



## 2020 Reports

prepared for AGM 13 April 2021

Contents	Page
Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2020.	2
Stewardship Report	8
Churchwardens' Report	9
Treasurer's Report	11
Refugee Fund Report	14

# **The Parish Church of St Paul, Grove Park, Chiswick, London W4**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.**

**Charity Registration Number 1154 708**

### **1 Aims and purposes**

The Parochial Church Council of St Paul's shares with the incumbent responsibility for promoting the mission of the church within the parish. It has responsibilities for the fabric and contents of the church building, parish finances and management of everything.

### **2 Objectives and activities**

The Church Council has been working to promote the mission of the parish with Sunday worship and activities, weekday services, and the church being open daily for prayer and quiet times. However much of this was suspended due to the corona virus.

### **3 Achievements and Performance**

#### **Worship and Prayer**

In 2020 we had one wedding, and no baptisms or funerals in church. This was partly due to the coronavirus, with many events postponed. The church was closed for services from Mothering Sunday till June 28<sup>th</sup>, and again from the 6<sup>th</sup> November until Mothering Sunday 2021. During this period there was a mix of Sunday services on Zoom and YouTube. Zoom services were without Eucharist, and consisted of scripture readings, prayers, music and reflections. Between lockdowns the ecumenical meditation group continued to meet weekly, with occasional study/supper times. York study courses were used, and an Advent Group looked at five psalms in a study book written by Steven Croft, the Bishop of Oxford. Many people drew strength from the BRF Advent book by Gordon Giles, 'At Home in Advent.' The Book Club was suspended due to lockdown.

With the ban on congregational singing in church, we have had much more instrumental music. This has included violin and viola, voice and trumpet and superb offerings from Tom

Torley on the piano. There was a much appreciated Christmas service which included a brass quintet and delightful pieces from the soprano Ana Beard Fernandez.

As many of our members have had to shield for personal and family reasons, the zoom meetings planned and run by Sue Hearn have been invaluable. These have included poetry appreciation on Thursdays, and Saturday Socials covering music and people talking about their work and their favourite things.

### **Events**

In March 2020 we had a soup lunch raising funds for Water Aid, and one Bring and Buy Sale for church funds. A group within the congregation donated and ensured the distribution of funds towards local work with Syrian refugees and Hounslow Refugee Welcome. We also supported the Royal British Legion, and the charity Embrace the Middle East. Music events and other fund-raising were cancelled due to coronavirus restrictions.

As many of our members have had to shield for personal and family reasons, the zoom meetings planned and run by Sue Hearn have been invaluable. These have included poetry appreciation on Thursdays, and Saturday Socials covering music and people talking about their work and their favourite things.

### **Electoral Roll**

At the Annual meeting the figure for the Roll was 186, representing 109 families.

### **Safeguarding**

No safeguarding concerns have been reported regarding any member of St Paul's community.

All safeguarding attention has been focussed on minimising the risk of transmission of COVID 19 during gatherings in church. All activities in church have taken place within government and C of E COVID 19 guidelines.

The youth club has continued to operate when consistent with guidelines.

The Stay and Play Group has remained closed since the start of the pandemic.

## **4 The Church Buildings**

### **Maintenance**

There were repairs to plaster damage in church on the north aisle, and around the garden door in the lower Isis Rooms. A leak from the water tank in the Upper Isis Room due to a faulty ballcock was repaired. The garden gates were fixed and re-varnished and some major garden clearance was done around the church property, both by a gardener and by working parties from the congregation.

### **Cleaning**

The church, vestry and Isis Rooms are cleaned fortnightly.

### **Inventory and Terrier**

The Inventory is updated annually and stored in the Dropbox and the Terrier is stored in the Vestry.

## **5. Finance and Stewardship**

### **Income**

Income exceeded expenditure by £11,459 and year-end total net assets were £133,154 (£122,083 in 2019). The 2020 income of £64,770 was considerably lower than the £106,776 of 2019. Clearly this is due to the year of COVID restrictions with much reduced Plate collections and rental income both from the Toddlers World nursery and the ISIS rooms. Fund-raising activity in 2020 generated £31,601 compared to £65,625 in 2019.

### **Expenditure**

2020 expenditure was £53,311 compared to £94,043 in 2019.

The common fund contribution was reduced to £25,070 this year, as agreed with the LDF. This is less than half 2019's figure of £60,000. Repairs and maintenance were a little increased from 2019 due to service streaming costs etc, but utilities and services have reduced from £7,585 in 2019 to £3,890 this year.

### **Stewardship**

The total amount given as gift aided donations from individuals for the year 2020 was £24,195.90. This is a decrease on the donations of £27,258.32 in 2019.

This does not include donations via the internet for one off events

29 people gave donations by standing orders (£18,178 of the total giving).

The rest was by yellow envelopes. In addition to personal gifts, we have claimed on anonymous gifts made in the church building. This is the GASDS scheme. We claimed on £238.55 from plate collections and donations in the church.

A total of £6,575.56 was claimed in gift aid in 2020, (2019 - £7,906.61)

### **Reserves Policy**

It is PCC policy to maintain a minimum balance on unrestricted funds which equates to at least six months' running costs. This year it would be equivalent to approx. £10,750 but it is recommended that this figure is left at last year's figure of approx. £12,500 in the expectation that costs will increase this year. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow, and to meet emergencies. Our current unrestricted funds healthily exceed this figure

### **6. Structure, Governance and Management**

The Parochial Church Council of St Paul's Church, Grove Park, has been working to promote the mission of the church in our area. In the second lockdown the church was open every day for quiet times and prayer. All are welcome to attend our services and events via Zoom and YouTube.

### **Administrative Information**

St Paul's Church is part of the diocese of London, within the deanery of Hounslow. The correspondence address is: St Paul's Vicarage, 64 Grove Park Road, Chiswick, London W4 3SB

Charity Registration Number: 1154708

Parochial Church Council members have been:

*Incumbent* The Rev'd Michael Riley, Chairman

*Churchwardens* Charlotte Mendes da Costa

Cassandra Barker

*Deanery Synod Rep* Simon Surtees

*Elected Representatives* Carolyn Ashford Russell

Katie Bell

Catherine Jessop

Claire Carter (from Annual Mtg)

Liz Abbot (till Annual Mtg)

Joanna Harry

Shelagh Allsop

*Co-opted Sec* Cecilia Thwaites

*Safeguarding Officer* Shelagh Allsop (PCC member)

*Stewardship Secretary* Jackie Rayer (Volunteer for position)

*Electoral Roll Officer* Liz Abbott (Volunteer for position)

PCC Members are invited to join or volunteer at Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The Parochial Church Council operated through the Standing Committee and several groups, and forms working groups to plan specific events.

**Standing Committee:** This transacts the business of the church between Council meetings and oversees the finances and fabric. It includes the Vicar, the Churchwardens, Treasurer and Secretary.

**Pastoral Group:** This group is chaired by Sue Hearn and is concerned with welcome and accessibility of services and events, pastoral care and support with funerals, baptisms and weddings.

**Communications Group:** This is concerned with promoting the life of St Paul's through the website, magazine, noticeboards and email newsletter.

Cecilia Thwaites is responsible for the newsletter, and Catherine Jessop for the website.

The Independent Examiner is Anne Harraghy of PK Audit LLP

1, Parkshot, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2RD

## Stewardship report for the year 2020

The total amount given as gift aided donations from individuals for the year 2020 was £24,195.90. This is a decrease on the donations from 2020 of £27258.32.

This does not include donations via the internet for one off events

29 people gave donations by standing orders (£18,178 of the total giving)..

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In addition to personal gifts, we have claimed on anonymous gifts made in the church building. This is the GASDS scheme We claimed on £238.55 from plate collections and donations in the church

Using on line claiming I have been able to make claims quarterly

We received refunds of tax from HMRC during 2020

01.10.2019-31.12.2019 refund £2204.28

01.01.2020-05.04 2020 £1606.09

06.04.2020-17.07.2020 £1034.96

17.07.2020-30.09.2020 £1730.13

**TOTAL £6575.56**

**Jackie Rayer**

**Stewardship secretary February 20<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**St Paul's Church, Grove Park, Chiswick, W4 3SB****Annual Report 2020**

## CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

There have been no big projects to report on this year, just a steady stream of maintenance and repairs, and of course adjustments for services during a pandemic.

Potential leak on church property

In late summer we became aware that Thames Water had detected a water leak on church property during a routine check in July 2020. They planned to undertake further examination and repairs themselves through a subsidiary, Essential Water Services, at a possible cost of thousands if we did not provide written evidence that we had this work in hand ourselves, giving a date in early October for this work. We contacted our church insurers, Ecclesiastical who referred us to the drainage and water specialist company Auger. Auger also contacted Thames Water on our behalf. Auger were able to show that there was no water leak on the church side of the water supply but that the water leak was on the pavement side, which belongs to Thames Water. They did however find a small leak from the water tank in the loft above the Upper Isis Room. We engaged a local plumber to correct the problem with the ballcock for a small sum.

Essential Water Services, on behalf of Thames Water, did not initially accept the findings of Auger but they made a further examination of the pavement side water supply and did finally find that the leak was on the pavement side and they mended this in November 2020, which did involve some digging onto the church property. However they made good this disturbance to the earth and fencing.

Boiler repairs

In the late summer we arranged for the church boiler to be serviced as this had not been done for several years. Initially, all was well but after about a fortnight the boiler started turning itself off after 30 mins or so. The engineers, Quotehedge, returned three times before they finally diagnosed the problem as a fault with the boiler's thermostat. Meanwhile we had had the meter replaced, very promptly, by our new gas supplier CNG. The fault was only diagnosed because after the second visit the engineer happened to have his next job close enough to St Paul's to enable him to return within minutes after it had cut out. There was then a long wait while the spare part came from Peterborough. This turned out to be faulty itself and necessitated another wait. Finally, after a very long wait and a cold spell outdoors, the heating functioned again. Most people learned to dress up warmly for church, the real problem was for musicians in the church who must keep their hands warm. The total for the several visits and the spare part was £412.00.

Filming and live streaming of services

For many months in 2020 the church was closed for the usual services. Services were halted from late March until early August and again from mid-December until mid-March 2021. St Paul's has paid for a Zoom subscription to enable worship and community to move online, and has bought a small movie camera to stream live to YouTube. (Streaming to YouTube has been stopped by YouTube and the church will probably move to streaming live to Facebook). The church remained

open for private prayer during these closures, but the PCC felt that the congregation contains many members who were too vulnerable to be exposed to large groups for an hour at a time. When the church has been open the PCC have been following government and Diocesan advice on keeping safe. Track and Trace lists are kept for every large service, the congregation wear masks and hand gel is available. During worship there is no singing except from the choir when permitted, Father Michael does not distribute the wine during communion and wears sterile gloves for giving the bread.

#### Routine maintenance

Routine maintenance of the fire alarms and extinguishers has continued as usual.

Light bulbs in the high lighting system have been replaced. (approximately 20 bulbs, cost £262 plus fitting). Some of the older bulbs have now expired, so light bulbs will need to be replaced again later this year.

The gutters have been cleaned as they are annually.

#### Gardens

The congregation got together for several Saturday morning gardening sessions to tidy up the bushes surrounding the church and clear away dumped litter. This has made the church much more visible from the road.

#### Church usage apart from worship in 2020-21

St Paul's Church has been used a place for musicians to practice and rehearse both during the lockdown periods and between those periods. This is deemed legitimate use as no other persons apart from the musicians were present, and the church in this case was being used as a work place.

Some concerts have been filmed and recorded (with no audience present) and then streamed at a later date, and St Paul's parishioners were also given access (amongst others) to these pre-recorded concerts. Of note, concerts given by Ben and Bea Chappell and Mike Reed have been filmed and subsequently enjoyed by a wider audience.

The church was also rented to a choir, Addison's Singers, in the brief period in 2020 between lockdowns, when choirs were allowed to meet for a brief period of a few weeks, as long as social distancing was maintained.

**Charlotte Mendes da Costa – Churchwarden**

**Cassandra Barker - Churchwarden**

**St Paul's Church, Grove Park, Chiswick, London W4 3SB****Annual Report – 2020****Treasurer's Report**

Cassandra Barker, Churchwarden, writes:

For most of the year 2020 the bookkeeping for the Church was covered by a kind volunteer. Ian Low came to the Vicarage once a month and entered the figures into the various records during a morning's activity. This routine itself was interrupted several times by the various lockdowns imposed in response to the pandemic. We appointed a paid Treasurer, Sally-Ann Feldman, at the beginning of December and since then have worked on producing the end of year accounts and setting up the Parish accounts ready for 2021.

The new Treasurer writes:

I have been performing a bookkeeping role for small businesses for the past approximately 22 years. I will largely be working from home at an agreed hourly rate. My main liaison will be Churchwarden Cassandra Barker but I have also received a great deal of help in coming to grips with the accounts from previous Treasurers. The Diocese has been informed of my new position.

Income exceeded expenditure by £11,071 and year-end total net assets were £133,154 (£122,083 in 2019). The 2020 income of £64,649 was considerably lower than the £106,776 of 2019. Clearly this is due to the year of COVID restrictions with much reduced Plate collections and rental income both from the Toddlers World nursery and the ISIS rooms. Fund-raising activity in 2020 generated £31,601 compared to £65,625 in 2019.

Expenditure in 2020 was £53,698 compared to £94,043 in 2019. The common fund contribution was reduced to £25,070 this year, as agreed with the LDF. This is less than half 2019's figure of £60,000. Repairs and maintenance were a little increased from 2019 due to service streaming costs etc, but utilities and services have reduced from £7,585 in 2019 to £3,890 this year.

All rental income for the church stopped for a period during the first lockdown. We agreed with Toddlers' World that they could have a quarter's rent holiday during the first lockdown. The smaller businesses and classes that use the Isis Rooms have not been able to operate since last March and rent from these sources is still much reduced, although one user, A3N in the Upper Isis Room, has continued to pay rent and use the room for Zoom teaching.

There was a surplus at the end of the year in the donations given by Parish members to the Hounslow refugee project and the decision on what to do with these funds is under discussion.

The Parish had to stop all contributions to the Common Fund from June to December, except for a small payment of £10 to keep the direct debit functioning as all income had stopped. As lockdown eases and the church's income improves the PCC need to consider payments during 2021.

In spite of this the Parish has finished the year with a sound balance. The PCC intend to look at the bank account with a view to finding an account suited to a charity but with more up to date facilities, such as receiving bank transfers from members of the congregation etc.

The Quinquennial Report on the state of the building in February 2020 drew attention to possible damage to the roof of the North Aisle and the Parish may be in a position to investigate this properly and commission repairs if necessary.

In spite of a very difficult year the Church is in a relatively sound financial position.

**St Paul's Refugee Fund  
06/04/2021**

The fund was started in April 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our aim was to support a group of single women and children living in a hostel for asylum seekers in Hounslow; we had been supporting them informally for about two years before this but had not given them regular financial support up to this point.

As asylum seekers, the women live on a weekly income of £40 which is paid to them via an Aspen payment card; they can use this in main supermarkets but cannot use the card at local shops or to withdraw cash. We wanted to give them a small regular amount of cash so they could buy supplies locally if they could not get to the supermarket and use the money to top up Oyster cards and phones. The suggested amount was £5 per adult per week.

The hostel provides temporary accommodation while the women's asylum claims are being assessed by the Home Office; over the course of the year some of the women have been granted asylum and moved from the house, others have left the UK. The number of adults in the house varies between 8 and 12; usually there are between 4 and 8 children under the age of 11.

The regular giving has had the benefit of ensuring that we see someone from the house each week; the women have said on many occasions that this continuing presence is as important as the money. They know they have not been forgotten and we have been able to offer moral support. Some of the extra money was used by the household over the summer to buy vegetable plants and improve the garden; the children were actively involved in the gardening and were proud of their potato crop. We have been told that the weekly distribution of the fund at the hostel has provided a useful focus point to bring all the residents together and share their worries and concerns

The fund is financed by 11 members of the St Paul's congregation who make monthly donations by standing order. The monthly income is currently £270; the regular weekly outgoings are currently £60 (£260 per calendar month). So income and outgoings are matched, although over the course of the year some surplus built up due to there being only 8 adults in the house for some time. Some of the surplus was used in November 2020 to make a one-off donation of £200 to West London Welcome, a local group that has been offering frontline support to asylum seekers throughout the pandemic.

The surplus at the end of the 2020-21 tax year was £400. Following discussion with the donors, it was decided to use this surplus for further support of the asylum seekers in the hostel (as opposed to giving it to any other groups or organisations). As a result, we have given the ladies an extra £10 each for the Easter holidays to fund transport for school holiday outings to Kew Gardens (arranged by Stephanie) and a Family Food Club run by St John's and St Mary's Church in Isleworth. This is at a cost of £120.

The remaining surplus of £280 is earmarked for provision of school shoes (£80) and improved access to the internet (£200) as the house currently has no broadband. We will provide a 4G Wireless Router for the house, at a likely cost of £22 per month from May 2021. We have applied to a local charity for a reconditioned laptop or tablet; if we are unsuccessful we will use the surplus to buy a new device. We know that free broadband access to the internet will save the women money on their phone charges as they are currently using expensive pay-as-you-go data for essential communications. We also want to provide access to educational resources for the children and support them in their learning.

# St Paul's Refugee Fund

1	St Paul's Refugee Fund 2020-21						
2							
3	Income	(by standing order from regular donors)		Support	(cash payments reclaimed from the fund)		
4							
5	April	250		08/05/2020	265 (RT)		
6	May	250		19/06/2020	255 (RT)		
7	June	250		06/09/2020	240 (RT)		
8	July	250		22/09/2020	200 (SA)		
9	August	250		20/10/2020	200 (SA)		
10	September	250		16/11/2020	200 (RT)	Donation to West London Welcome	
11	October	270		01/12/2020	300 (SA)		
12	November	270		15/01/2021	220 (SW)		
13	December	270		19/01/2021	175 (SA)		
14	January	270		11/02/2021	220 (SW)		
15	February	270		12/03/2021	220 (SW)		
16	March	270		01/04/2021	225 (SW)		
17				01/04/2021	120 (SW)	Travel money for Easter outings	
18	Total	3120			2840		
19							