

PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW, HYDE, WINCHESTER



Parish Review 2023



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

for Hyde and Abbots Barton

Front cover photos showing just some of our activities during 2023:

- Charlie was the first of seven people baptised during the year
- Floral cross made by the families who came to Messy Easter
- Flowers fit for the King's Coronation in May
- Confirmation of Bill Lanfear at Abbots Barton Care Home
- Wedding of Ed and Jo Bates, one of four weddings during the year
- Making rainmakers on St Swithun's Day
- The Christmas Fair, a wonderful community event
- Lots of families enjoyed hosting Mary, Joseph and the Donkey during Advent
- The Church was specially lit for the Christmas services

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH
King Alfred Place, Hyde, Winchester

PARISH REVIEW 2023

As of February 2024, the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Hyde, St Bartholomew, Winchester ("The PCC of Hyde") is now a Registered Charity, No. 1207015. As such, it is required to submit a formal Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements to the Charity Commission. That Report contains administrative information, the Treasurer's financial review, the 2023 accounts, accompanying notes and the Independent Examiner's Statement, and is available on our website or from the Parish Office. It should be read in conjunction with this Parish Review, which describes in more detail the activities and events of parish life during 2023.

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1. Rector's Report

This has been a significant year for the Parish, with the sale of Hyde Parish Hall marking the end of a long chapter and facilitating the start of a new one. The PCC is most grateful to Lorraine Curtis for managing the Parish Hall bookings and hirers for some 30 years, and we are delighted that the building can now receive the attention that the PCC could not afford to give, and will remain available to the wider community. The sale means a much-needed injection of funds which will enable us to carry out long-awaited works in the church, so that it is able to thrive, not just as a precious place of worship, but also as the holder of an important piece of the city's heritage and as a great venue for community activity.



The parish finances, however, remain challenging: the sale proceeds cannot be used for subsidising our running costs if all the necessary work is to be carried out, but our regular income falls well short of what is required. The PCC is most grateful to those who already give generously to the church and would encourage everyone to review their giving annually, where possible, and consider leaving a gift in their will.

Attendance on Sundays and at festivals generally held up or increased, which was very heartening. Among the highlights of the year, the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III in May was marked with special services across the benefice, and thank you to our flower arrangers who made beautiful decorations to mark this historic event. We were glad to welcome Deputy Mayor Cllr Russell Gordon-Smith to this year's annual commemoration of King Alfred, and grateful to Hyde900 for organising a 'Hyde Past, Present and Future' cheese and wine evening, a calligraphy workshop, walking tours, and the annual King Alfred Lecture, this year given by Professor Ryan Lavelle. For the first time we held a combined Christingle and Crib Service on Christmas Eve, and the church was wonderfully filled with families, at the same time raising money for The Children's Society.

At Abbots Barton Care Home it was a delight to welcome Bishop David to fulfil the lifelong wish of Bill Lanfear to be Confirmed. This year our friends at Brendoncare Park Road finally made their much-delayed move to new premises in Highcliffe, after decades of receiving visits from the parish Ministry Team. Meriel and I led a special service there in September to say farewell and bless them on their way.

It is a real joy to see vocations being discerned and to support their development. In March we said a final farewell to the Revd. Eluned Phipps, who completed her curacy following her placement in North Stoneham, and we welcomed Jamie Cann on a short placement prior to ordination in June. Malcolm Bruce embarked on the new one-year Caleb course, training for ordination in 2024, and Nicholas Goulding was admitted to the year-long course for the Bishop's Permission to Preach (BPP). Revd. Amanda (Assistant Priest) and Meriel Walton (LLM) both reached the age at which their licences to the benefice came to a natural end, and I am most grateful to them both for continuing their ministry with the Bishop's "Permission To Officiate" (PTO). With Chris Pilgrim, Edmund and Jane Jessop, the Revd. Norman de la Mouette (PTO), Jane Bessey and Clare Talks, our three churches are blessed to have a team of people to lead our worship, giving it richness as well as sustainability. My grateful thanks to all of them and to our musicians, intercessors, readers, sacristans, eucharistic assistants and stewards. There is always room for more, so if you are feeling a nudge to get involved in our worship in some way, please come and have a chat with me.

Our gatherings would be much poorer without the diligence of those who clean the church, the commitment of those who serve refreshments (after services and at the monthly coffee mornings), and the skill of those who beautify the church with flowers, not to mention all the other necessary things that go largely unseen, like the safeguarding, health and safety, banking and the care of our church linen. All these roles are crucial to the smooth running of parish life and we really need more people to join in, not only to help spread the workload, but because being part of the team is sociable and enjoyable! Please speak to the churchwarden if you would be able to get involved in any way, whether regularly or from time to time.

This Parish Review is published on behalf of the PCC, and I would like to express my deep appreciation of the commitment and leadership of our churchwarden and all our PCC members and officers. Last but not least (there is no 'least!'), thank you to Sara Gangai, our benefice Administrator, for keeping all the wheels turning.

2024 began with celebrations, with a lunch in honour of the ministry of Revd. Amanda, and the Welcome Service for Bishop Philip as the 98th Bishop of Winchester. It was a great honour to take part in the ancient tradition of welcoming the new Diocesan bishop at St Lawrence prior to the service at the Cathedral.

As we look ahead, it is exciting to contemplate all the improvements that will be made possible under our Giving for Living plans. I hope that we will continue to build on all the good things described in this report, as we face up to our challenges, seek to deepen our faith and serve our community. May all that we do be in the name of Christ, who has called us by name and is with us, whatever 2024 has in store.

The Revd. Karen Kousseff

2. Churchwarden's Report

The main event of the past year from April 2023 was selling Hyde Parish Hall. This resulted in an offer from Winchester Muslim Community Association (WMCA) being accepted by the PCC in the autumn. The sale completed in January 2024 for £700,000. We were especially pleased to accept an offer from WMCA given their publicly stated commitment to continue to use the hall for local community activities and also to begin a much-needed programme of refurbishment for the hall.

The sale has injected a significant cash receipt into our Giving for Living church refurbishment campaign. The priority for our refurbishment work will be the replacement of the oil-fired boiler with an efficient and environmentally friendly heating system. This work is urgent as the oil storage tank became compromised due to a hole in the inner skin being detected. The remaining oil was removed to avert any environmental damage to the churchyard. A straw poll amongst members of the congregation was in favour of toughing out the winter with blankets rather than replace the tank at this stage.

Donations to our Giving for Living fundraising have steadily increased and will enable us to plan further improvements to internal fabric, wheelchair access and lighting. Little Wrigglers has also continued to meet in the church building and the parish coffee mornings have now transferred to the church from the hall. Longer term development plans should enable us to offer better catering facilities and flexible space for appropriate community uses. We have appointed Louise Salman from St Ann's Gate Architects, Salisbury, to design and project-manage this work.

Two very tall, pollarded trees in the churchyard have become rotten and present a danger to passers-by. An application was made to have them removed and replaced with fruit trees which will grow to a more appropriate height. At the time of writing the council inexplicably placed a tree preservation order on them, having previously raised no objection. We and many local residents are raising formal objections to this decision.

Finally, I would like to gratefully thank once again our dedicated stewards, sacristan and server who make it possible for worship to happen every week, and for the building to be open for visitors on Saturdays.

Malcolm Bruce (churchwarden)

3. Safeguarding

Since being elected as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) of St Bartholomew's in June 2023, I have been liaising with the PCC and other volunteers within the church to ensure they have the required DBS certificates and also that they are completing the relevant Church of England safeguarding training courses.

No safeguarding concerns have been reported to me since my election.

Together with Kathryn Whelan, St Lawrence's PSO, we have written a couple of articles for the benefice magazine, highlighting the importance of safeguarding practices within the parishes. We hope this awareness raising will help volunteers to understand why they are being asked to comply with safeguarding procedures and, crucially, for the wider congregation to feel able to report any safeguarding concerns they may have.

We now include helpline numbers for the Samaritans, Citizens Advice and for domestic abuse in our weekly newsletter.

Rosie Duffy (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

4. Health and Safety

Various risk assessments have been undertaken or updated during the year.

No incidents have been reported to me.

Linda Jarvis (Health & Safety Officer)

5. Fabric Report

The PCC received its 2022 Quinquennial Inspection report in January 2023, from our architect, St Ann's Gate Architects. The report identified no major risks, but many items needing attention, alongside our plans under the Giving for Living project (see page 6).

Works carried out during 2023 included:

- securing loose stones on the south boundary wall;
- replacing the external tap;
- further work to address the drainage issues, which are causing damp in the walls and the deterioration of the internal paintwork;
- clearing of gutters;
- trimming of the large trees at the east end of the church;

- treating a small amount of woodworm near the organ;
- repairs to an internal doorway in the Parish Hall, following damage by a private hirer bringing in bouncy castle equipment.

The following Quinquennial Report Works are all currently in hand:

Annual maintenance:

- Clear rainwater goods and gullies (for completion in 2024);
- Remove plant growth to base of building;

For immediate attention:

- Investigate rainwater goods at east end (for completion in 2024);

For attention within 2 yrs:

- Establish type of paint used internally ahead of any redecoration / internal works (for completion in 2024);

For attention within 5 yrs:

- External drainage works - (for completion in 2024);

For attention within 10 yrs:

- Consider upgrade to heating system and boiler house removal (**this is now a priority**, following the failure of the oil tank in January 2024);
- Monitor condition of weathervane post (see right - this is being repaired and regilded now, following damage during a storm, for completion in 2024).



The following Quinquennial Report Works are for future attention:

Annual maintenance:

- Monitor insect activity and report changes;

For attention within 5 yrs:

- Redecorate external paintwork;
- Glazing repairs ;
- Commission structural engineer condition report on structural timbers;

For attention within 10 yrs:

- Redecorate rainwater goods;
- Repair, conserve and repoint Churchyard monuments;
- Churchyard railings - repair and redecorate;
- Pin belfry mullion;
- Localised masonry repairs.

Suggested improvements:

- Re-lay uneven steps

The goods and ornaments of the church are all in place and in general are in good repair. The City Council continues to cut the grass in the churchyard and is responsible for keeping the hedges trimmed. We received a report on the condition of the organ, which recommends a significant level of refurbishment.

Andy Wainwright and Malcolm Bruce

6. Giving for Living at St Bart's - Project Plans

The "Giving for Living at St Bart's" campaign started in March 2022, to raise funds for a significant programme of work to conserve and repair the historic fabric of the church, whilst also making sensitive alterations in order to better serve the needs of its community, for worship and wider community events.

A sub-group of the PCC has been formed to manage the project, chaired by myself as Fabric Officer, and including the Rector, the Churchwarden, and Lady Walker (Rosemary). The PCC's appointed architect, Louise Salman from St Ann's Gate Architects, has produced a feasibility study in line with our Design Brief, which details our ambitions to:

1. Install a new sustainable boiler with modern controls. This is an urgent requirement following the failure of the oil tank recently, which means that there is no heating in the church. It is necessary to improve our heating system so that we can provide sufficient comfort for the many different users of the building, from worshippers to volunteers to visitors. Achieving this, whilst cutting our greenhouse gas emissions and conserving historic interiors, creates specific technical challenges for church buildings. A church's heating system affects its fabric, its contents, its congregation and its mission. Heating makes up the vast majority (over 80%) of its energy use and carbon footprint. Heating costs money to run, maintain and replace.
2. Make surface water improvements by installing French drains and soakaways to prevent dampness to external fabric and any future flooding to the church.
3. Refurbish the external fabric of our building by completing the maintenance works identified in our Quinquennial Inspection survey, prepared by St Ann's Gate Architects last year. Of particular importance are repairs to the roof and rainwater goods to the church and the tower where necessary. We also want to repair the weathervane (part of which fell down in high winds during the year) and refix it to the tower. This work was started in March 2024.
4. Improve the level access into the northwest entrance to the church, by expanding the entrance footpath, so that those with wheelchairs, pushchairs and walking aids can easily gain entry and egress. This is particularly important because this is the only level access fire escape route. The church's main entrance on the south side comprises a number of steps which limits access, particularly for those who need a level way in or out.
5. Carry out urgent repairs to some of the internal plasterwork.
6. Resurface, upgrade or repair the timber flooring.
7. Carry out research to discover whether there are any mediaeval wall paintings behind the plasterwork. On completion of the work, we want to redecorate all spaces internally.
8. Remove all pews and replace them with chairs which can be stacked. Any memorials on the pews would be kept and can be identified on a wall plaque. We also want to provide tables to improve flexible seating arrangements so that the church can be used for worship and for many community activities previously provided by Hyde Parish Hall.
9. Provide a new servery facility within the church.
10. Create areas within the church to provide separate rooms in the north aisle and the north transept, by dividing these spaces with glazed partitions.
11. Upgrade the audio-visual system and install a ceiling-mounted projector and electric ceiling-mounted retractable screen.
12. Install a new external porch door and screen to the main entrance on the south side.
13. Consult the planning authority to discover whether solar panel installation could be installed to the south facing roof.

14. Improve our telling of the story of our links with Hyde Abbey and King Alfred the Great, by creating a heritage area to be used by visitors to the church, including the local community, tourists and people interested in the past. This will also involve reordering some pews and new items of furniture. This part of the project is the subject of a planned application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund, and will involve working alongside community partners such as the University of Winchester School of History and Archaeology. Their MA students would gain a good opportunity for practical experience, while producing two high-quality videos and sound recordings. The church's plans for a dedicated heritage area also offer an exciting opportunity to extend the educational scope of school visits, particularly because of the local link with the Anglo-Saxons and the story of King Alfred the Great, whose image is so prominent in Winchester. We already have strong links with St Bede Church of England Primary School, and other schools in the city would also be encouraged to use this as a new learning resource to support their teaching about this period of history and about the city. Hampshire County Council have kindly donated £550 for a monastic herb garden which we hope to site on the south lawn.

After discussion of initial ideas, St Ann's Gate Architects produced (in February 2024) a modified proposal, which would begin by addressing the priorities identified by the PCC, accommodating a new boiler room and providing improved level access. Rather than extend the building, this could be achieved by making a new opening in the north aisle. This is proposed to take the form of a sensitively achieved new opening in an altered window in the westernmost gable of the north aisle. The extension would provide much-needed toilet facilities and storage for wheelchairs and pushchairs. The work would need to be planned and phased so that the church can remain open for services and events where possible during the construction contract.

The funds raised from the sale of the Parish Hall will enable the initial stages of this project to proceed apace. We are continuing to apply for grants, donations and in-kind support from local businesses, local trusts and funders e.g. local authorities and charities, national grant-givers e.g. trusts and funders and we are about to make a grant application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

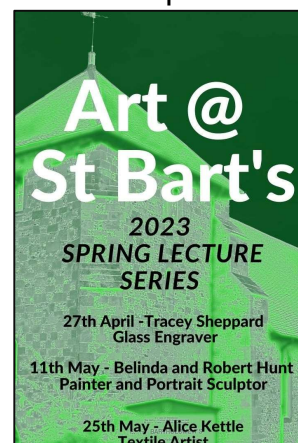
The funds and pledges raised so far (to February 2024) for the Giving for Living appeal amount to approximately £75,000, excluding proceeds from the Parish Hall sale.

Andy Wainwright (Giving for Living Appeal Co-ordinator)

7. Giving for Living - Fundraising Events

The PCC's Fundraising Group, chaired by Rose Burns, worked hard to put on a programme of events that were interesting, entertaining, generally well-supported, and, most importantly, gratifyingly successful in raising funds for the Giving for Living @ St Bart's Appeal. We are most grateful to everyone who has helped or attended or made generous donations.

Art @ St Bart's: Master Glass Engraver, Tracey Sheppard, very generously organised a series of three illustrated lectures during April and May, showcasing the work of four highly skilled artists who have connections with Hyde. It was a fascinating, informative and inspiring insight into the careers and work of Tracey herself, Robert Hunt (portrait sculptor), Belinda Hunt (decorative mural



painter), and Alice Kettle (stitch storyteller). The artists very kindly gave their time for free, showed examples of their work and answered the audience's avid questions over a glass of wine afterwards. The series raised a net profit of over £2200, and we are most grateful to friends from Hyde900 who helped with serving the refreshments. A second series is planned for 2024, featuring artists in media that were important to Hyde Abbey: stonemasonry, stained glass and pottery.

Eden Stell Duo: a wonderful summer concert was given by this talented and internationally-renowned guitar duo, with a programme ranging from Mozart and Ravel to modern composers Babajanyan and Castelnuovo-Tedesco. The event raised around £700 for the Giving for Living Appeal.

Patronal Festival Weekend Open Day: in August we had displays from local organisations and showed some of the work done by the PCC's appointed architect, St Ann's Gate Architects, as a foretaste of the kind of improvements we might see in St Bartholomew's. We welcomed a visit from Steve Brine MP.

Christmas Fair: we were delighted at the success of this event in November, which was a real community affair, with a fabulous array of locally-made art and crafts on sale, including aprons, tea towels and preserves (Winchester Go LD); hats by Deirdre Wood; calendars and cards by Tracey Sheppard; and a range of gifts offered by Hyde WI, Hyde900 and Wilder Hyde, as well as the unique JDryer Company, Kingsgate Books & Prints, Fab Wine (Italian wine importers) and Toscanaccio, the Parchment Street Italian delicatessen. Christmas trees and wreaths were available to order, and the stand-out feature was a superb raffle, with high value prizes donated by stallholders and local businesses, to whom we are most grateful. St Bartholomew's had a table of gifts and decorations, plus its popular homemade cakes for sale, as well as offering coffee and cake, mulled wine and mince pies. It was very well attended and made a profit of over £2200. Many thanks to Rose Burns, Lawrence Talks and Malcolm Bruce for all their organisation (including moving several pews to create space for all the stalls).

A Christmas Carol: in December John Lofthouse returned with a clever new one-man presentation of the classic Dickens story. Attendance was not as strong as we had hoped but still resulted in £240 for the Appeal.

The fundraising group meets monthly and is always happy to welcome new members or hear suggestions for events or activities that people are willing to organise.

The Revd. Karen Kousseff

8. HIHCT Ride & Stride



What a day it was on Saturday 9th September for the annual Ride & Stride! It was forecast to be the hottest day of the year, so I started the ride at 8am and finished soon after noon, having visited seven churches along the Itchen Valley. From St Bartholomew's, I rode to three churches dedicated to St Mary (at King's Worthy, Easton and Avington), St John's church at Itchen Abbas and churches dedicated to St Swithun at Martyr Worthy and Headbourne Worthy.

This event raised money both for St Bartholomew's and for the Hampshire and The Islands Historic Churches Trust (HIHCT). Any money raised was split 50/50 between the Trust and our church.

HIHCT is a non-denominational charity that raises funds to save the County's beautiful heritage church buildings for the next generation. It provides grants for repair, restoration, and modernising facilities. The annual R+S Day is invariably a fun and enjoyable day for individuals, groups, or families to get out and about exploring the countryside and heritage of Hampshire.

The Trust has supported St Bartholomew's with a grant towards its Tower Appeal for work completed two years ago and has pledged a further grant in its current appeal, Giving for Living at St Bart's. The planned improvements will ensure more people are able to access the building, to experience its heritage first-hand and enable us to better support our local community.

I raised £630 in sponsorship for the Trust and HIHCT gave us a donation of half of the amount we raised (ie £315), which was transferred to the Giving for Living at St Bart's Appeal.

Andy Wainwright

9. Children and Families Ministry

This ministry has been reshaped during 2023, partly because it has not been possible to replace our Children & Families Worker, who left at the end of 2022, but also because of having fewer volunteers. Some have understandably stepped down after many years' faithful involvement, and I am most grateful to them for all their time and commitment for so long. If you feel a calling to this ministry in any way, from serving drinks to leading activities, please get in touch with me. Messy Church in particular cannot take place without a team of volunteers, so is now 'on pause', but we still have a lot of contact with families, through our Little Wrigglers toddler group and our relationship with St Bede Church of England Primary School.

Messy Church was put on for Good Friday and was attended by several families, including some from Little Wrigglers. We hoped to put on a summer picnic in the churchyard on 15th July, but the weather was too wet to be outside, so at the last minute it turned into an indoor Messy Church on the theme of St Swithun! It was after this that the reality had to be faced of having too few volunteers and an age group of children who are really too young for the Messy Church format, so it is time to refocus our ministry accordingly.

Little Wrigglers is therefore a priority: it is proving a great way to build relationships with new families and is a very relaxed and happy gathering, every Wednesday in term time, even resulting in a number of baptisms. The adults really enjoy the time for a chat and having a cup of tea made for them, and the children love all the toys, many of which formerly belonged to the now defunct Hyde Tots group. We all greatly enjoyed a Christmas party. Having the seating area at the west end of the nave is a great blessing for this group. Many thanks to Emily Mantell for valiantly providing the refreshments every week. We would love to have some more help though, whether regularly or on an occasional basis.

The **Advent Posada** was enjoyed by 15 households this year, hosting the figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey as they travelled around the parish on their journey to 'Bethlehem'. We received lots of pictures of children enjoying the nativity story with them and engaging them in all sorts of activities, such as meeting the dog, reading stories, baking, and even circumnavigating the Christmas Tree on a train.



Christingle & Crib Service: combining these two occasions into one, on Christmas Eve, proved to be very popular. It was wonderful to see the church packed with families, and the 60 Christingles were only just enough to go round. Thank you to Andy and Julia Wainewright who helped me prepare them all. We were able to pass £190 on to The Children's Society.

At **St Bede School**, Clare Talks and I continue to serve as Foundation Governors, and I have enjoyed many visits to the school during the year, whether to talk about aspects of faith or Church practice, to attend performances and Collective Worship, or simply to serve the school by listening to children read. It is always a joy to host the children in St Bartholomew's Church, whether it's a year group visit or the annual service for the Year 6 children who are about to move on to secondary education. In December the upper juniors invited their parents and carers to the church to watch their performances of the nativity story. Many thanks to Cathy Seago who organised an excellent session in Hyde Parish Hall in August, for children who were about to start school in the Reception year. It gave them and their parents a great chance to get to know each other so that there would be familiar faces on the first day of term.

Heritage Open Days: on 16th September we offered 'Sculpt a Selfie' to tie in with this year's theme of 'Creativity Unwrapped', taking inspiration from the different faces in the church, made in wood, stone or glass. Despite taking advantage of the HODs publicity, sadly this was very poorly attended, being in competition with bigger, more central events for children, eg in the Cathedral and City Museum.

As we move into 2024 we continue to look for ways of building relationships, looking for different ways to offer feasible and appropriate activities to the many families in the community of Hyde and Abbotts Barton.

The Revd. Karen Kousseff

10. Pastoral Work

Pastoral visits across the Benefice continue to support those who welcome them, and especially those who are no longer able to get to church. Home Communion is available from both the Ministry Team and Pastoral Visitors and we are glad to be able to include them in this way in our church community.

We have seven Pastoral Visitors plus three members of the Ministry Team, who are visiting more than thirty members of the Benefice. We meet regularly under the guidance of Liz Baron and the Revd. Amanda Goulding, to support one another, share good practice, and occasionally listen to experts who might come to speak to us on a special topic. Three members of our team have retired this year but they continue to visit and keep in contact with members of the church community, but now as friends.

In addition to the pastoral visiting happening within the Benefice, we currently also provide support to the St John's *Hand in Hand* scheme, which works alongside GP practices to fulfil their requests for what is known as 'Social Prescribing': pastoral visiting to those living within a parish, fulfilled by volunteers from that parish. At present we have just one of our Pastoral Visitors visiting one person living within one of our parishes.

We are all involved in regular safeguarding training and hold current DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificates. We carry out visits and make contact in accordance with those guidelines. Some Pastoral Visits have been made at home and some occur over tea or coffee in a mutually agreed public place. A lot of contact is made by phone calls. We are blessed by the dedication of our Pastoral Visitors, who clearly find fulfilment in this role, and the feedback we receive from these visits and phone calls is very positive.

Rosie Duffy and Kathryn Whelan, Safeguarding Officers for the two parishes, have been immensely helpful in guiding us in gaining access to the statutory training required by the National Church, through the Diocese, and ensuring our training and DBS status is kept up to date.

We are often alerted to pastoral need by other parishioners, so if you know of anyone who would appreciate contact from a Pastoral Visitor, please leave a message with Sara in the office, and she will contact us.

Liz Baron (Facilitator for Pastoral Visitors for the Benefice)

11. The Martin-Wheeler Trust

This Trust was transferred to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (HIWCF) in 2021, in compliance with Charity Commission advice. The money is now held by HIWCF as an endowment fund named 'The St Bartholomew's Martin-Wheeler Fund'. Every year HIWCF draws down 5% of the fund for distribution according to the agreed objectives. The primary area of benefit remains the Ecclesiastical Parish of Hyde (including Abbotts Barton), and the objective remains the support and care of "the poor, sick, elderly or distressed persons and their relatives who reside in their own homes". It may also be allocated to organisations who support such people, including in the civil parish ward and the wider city.

For 2023, the amount available to be distributed from the St Bartholomew's Martin-Wheeler Fund was £5,500, and the PCC's representatives (myself, Andy Wainwright and Libby Neale) decided it should be awarded as follows:

Trinity Winchester	£1,000
Winchester Go LD	£1,000
Friends of the Family (Winchester)	£1,500
Winchester Citizens Advice	£2,000 for use as hardship grants

Parishioners are encouraged to send anyone who might qualify for a grant direct to HIWCF or via Winchester Citizens Advice, who will do a full review of a person's situation and may be able to offer other help as well, such as debt counselling. It is very gratifying that this money is now being used according to its objectives.

The Revd. Karen Kousseff

12. Overseas Links

St Bartholomew's takes part in overseas outreach by sponsoring the education of a child at the Ikona Hillside School in Kisiizi, Uganda. This is part of a well-established link initiated by the parish of St Lawrence with St Swithun, which had parishioners who had visited and/or worked at Kisiizi Hospital, a Christian Hospital originally founded by CMS in our link diocese of North Kigezi in Uganda.

Members of the parish also started to sponsor orphans at a school not far from the hospital, called Ikona Hillside School, and continue to do so. The parish supported nurse training, other expenditure at the hospital and a house for teachers.

Now the child sponsorship is through Kisiizi Partners, a charity based in Reading and occasionally includes children at different schools in N. Kigezi. New sponsors are always needed. Do please contact me if you would like to sponsor a child.

Each year in the autumn Kisiizi Partners hold an annual day near Reading which I have attended for the past two years (since Covid), which has been reported in our Parish Magazine and online. A collection is also held annually during Advent beginning at the Advent Sunday lunch (kindly prepared by the social committee). The recent collection for 2023 raised £1775.50 before Gift Aid.

The Overseas Group also encouraged links with the Church of the province of Myanmar, which St Lawrence parish continues to support annually. The parish contributed to the training in England of a student from Myanmar, who returned to work at home in ministry. We would really welcome help from someone gifted online to promote our links with Myanmar.

Meriel Walton

13. Home Groups

The Benefice holds regular home groups throughout the year for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. During 2023 we had home groups in Lent and Advent and have commenced a new series of meetings during Lent 2024.

In Lent 2023 we did a course on the Psalms, designed by the Scottish Bible Society, which was much appreciated. This brought members much closer to understanding the Psalms in the context of the time they were written in, as well as their application in present times. This course had 27 participants meeting in four groups.

Our Advent course was called 'Journeying through Advent', using a booklet of daily Bible readings and group study material, produced by the Bible Reading Fellowship. This course had 13 participants meeting in two groups.

We have commenced a Lent course encouraging everyday discipleship, called 'Seeking Shapes for Living' developed by the Diocese of Gloucester, with 26 participants meeting in four groups. We are exploring the best time to offer a course in the second half of the year.

Tom Nell

14. Benefice Prayer Group

The Benefice prayer group has been meeting regularly on the third Monday throughout the year. We usually meet at one of our houses in Hyde. There are six of us: three from St Lawrence and three from St Bart's. Very democratic! We take it in turns to lead the prayers, and there are times of quiet and stillness, when those who wish can add their own. We pray for our churches, the diocese, the wider world and offer prayers for those who we know are in particular need at the time. We always end by linking hands and saying the Grace together. We have now been meeting for some years and would always welcome new members.

Sue Tisdall

15. Julian Group

The Julian group has continued to meet on a Tuesday afternoon, regularly throughout the year: always virtually, and where possible in person too. We take it in turns to choose a reflection and I email it to the group on a Sunday. We also have a WhatsApp group on which we can share afterwards if we want to. We are always open to new members so anyone interested do contact me.

Sue Tisdall

16. Environmental Officer's Report

The Church of England expresses its mission in what it calls “The Five Marks of Mission” and the 5th Mark is ‘the Care of Creation’. Caring for Creation can take many forms and it can involve a group of people or by individuals. Across the benefice we demonstrate our commitment to this in different ways.

During June there was a ‘**Count on Nature**’ afternoon in St Bartholomew’s churchyard, a national initiative of the charity ‘Love Your Burial Ground’. With the help of the iNaturalist app, local knowledge and some gardening books, we managed to spot many different varieties of plants, from the tiny Speedwell to the huge yew tree. We contributed 127 plant observations to the national database, covering 86 species!

In September we took part in the **Winchester Green Week** theme of **Growing Greener Together**. There was an amazing wall-to-wall display, held in St Lawrence Church from 23 September - 3 October 2023. Parishioners, photographically or otherwise, demonstrated how they, individually or as a household, were growing greener within their lifestyle. From electric cars to wild gardening, to community commitment (litter picking), it was all demonstrated in the display. We had many visitors!



Our 4th **Recycle Sunday** event took place on 28th January 2024 in St Lawrence Church, after the morning service, supported by parishioners from both parishes. There were two goals: (1) Recycling and (2) Donating to an agreed charity. Parishioners were encouraged to bring any unwanted/unused gifts to the church. This year’s chosen charity was The Winchester Hospice. A magnificent (pre-gift aid) £1804 was raised and handed over to a delighted Winchester Hospice. Gifts not taken up were given to the Mountbatten Hospice Charity Shop, to maintain the hospice thread.

Most months an environmental themed article or reflection has been put in our United Benefice Magazine.

Christine Pilgrim (Benefice Environmental Officer)

17. Space in the City

This year I was astounded to note that it is some thirty years since the inception of *Space in the City* talks, and twenty years since I became involved. Canon David Scott had been appointed as Rector of St Lawrence with St Swithun, and Warden of Spirituality for the Diocese. There was a natural connection between his focus and that of various enthusiastic members of the parish, including the Reader (LLM) Dr Margaret Marshall and parishioner Graham Guest's passion for 'Kingdom Living' brought to the workplace: melded together the ideas gave birth to *Space in the City*.

Originally, these lunch-time talks were intended to be available for anyone working in town or coming in for shopping or appointments; those in the local offices could take time out at 12.30 for a half hour talk and a sandwich before going back to work. These days few people take a 'lunch hour' and are more likely to eat at their desk or be working from home, but we still have an enthusiastic following, and adding Zoom recordings to the website has meant more access for all.


The first series to be recorded and available in the archive was in the autumn of 1995, *Yes to God's Earth*, and others followed, focussing on the arts and spirituality, the environment, and theological themes, presented by lively and interesting speakers. Look at the archive and see the range and expertise!

www.spaceinthecity.org.uk

At its height, *Space in the City* offered three series of talks each year and had need of the larger capacity of the United Church to accommodate the audiences. Nowadays, in a post-Covid world, we avoid the winter months, and have one series a year, in late spring, and still attract interest and enthusiasm.

In Spring 2023 we enjoyed four talks on *Sacred Spaces*, where four speakers showed us the ways that the arts enhance the sacred in a space. Andreas Andreopoulos came back to speak about Icons, bringing dozens of slides for us to look at. I followed with my own illustrated talk on some amazing examples of beautiful modern church architecture. Thomas Denny, the renowned stained-glass artist, brought slides of his own beautiful work in a variety of churches and talked about the way they are created, and we ended with the return of Bishop Christopher Herbert talking about works of art entitled *Noli Me Tangere*, and the Resurrection in Art.

Space in the City
Early Summer 2024
The Church of St Lawrence
Winchester

spiritual

Five talks on spiritual traditions that have shaped lives and religious practice over the centuries and how they still influence our flourishing today

12.30-1.15pm on a Wednesday Lunchtime
starting on Wednesday 17th April 2024

Admission free Donations are most welcome

See the archive at www.spaceinthecity.org.uk

Coming up in April/May 2024 we are looking forward to a full series of talks called *Spiritual*, looking at spiritual traditions that have shaped lives and religious practice over the centuries and how they still influence our flourishing today, with some excellent speakers lined up.

I am grateful for the help and encouragement of the churchwardens of St Lawrence with St Swithun parish, and to all the parishioners for their practical and moral support; as always, I have much gratitude for the committee of Denis and Jeannette Archdeacon, and Nigel Close, our treasurer.

The Revd. Amanda Goulding

18. Winchester Deanery Synod

The Synod met twice during the year, as the summer meeting was cancelled.

At its March meeting, the Deanery Synod agreed to submit to Diocesan Synod a proposal for (in summary) the increase of clergy rest periods from 24 hours in any one week to 36 hours in any one week. This proposal was duly presented at the Diocesan Synod and passed with a very strong majority. The next step for it was to go to the Archbishop's Council, who then presented it to the General Synod, where it is now (29.2.24) on the agenda.

There was a discussion on how to use lay ministries across the Deanery, specifically Bishop's Commission for Mission, Bishop's Permission to Preach and Licensed Lay Ministers. The aim was to create a register of those who are willing to go to other parishes. It was recognised that they cannot, of course, provide Eucharistic cover, but they could potentially stand in for services of the word and preaching (no further news on this).

At the October meeting the Area Dean, the Revd. Ed Dines, presented Diocesan statistics which showed that almost 50 people leave our Deanery churches every year. He also presented the priorities for deanery parishes, as stated by them, as follows:

- 1) Youth & Children
- 2) Inter/Intra Deanery Support
- 3) Volunteers / BCM / LLMs
- 4) Minority Groups
- 5) Services

What could the Deanery do to help? Ed launched the **Deanery Ideas Fayre** initiative, which is about:

- resourcing each other and celebrating what God is doing in our parishes;
- creating links between people in the parishes who often are working alone, giving sparks of ideas, but also someone else to talk through practicalities.

The Fayre will take place at St Paul's Church in Winchester on Saturday April 13th 2024, with displays from different Benefices of what's working well, coffee tables for cream tea and chat, and two or three keynote speakers sharing an initiative that has worked well, including possible Q&A sessions. All churches are invited to host a table. St Bartholomew's will have a table to show the Giving for Living Project plans. **All church members are invited to come and pick up ideas.**

There followed two examples of Deanery-wide working together:

1. A paper was circulated about Eli Gent offering her time free of charge to support Deanery Benefices. Eli is a Licensed Lay Worker who acts as a support worker for children, youth and families for Benefices in the Winchester Deanery. She has had an initial conversation with the Rector about how to reshape our Children & Families ministry, based at St Bartholomew's.
2. There was a Q&A presentation of the recent Deanery Trip to Uganda. It was noted that the Revd. Brian Wakelin in particular was very experienced in working across cultures and abroad. He would be very happy to offer his expertise in planning trips abroad for churches with links abroad. A film was shown of an interview with some of the 50 Readers that were financially supported by the Deanery, and many thanks were given for the generous donations of the churches in the Deanery.

Alys Blakeway, Deanery Synod Rep

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as a place of

Living History...Living Faith...Living Community

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Thank you.



**St Bartholomew's Church
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Registered Charity No. 1207015**

www.threesaints.org.uk/st-bartholomew

For details of all our services and events, and to sign up for our weekly newsletter, please visit our website. All correspondence should be sent to St Lawrence Parish Office, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LH
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