involve village organisations in the proposed drama events that FSPSP plan as a community initiative. We continue to liaise with St Nicholas Cranleigh on the installation of technology to improve the visuals within the church and hope to complete the application by May 2024. We have asked for an extension, if needed, and have been informed that this will be considered.

To see pictures of our activities, to find out more of what we do, or to join or donate, please visit our website www.friendsofewhurstchurch.com or contact our secretary on 01483 268694.

Jane Harry (Chairman)

Friends of Okewood

The trustees of The Friends had 4 meetings during the course of the year. During the course of the year the charity made donations to the parish towards the re-surfacing of the roadway to The Ark and the felling of ash trees adjacent to the roadway and behind The Ark affected by ash die-back.

An improved system of theatre lighting to the chancel area was sourced by Phil Waller from Cranleigh School and installed by Malcolm Coleman. It is felt this will greatly enhance future events held in the Church.

A new oak Church signboard was made and installed in the lower car parking area by Richard Mlinaric as well as a direction sign at the junction of Standon Lane and Church Lane. We are indebted to Richard for these excellent sign boards.

By kind permission of Anthony Paul the Friends held an “Afternoon tea and cake event” in the Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden in Standon Lane on 13th August which was very successful.

On 18th November a musical event was held in Okewood Church entitled “A night at the musicals” which filled the Church and raised over £1,200 for the charity. Our special thanks go to Phil Waller for organising this event and Liz Thorne for creating the programme.

Liz Thorne has agreed to become our “Events co-ordinator” and we are delighted to welcome her in this role. During the course of the year we were delighted that Sarah Murphy agreed to become a Trustee and was appointed Treasurer.

It has been drawn to our attention by our bankers Barclays that our bank account is not, as it should be, designated as a “charity bank account” as it was originally opened before we obtained charitable status. Steps are being taken to open a new account at Barclays which is appropriately designated.

Barry Thomson, Chairman

Friends of Holy Trinity, Forest Green

It has been a quiet year for the Friends with no significant fundraising activity nor any meaningful spend. That reflects in part a busier period in the years before (when we were fundraising to refurbish the stained glass) and simply a less active period for the group. We have only recently been made aware of the current Quinquennial Report which ends next year and there are a number of actions identified for more urgent attention. These include repairs to the roof, replacement of the vestry door and some more modest repairs internally. The Friends will be addressing this work over the next 3-6 months.

In the longer term, beyond whatever the next quinquennial tells us, we know that replacement of the roof is required within a decade or so. We are beginning to explore grant funding for this though are hampered by the fact that the church is – perhaps surprisingly – not listed. We will also be considering what fundraising we can plan over coming years so that the £50,000+ costs of the work can be met.

APCM Report 2023

Perhaps we can close by saying that Holy Trinity remains a very fine church in a beautiful spot and the Friends remain committed to ensuring it remains a home for worship for many years to come.

The Trustees of FOHTFG - Matt Sparkes (Secretary), Judy Craddock, Libby Daghorn, John Doree, Doug McGregor

Matt Sparkes (Secretary)

EWHURST C of E INFANT SCHOOL

In April 2023 OFSTED's inspection report of Ewhurst School was published. Ewhurst School received the grade of Requires Improvement. The Governors and school leadership immediately implemented an improvement plan that addressed each of the concerns raised by OFSTED. The school received tremendous support from Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE) and the Diocese of Guildford.

The academic year got off to a fantastic start in September, with 3 new class teachers, and 1 new learning support assistant. The enthusiasm and dedication of staff was palpable, and it was evident to everyone who visited that this was a "new school".

The hard work and determination of staff and leadership has resulted in an improved phonics and maths provision, new curricula, the introduction of a variety of school clubs, improved behaviour, and increased attendance.

Ewhurst School continues to face many challenges due to falling enrolment. At present the school is at 50% capacity, which has major financial implications. Ewhurst School has been very fortunate to receive financial support from, among others, the Ewhurst Charity, the school's trust, the PTA, and SAfE.

We are delighted to have been able to continue hosting end of term services in the Church, and to share celebrations with the community. Most notably, the school and Ewhurst Christmas fair was a great success and we enjoyed welcoming the community into the school for carols, musical performances, and many other treats!

Ariela Fish, Governor

SAFEGUARDING

Our Parish states that we take the safeguarding of our children and vulnerable adults very seriously. This is the responsibility of everyone. Along with the Incumbent, the PCC provide a vital role in promoting a safer environment. Safeguarding training, is key in reminding people of their responsibilities and also to help them feel confident in how to report and respond, should they become aware of a potential safeguarding issue. If you have any queries or concerns, however big or small, even if you are not sure if it is a concern or not, please always follow the correct procedure, by reporting as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours, to any of the following people:

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sarah Smith safeguardingeofg@gmail.com tel. 07775 268945
Jackie Broadfoot: Diocesan Safeguarding Officer jackie.broadfoot@cofeguildford.org.uk

To report an emergency safeguarding concern out of hours please telephone the police on 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm, or 101 if there is not an immediate risk and follow up with Safeguarding Officer or Jackie Broadfoot on the next working day. All safeguarding contact information can also be found on the Parish website.

Safeguarding Training

Keeping safeguarding training up to date is fundamental to safeguarding the church community. There remains a portion of the PCC that need to complete or renew training. Please do get in touch if you need help with this.

The Parish Dashboard

The Parish Dashboard is a tool used to monitor how each parish is managing to fulfil its safeguarding policy. It is an online tool where parishes can now keep a record of safeguarding compliance, based on a traffic light system. These records can be viewed directly by the Diocese so they can track which parishes need extra help to implement safeguarding policies and procedures. The up to date action plan will be present for PCC review at the first PCC meeting following the APCM.

Safeguarding Policy Annual Review

The adoption of the Safeguarding Policy is renewed annually, at the first PCC meeting after the APCM.

Sarah Smith, Parish Safeguarding Officer

FINANCE

The Treasurer is responsible for reviewing and monitoring financial policies including payroll and outward giving. They review and monitor the annual budget and assists the Parish with stewardship and financial management of the parish.

Unrestricted Funds

In the beginning of 2023 we set a plan to increase planned giving and resume collections in services, this has been successful we have increased 50% increase in collections and a 5% increase in planned giving. We managed to get a refund in Utilities from 2022 which has decreased our spend in utilities in 2023. With our change of Ministry in October we received a reduction in our Parish share liability, and using some of our Ministry funds to help cover costs for advertising and outreach we have managed to keep our deficit in unrestricted to minimum of £6,864.00, this has been covered by the legacy we received a couple of years ago. (we are very thankful for that legacy as it has kept us afloat for the last couple of years).

For 2024 with the reduced Parish share figure to £48,715 and keeping our costs to a minimum we should break even.

Restricted Funds

The PCC has in addition restricted funds totalling £394,674.

Thank you for your continued support in the work the parish is doing.
2 Corinthians 9:7: “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Financial Report Background & Policies

The Parish of Ewhurst with Okewood and Forest Green PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. It has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, and in a vacancy the Church Wardens and PCC in promoting to the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for the Church and the Church grounds. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity’s governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard FRS102.”

Reserve Policy

The Finance Committee of the PCC conducts an annual review of the level of reserves by considering risks associated with the various income streams, expenditure plans and balance sheet items. This enables an estimate to be made of the level of reserves that are sufficient to continue to meet its objectives.

Risks and issues considered in making this judgement included:

- The over dependence on any single source of income or likelihood of downturn in income
- The period of time required to re-establish income streams or downsize activities
- The adequacy of control over budgets
- The requirement for a reasonable level of working capital

The PCC has agreed that we should hold unrestricted funds equal to at least a minimum of three months budgeted unrestricted expenditure.

Michelle Matthews, Treasurer