

Greater Whitbourne Parochial Church Council Annual Report April 2024 for the Year 2023 Parish of Greater Whitbourne

St. Mary - Edvin Loach



St. Michael and All Angels - Upper Sapey



St. James - Tedstone Delamere



St. John the Baptist - Whitbourne



Annual Report – Revd. Preb. Dawn Hyett

Throughout 2023, three (3) people received home communions regularly offered by Chris Evans or by Dawn Hyett.

During the Christmas period, in the four churches 179 people attended worship.

Baptism preparation was offered to all who came forward for this pastoral service and a wedding preparation day was held for all the couples married in the greater parish.

Silverware held in the churches was listed and noted by the diocesan office and the silverware from Wolferlow church has been deposited in the secure diocesan offices and added to the insurance.

Training on generosity and the welcome offered in each church was reviewed as well as the annual Bishops study day attended. A full day safeguarding training leading to the reissuing of the safeguarding certificate required of all ministers.

The long process of including Saltmarshe site into Greater Whitbourne parish has been finalised and the Saltmarshe Retirement Village is now part of the greater parish and pastoral care available and offered to the residents of the park.

A long-standing boundary issue has been resolved and the original boundaries of the Upper Sapey churchyard are being reinstated in the correct position.

Members of the PCC have all been made aware of the diocesan code of conduct and have signed to show their agreement with holding these standards for all PCC meetings.

Deanery Reorganisation discussions and plans are well underway and a strategy for the future is being formed which it is hoped will be in place during 2024.

An Organist and deputy organist for Upper Sapey has been appointed and a deputy organist for Whitbourne, Tedstone Delamere and Edwin Loach appointed.

I wish to voice my appreciation for the hard work and support of the Greater Parish offered by the ministry team: Andrew, Alexandra, Chris and Jan.

For the people who do the flowers in the four churches;

The people who keep the churches clean and the gardens maintained so beautifully;

The people who provide refreshments after services;

Those who welcome worshippers;

Sacristan for the Greater Parish and those who have stepped forward for training in each of the churches;

The DCC members from each church who work tirelessly to maintain each church and to fund raise for the ongoing expenses;

The new administrator who has begun work so well and is making the day to day running of the Greater Parish much more manageable;

The PCC secretary who retired at the beginning of 2023 and the new secretary who has taken on the role so competently;

To John and Syliva Bland who are leaving our parish, for all that they have contributed over many years.

Well done to all for your work.

Church Warden Reports

St John's Whitbourne Annual report for 2023

We start this annual update with great appreciation to all the volunteers who weekly and monthly maintain the fabric and smooth running of this church, the beautiful rose beds and to the contractor for the grass mowing in the two burial grounds. Thank you to everyone. Five (5) volunteers spent a sunny winter morning tidying up around shrubs and trees in the upper churchyard to maintain ease of access. The bonfire burnt well and refreshments were always on hand.

Weddings, baptisms and funerals have been a big part of the story of this last year and the Bishop of Hereford lead a Confirmation service for four (4) candidates at St John's Church.

Last August a village treasure hunt was held. Footfall, pedal bikes and pushchairs up and down church bank increased hugely that afternoon. Clues were placed in various corners of the church and grounds. Many more people now know that we have an old Ginkgo tree in the lower churchyard.

All the annual inspections – electrics, fire hydrants, bells and clock have been completed and passed. The Quinquennial visit took place in August. A big thank you to Rupert Roberts for his drone footage of the church and grounds, which was sent to the architect for the report.

The first service of 2023 was also the last at which Christopher Allsop played the organ, before going to take up a new appointment elsewhere in the country. We prayed for a replacement, and waited. Before long it emerged that Hilary Markland, a current member of the choir, was interested in the role. Already an experienced pianist and choir leader, part of the package was that she would learn to play the organ. That was early in the year, and under Hilary the choir, and its repertoire, has grown further. Who says prayers are not answered?

Report prepared by Anne Evans and Clive Pickering – Church Wardens

St Mary's, Edvin Loach Annual Report for 2023

Two Churchwardens were in place for the year, Lis Morris and Jeff Salt.

The year saw a continuation of the regular church service attendance of around 11 people, again as in previous years an excellent attendance given the population and location of Edvin Loach.

Services continue to be held on the third Sunday of each month and included our usual and very popular stir-up Sunday service, our carol and only Xmas service was held on the 17th December. 12 services were held in 2023.

A burial took place, without a service, on the 5th May.

The church was visited by a party of U3a ers, hosted by Brenda Allen, on the 18th July.

Two successful fund-raising events were held during the year, an afternoon tea and a cake decorating event, both well attended and in particular the cake decorating was great fun.

Work on the church was restricted to having missing and loose roof tiles replaced and re-fitted in April, and the planting of 250 daffodils in November.

The 5 year quinquennial inspection was completed in May by Deborah Johnson, Hook Mason, the subsequent report showed no issues of great concern and the majority of the work can be completed without the need to employ contractors.

It was planned to have the bell tower inspected and any necessary remedial work completed, however this did not happen in 2023 but is scheduled for the 28th February 2024.

In general, a quiet year, the churchyard continues to be kept tidy and litter free and the standing headstones regularly checked for wobble.

2024 will see an increase in expenditure with the bell tower inspection, lightening rod inspection, and the 5 yearly electrical inspection all to take place, and the vestry needing some plaster work.

Report produced by Lis Morris and Jeff Salt – Church Wardens.

St James, Tedstone Delamere Annual Report for 2023

Financial and services

St James church was closed for most of 2023 which meant that the contribution to the parish was less than in pre-dry rot outbreak years but still a bit more than 2022. Donation income to restoration projects was good. The church re-opened for the Christmas services and we were delighted to have 60 attendees to our Christmas Eve carol services. Thank you to Kathleen Harris for the sterling job she did of cleaning the church ahead of the Christmas services.

Building and Churchyard

A temporary floor was installed in May to enable a wedding to take place and subsequently 2 matins' services were held. The main repair work involved the full removal of the floor and its replacement, joists and floorboards, with kiln dried oak timbers. The space under the floor had its void increased and ducts were drilled in 8 locations of the North and South nave walls to enable cross-ventilation to occur. Ducts were also installed under the nave aisle to facilitate the cross flow of air. The areas on both sides of the organ were filled with concrete with the incorporation of an air gap adjacent to the exterior walls. The nave carpet was removed to allow upward ventilation. Additionally, instrumentation has been fitted to monitor the humidity and temperature of the sub-floor area.

The churchyard was maintained by several volunteers.

The safe was removed and will be sold for scrap.

Report produced by W A North and ratified by Kathleen Harris – Church Wardens

St Michael's & All Angels, Upper Sapey Annual Report for 2023

This year, we had our Garden Party and put up seven gazebos to create a large covered space, as the weather was uncertain. Live music was provided by Mike and Marion Symmons. This worked well as it created a sense of community.

We held a Carols around the tree event in December with a raffle stall only this year. Not only did we have a group of hand bell ringers organised by Maureen Williams, making a lovely start to the event but they also led the carol singing afterwards. This started with mulled wine and

mince pies and ended with tea and cake. This was well attended and was very much a community event.

The following week at 11am we had a full Carol service of 9 lessons and Carols, but we also had the Whitbourne choir who made a great contribution to the singing. It was lovely to have our very own organist Steve Curtis playing the organ, at this event after so many years without an organist, rather than relying on the usual recorded music. We are very pleased to welcome both Steve and his wife Melanie, also an organist to our parish. We hope to have next year's Carol service at 3pm as it was too close to lunchtime for tea afterwards.

We have held regular Holy Communion services once a month, with around 12 people attending, which is up from last year. The regular festivals were well attended with a Christingle service led by Marion Symmons before Christmas.

We have had two funerals and one baptism this year.

Film-nights in Olly's Friendship Room have continued with David Roberts taking over the setting up from John Bland and Mark Maddock doing the publicity. The films chosen by Jan Webb continued to be thought provoking and enjoyable, but she retired from this role at the end of 2023. Selection of films will be now on a rota basis. The attendance is generally about 12 and those who come enjoy it. Thanks to a grant negotiated by Dawn of £380 from the Addenbrooke, Nash and Winnington United Charity and a reduced licence fee negotiated by David Roberts, the future of the film club is secure.

In addition to monthly coffee mornings Mike and Marion Symmons have held a number of very successful children's playgroups in Olly's Friendship Room at half terms and holidays.

Steve Curtis is planning a children's film club for 2024.

A new graves plan is in the process of being prepared by Beverley Robinson.

The possibility of broadband is being investigated by John Grove.

The laurel hedge on the right-hand side of the path has now been removed and will be seeded with grass in 2024. This opens up a view of the church as you walk up the path and links the two sides of the churchyard together.

The beam and the dry rot to the beam in the old boiler house has now been removed. Improvement to the ventilation to this area is under review.

The lightning conductor now has its certificate, and the original lightning conductor has been removed and disconnected, as required by Ecclesiastical Insurance.

Quinquennial Report 2023

Below is the list of recommendations from the report but the conclusion of the report states 'The church is generally in good order and well cared for.'

Urgent – Requiring Immediate Attention

- a. Fire Risk Assessment – done
- b. Health and Safety Assessment – done
- c. Asbestos Management Survey – There is no asbestos - see report
- d. Clear vegetation from gutter and perimeter - done
- e. Repairs to roof tiling – broken rather than missing tiles – not done
- f. Strip out and treat boiler room fabric infected by dry rot - ongoing.
- g. Replace external socket outlet - done

- h. Replace lost boarding to apex of spire - done
- i. Monitor spire boarding for further rot and dampness.

The churchyard has continued to be kept in a tidy condition by Andrew Wilde and Chris Kenwick at no cost to the church, and it is much appreciated and commented on.

Chris Amphlett and Val Burness continue to do a great job in keeping the church clean and tidy.

As well as those just mentioned we would like to thank all those who have helped in various capacities during the year.

We would also like to thank all those, behind the scenes, that make things happen, but especially Revd. Dawn Hyett who is a regular supporter at all our events, and of course the supporting clergy and many others.

We are very grateful to John Grove for producing the accounts as Treasurer and to Mark Maddock for carrying out small repairs and maintenance jobs at no cost.

Churchyard boundaries with 2-4 Church Close – the Settlement has now been signed by all parties and we are now awaiting the approval of the Diocesan Chancellor and a Faculty so that it can be implemented and a new boundary fence installed.

We have had considerable success in establishing new activities for the Community this year and these are far better supported than are the regular church services. We are very grateful to everyone who helps with these events, or provides cakes!

Thank you.

Report produced by David Roberts and Mark Maddock – Church Wardens

Electoral Roll

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Whitbourne | 53 |
| Tedstone Delamere | 18 |
| Edvin Loach | 21 |
| Upper Sapey | 16 |
| Total | 108 |
| Resident | 89 |
| Non-resident | 19 |
| Removed since 2023 APCM | 9 |
| Added since 2023 APCM | 5 |

Financial Report 2023

2023 was the year we emerged from the Covid pandemic, and was also a year of high inflation. In view of this, the financial results for the parish were encouraging, and a cause for much gratitude.

The Consolidated Accounts show that each of the four churches and the Comon Purse ended the year with income greater than expenditure, with an overall 'surplus' of £11,279, even after spending £5874 on major church repairs.

This figure also includes £3,195 which was the balance on the OFR (Ollie's Friendship Room) account in Upper Sapey, which has now been brought into the Upper Sapey church accounts.

There were no legacies in the year, and in line with the higher interest rates prevailing in the wider economy, the total of interest received rose from £1,526 in 2022 to £4,059 in 2023.

We were able to contribute £26,150 in Parish Share, towards the costs of ministry in the Diocese, an increase over 2022 of almost 9%.

The PCC would like to thank everyone whose contributions, whether in cash or in kind, helped bring about these results.

Looking ahead, our churches have all had quinquennial inspections of their fabric, and, although there have been no more nasty surprises, there is maintenance and repair work needed. Getting this work done will tend to increase expenditure levels in the next year or two.

Chris Evans. PCC Treasurer.

Safeguarding

Apart from one or two 'glitches', the safeguarding systems in place between the diocese and the parish now appear to be working satisfactorily. This applies to both DBS applications and safeguarding training. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Mandy McPhee, has moved on to join the National Safeguarding Team and Carl Steventon, previously the deputy, is now the advisor. Thanks to our joint continued vigilance, I believe that we as a parish are doing everything possible to ensure that we are compliant with all required procedures.

Report prepared by Revd. Jan Webb - Parish Safeguarding Officer

Children's and Youth Work Report for 2023

Children's work

I have been going into 3 Primary schools for half days on a fortnightly basis. At St Peter's I helped in class for a term, and now hear readers.

Bredenbury is very happy to let me take assembly and then work in class or hear readers.

At Brockhampton I hear readers and take assembly once a month. As a result of this contact, I am recognised by children in town and get to say hello to the parents.

I made contact with Clifton Upon Teme in January, but with little success so far, I've not given up yet.

The Easter event in OFR had 8 children, and was much enjoyed.

In the summer we had Fun Days on the theme of Fruit of the Spirit.

Children were invited to the Christingle service at Upper Sapey, and a Brockhampton family attended. Approximately 40 people in total.

In February, two Pancake Madness Fun Days took place in Whitbourne village hall, a total of 18 children attended over 2 days (8 & 15). This year's Easter Fun will be in OFR March 25 and 26, I already have one booking.

Report prepared by Marion Symmons

Youth (year 8 to 24years)

Approaches to mission with young people needs to be appropriate to:

1. the identities of the young people, their groups,
2. resources available
3. excellent management structures.

There are many ways to move forward but also many limits.

Mike assisted the Bromyard youth hub to meet at the public hall during the school summer holidays. During this there were many calls from the youngsters to progress this as they participated in some good, varied activities. To enable this programme the past safe policies and practises were activated again. However, owing to pressure on a small group of workers and committee this programme could not continue.

The public hall has some free availability for young people. Mike has been considering advertising some recruiting and training to support any interested in choosing the best way forward for their interests.

We are also looking at assisting the development of activities for young people met at the churches - particularly post confirmation. It is most important that all these young people participate and own a way forward.

Report prepared by Mike Symmons

Choir Report 2023

The Whitbourne church choir has worked extremely hard this year and each member has to be congratulated on their personal effort and dedication. The choir now has an extensive repertoire of anthems suitable for the changing liturgical seasons and has sung an anthem at most of the Sunday services throughout the year.

In 2023 the choir sang two choral evensongs, featuring RVW's Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis and Pitoni's "Cantate Domino" on the 28th May and Shera's Mag and Nunc with Summers "Love Divine" on the 29th October.

Rutter's delightful "Look at the world" was the anthem for Harvest Festival on the 15th October. Remembrance Sunday was memorable for the hauntingly beautiful "For the fallen" Mike Sammes and Schubert's "Holy, holy, holy".

Over the Christmas period the choir led carol services at Upper Sapey and Whitbourne on the 10th December and Edvin Loach on the 17th December. We were invited to lead the singing at Longlands Nativity on the 16th December – always a special event.

In addition to the weekly Sunday services the choir has assisted at weddings and funerals and has animated the patronal festivals at Upper Sapey, Whitbourne and Edvin Loach.

The organ is serviced annually in the spring. There have been a couple of issues with ciphering and David Gallichan has been prompt to remedy any problems. As I write, he has confirmed he will be servicing the organ on the 4th March 2024.

It is a privilege to lead the singing at Whitbourne and contribute to the enhancement of worship through music.

Forthcoming events include the Meditations through words and music for Good Friday, a special anthem for Easter Sunday and Harvest choral evensong on the 13th October.

Report prepared by Hilary Markland

2023 Belfry maintenance report

A number of routine checks and tests have been carried out on and around the bells throughout the year. Additionally, a full bell service on the 6 bells was carried out by Whites of Appleton on 22nd June 2023. The bells are in good working order.

However, with apparatus of this age there are always discussions to be had and adjustments to be made. In regards to this; Whites raised a question about oversized stays on 2 of the bells in their report. This has yet to be discussed with church wardens, and former Whitbourne ringers. It should be noted however that the stays in question have been in situ for many years, and under the custodianship of many previous, and very experienced, ringers.

Separately, and more recently, cleaning was carried out immediately around the bells. I am not yet aware of who carried this out, or how this was executed. The main issues being the risk of damage to the bells, and the possibility of dust raised affecting the clock mechanism adversely.

Report prepared by Ady Taylor

Greater Whitbourne Parish Website

With the Bland's leaving the parish in 2024, many of the tasks that John and Sylvia have been responsible for have been passed over to others. We would like to thank John Bland especially for his exceptional efforts in all that he has done including managing and updating the parish website. With his departure imminent, a small team worked on the format and design for an updated website. The website has been redesigned and is now being hosted and maintained by John Grove, with input from Gayle Clark and Anne Evans and of course overseen by Revd. Dawn Hyett. The web address is still the same: <https://whitbourne.org.uk/>

And finally,

John Bland is pleased to report that all his Greater Parish tasks & responsibilities have been smoothly and successfully transferred to others.

Sylvia Bland, the outgoing sacristan has reported:

The jobs I did are shared by several people and some of the jobs are not necessarily sacristan jobs.

Ordering of supplies - The new administrator

Whitbourne - Changing frontals - Myrtle Kneen and Jackie Bass; Averil Pickering taking on other tasks

Upper Sapey and Tedstone Delamere - Church wardens

Edvin Loach - Judy Read

These people to contact Averil when supplies of Wine and Wafers are required.