

**allsaints**worcester

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020  
Governance and Operations

## **VICAR'S REPORT**

This report is noticeably shorter than usual (you may be pleased to see) as for the first time we have asked our ministry leaders to provide their 2020 update via video. There is much to be thankful for, and though the year has been an incredibly tough and one in which we have experienced incredible loss, both as a community and as individuals, the film gives me so much hope that the church is firing in so many ways.

The film is available on the All Saints Worcester YouTube channel (something else we did not have before lockdown in March 2020!). It is great viewing for encouragement and a delight to see some of the faces of our faithful volunteers and hear how leaders and their teams have adapted and re-created ways to reach out and connect with people and to be the church.

The report that follows gives insight to more of the behind the scenes activity that has gone on to help the church function within a safe and healthy environment.

***Rev Dr Rich Johnson***

*Vicar*

*March 2021*

## **PCC**

Since the last (and very recent) APCM on 9th November 2020, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) has met four times. In November 2020 we welcomed four new PCC members on to the council: Sarah Kelsey, Steve Chase, Amy Williams and Mike Croft and are so very grateful to these and our existing members who give of their time, skills, knowledge and resources to guide and input in to key decisions around church finances and governance.

Despite having to meet via Zoom during this period we have kept our discipline of always starting our meetings with a time of worship, as we share stories and give thanks for what God is doing in and through the church. What comes through clearly in our discussion is the commitment of the PCC to see All Saints Worcester fulfil its purpose as the church: being good news to the city of Worcester, using resources wisely, honouring its volunteers and staff team, and protecting and maintaining our buildings, and providing a safe environment and culture for church community activity.

We are missing three Deanery Synod representatives at present and hope to appoint these to strengthen our communication link with the Deanery particularly following the creation of a new Worcester Deanery which looks to reinvigorate collaboration and more resource sharing between parishes.

You can read more about the actions and achievements of the PCC in the Annual Report and Accounts 2020, written by the Treasurer, Grahame Lucas.

If you would like to know more about PCC, its activities and records, or if you are interested in becoming a PCC member please get in touch with Rich Johnson or Philippa Barton, the PCC Secretary and we would love to talk to you.

***Philippa Barton***

*PCC Secretary*

*March 2021*

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## **ELECTORAL ROLL**

At the APCM on 9th November 2020 the electoral roll stood at 166. The annual electoral roll revision took place in March 2021. Over the course of the last four months since the last APCM 13 names have been added and 0 names have been removed. The new roll stands at 179.

***Philippa Barton***

*Electoral Roll Officer*

## SAFEGUARDING

We have a responsibility from God to protect all who may be young or vulnerable and keep them safe.

At All Saints we want to welcome everyone to become involved in our mission, for we would not be the vibrant church that we are today without everyone's involvement. Safeguarding is never an easy subject to consider but if we see safeguarding only as a set of inconvenient rules then we miss the bigger picture. It is only by setting boundaries and developing robust structures to keep everyone safe that we can have the confidence and freedom to be fully inclusive. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all in the All Saints community and is becoming more embedded within our culture as time progresses.

Safeguarding is not just about ensuring the wellbeing and protection of children and young people. Adults can also be permanently or temporarily vulnerable due to, for example, age, illness or personal circumstances.

This year has presented the Church with many challenges, as well as many opportunities; most ministries have had to develop new and creative methods to meet and continue to provide the prayer, support and discipleship to their members throughout the pandemic. This has resulted in different challenges for safeguarding – how can we ensure safety for our children, young people and vulnerable adults when new digital technologies are being utilised? New policies have been written and reviewed to support the fast-moving developing technologies – for example our social media policy is currently being reviewed to ensure the safety of our young people in the community.

### **Practical Safeguarding Measures:**

- All Saints follows the CofE Safer Recruitment policy. This is a formal application-based process for appointing people to roles. During the past year a major drive has been to centralise recruitment admin so that its channeled through the office instead of being primarily the responsibility of the ministry leader. The reason for this change is primarily one of visibility and consistency.
- Where a role requires a DBS, we use an on-line application system - much easier and quicker for volunteers than the old paper-based forms.
- **Operational Safeguarding group** meets every 6 weeks to review the processes involved in safer recruitment and safeguarding. The administration has moved from a paper based system to completely electronic with files securely stored in shared files accessible to relevant team members. This has also enabled remote working to be more effective.
- In addition, because so many roles have had to temporarily cease due to the pandemic, the number of applications for volunteer roles has reduced dramatically meaning the OSG's main focus has been refining the recruitment process.
- **Strategic Safeguarding group** meeting takes place bi-annually. The team discuss specific safeguarding concerns and appropriate mitigating actions which may be taken to protect all

members of the community at All Saints. The last meeting took place in October in a rare socially distanced face to face meeting!

- Mark Carrington continues to update and manage the Parish dashboard which reports and tracks all safer recruitment and safeguarding issues.

### **Key headlines:**

- 7 DBS applications have been processed – 2 of which were renewals. No referrals to Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) were required.
- 22 volunteers were safely recruited to a variety of church ministry teams this year. 37 volunteers were safely recruited to Worcester Foodbank during the past year.
- 7 volunteers have completed Basic Awareness (C0) safeguarding training
- 7 volunteers have completed Foundation (C1) safeguarding training
- 1 volunteers has completed Leadership (C2) safeguarding training
- There have been 3 safeguarding incidents in the past year which resulted in no harm to any member of our community. Advice was sought from the DSA and action taken in all incidents to reduce the chance of the incidents occurring again.
- There have been no serious incident reports made to the Charity Commission during this year
- Change in advice from Diocese Safeguarding Team is that all churchwardens should complete C2 safeguarding training at their next training point.

Our church has continued to have a wealth of volunteers willing to give up their time for the support of others and extend God's kingdom even and especially in the difficult year we have gone through. Thank you to everyone who, in their work, supports safeguarding by:

- Safeguarding each other, especially children and vulnerable adults.
- Attending the diocesan safeguarding training if your role requires it.
- Reporting anything which does not feel right.

Other key people with safeguarding responsibilities are:

### **Rich Johnson, Incumbent - with responsibility to**

- Create an environment which enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently.
- Ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the diocesan safeguarding adviser (DSA).
- Log any concerns about children or adults in the parish and make sure that the proper advice is sought/proper referrals are made.
- Chair the Strategic Safeguarding Group and keep a log of decisions made

### **Ministry Leaders:**

- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding practices happen within your ministry area.

- Receive any safeguarding concerns from your teams and handle them appropriately.
- Consult the wider team e.g. Incumbent, Safer Recruitment Lead, PSO as needed.

**Mark Carrington – Safer recruitment Lead:**

- Ensure that all applicable posts are safely recruited, and records maintained.
- Ensure that an “activity risk assessment” is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity, which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults, and run in the name of the Church.
- Maintain the Parish Dashboard.

**Sue Price – Parish Safeguarding Officer:**

- Work closely with the incumbent and ministry leaders on all safeguarding issues.
- Determine the appropriate level of DBS check for each role.
- Chair the Operational Safeguarding Group, keeping a log of decisions made and any incidents that arise.

The responsibility for safeguarding at Worcester Foodbank has been delegated to Grahame Lucas, Foodbank Manager, by the PCC.

As the Church of England safeguarding policy states,

‘The good news speaks of a welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy.’ (2018)

I believe this is what is happening in All Saints because the responsibility of safeguarding is taken seriously by everyone within our community. It has been a pleasure to work this year with such committed people since taking on this role in June.

**Sue Price**

*Parish Safeguarding Officer*

*March 2021*

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## **OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

From the period of 2020 to 2021, all areas of church life had the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic influencing how they have been run, or halted. It continued to bring a multitude of operational challenges and updates to facilitate different areas of church life. Some of these changes have been visible, and others happening more behind the scenes.

### **Coronavirus pandemic**

February 2020 saw the Coronavirus reach the UK. Like much of the country, it hit us sideways on, but All Saints responded quickly to the frequently changing advice and situation.

Before the initial lockdown started and the church closed its physical doors, we initiated health and safety measures to protect the community, which evolved over the year for the time periods when we were allowed to be open. When the lockdown inevitably hit, by the first week we had opened our 'virtual doors' and moved our gatherings online as well as initiating morning and night prayer, which have run daily on youtube ever since.

When the government implemented the first national lockdown, All Saints was quick to adapt:

- Our pastoral care team went into overdrive to ensure that people on our database were being regularly contacted and checked up upon. Additionally, plans were drafted to provide support for those who may contract the virus and required to fully self-isolate.
- The All Saints sound desk was upgraded, with reliable internet installed to allow for live-streaming from the church.
- We set up two pro zoom accounts to be used for the staff team and groups to facilitate contact.
- Staff were set up to work remotely from home.
- Andy Smith was quick to initiate the first of our online Alpha courses.
- St Helen's became a temporary overflow location for the influx of food donations to Worcester Foodbank.
- New COVID-19 health and safety and HR policies were drafted for best practice in the staff team and for the times when we have been able to use our churches and facilities.
- For those in our community who we were aware would struggle with using the internet and engaging with online church, we created support packs so that they could follow the teaching.

As the year has progressed and social interaction restrictions fluctuated between full lockdown to being able to meet in smaller groups, we became more flexible in our church operations and activities to flow with the changes, whilst striving to meet the needs of our community.

At several points in the year when restrictions were lessened we initiated 'in-person' church gatherings at reduced capacity and in a COVID-19 secure way. To control numbers we initiated a ticket system, with each household family group being able to sit together. The seating has been arranged to space groups 2 metres apart, as well as various other H&S measures put in place so as to protect everyone present. We saw a completely online Holy

Week and Easter Sunday celebrations in 2020, but were able to allow a reduced capacity Advent and Christmas celebration over the December 2020.

Life groups and mid week communities were encouraged to find new ways to connect. Although there has been real struggle and loss of community for some people not being able to meet face to face, some groups such as Artspace have really been able to flourish by meeting over zoom. Other group successes have been the emergence of the Men Together group, as well as the multiple prayer groups that meet online throughout the week.

Throughout the year, Rich and Owen have put emphasis on leading us into envisioning what the Holy Spirit might be leading us into for this period and the next, once we start to emerge from the pandemic. We are viewing it as a potential reset point for a lot of what and how we go about doing things as we evolve as a community and engage with the Holy Spirit in our communities and in our city. Along with the upcoming reordering works in St Helen's, and our resourcing church activities, there will be a lot of new operational activities in the next year.

## **HR and Staff Updates**

2020 continued to see changes to our staff team.

- We took advantage of the furlough scheme to support Lucy our church cleaner, ensuring that we also took the step of supplementing her pay so that it wasn't cut in real terms for the scheme. Additionally, we paid for Lucy to take an online cleaning training course whilst she was on furlough.
- In July 2020, Jess Fellows joined the church as our new curate.
- In September 2020 we recruited Jan Mitchell in a maternity cover position for Rachael Harwood as a Finance Assistant, so as to continue supporting Grahame Lucas in his role as our Church Treasurer.
- Also in September 2020 we appointed Ruth Allsopp as Operations Coordinator for Worcester Foodbank
- Sue Price took on the role of as our Parish Safeguarding Officer

Announced upcoming changes:

- It has been announced that after completing his ordinand training with us at All Saints, Fraser Oates will be our next curate, scheduled to take up the role in the summer of 2021.
- Andy Smith will be moving to St Peter's church in Bengeworth, Evesham to launch a church renewal project with his family on completion of his curacy in the summer of 2021 We will continue to network and have close relationship with Andy and St Peter's, and look forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit will work through this.



## **Safeguarding, Safer recruitment and volunteering**

The main safeguarding report will be located separately, however it's implications on operations require some brief mentions. Firstly, Sue has done a fantastic job of assuming the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer after a good hand over from Tim and Diane Marlow.

Even though a lot of our groups have stopped meeting in person, we have met new challenges of how to navigate safeguarding with so much more online activity. Additionally, with various the new online groups being set up, safeguarding and safer recruitment has been active throughout the pandemic. With this, the DBS process has become quicker, and we have continued to ask our teams who need safeguarding training to take the diocese online course.

The next stage when we emerge from the pandemic and start meeting back in-person more is to gauge the health of our many volunteer teams to establish where we need additional help and assistance from the church community.

## **Eco church**

Eco church is a relatively new concept which we as a church and a Diocese have subscribed to. It is a call on churches to become more eco friendly and is a project that is gaining momentum around the country across many denominations and churches. Before this point, All Saints already strove to play it's part in being environmentally friendly but moving forward it will be a key factor in how we operate. It is an ongoing process that requires community engagement. We already use compostable coffee cups, environmentally friendly cleaning products, eco friendly printing paper, to name a few examples. Some steps, like moving our energy over to green tariffs will happen over time, as and when contracts are up for renewal.

We are in the initial planning stages of the Eco-Church project, however, as we engage with it, we will form a team from within All Saints to champion our efforts and engage with areas across our church community - from preaching and teaching, engaging our children and youth, to working out the best use of our outdoor spaces and reaching out to other local groups.

Please feel free to get in contact with me if you would like to find out more about any issues or items listed, and if you would like to get involved with eco church or find other ways to get involved and help out with the practical and more practical and operational parts of church life.

### **Mark Carrington**

*Church Operations Manager*

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