

St Bartholomew's, Thurstaston with St Chad's Irby



MISSION AND ACTIVITIES IN 2017



Members of the PCC 2017-2018

Following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2017, the Parochial Church Council comprises the Rector, the Licensed Readers, the Churchwardens and the elected representatives to the Deanery Synod, all as *ex-officio* members. Fifteen members are elected to represent the congregations for three years, five retiring each year but eligible for re-election.

Name	Membership	Date Appointed	Until
1. Revd J Turner	Rector	Ex Officio	-
2. Mr C Perry	Warden	Ex Officio (Apr 2015)	
3. Mrs E Whitehead	Warden	Ex Officio (Apr 2017)	
4. Mr M Studholme	Deanery Synod	2017	2020
5. Mr C Smale	Deanery Synod	2017	2020
6. Vacancy	Deanery Synod		
7. Mrs J Parmenter	Co-opted	2017	2018
8. Mr J Oliver	Elected	2015	2018
9. Mr C Williams	Elected	2015	2018
10. Mr R Jackson	Elected	2015	2018
11. Dr M James	Elected	2015	2018
12. Mr B R Dennison	Elected	2015	2018
13. Mr A Harford	Elected	2016	2019
14. Vacancy			
15. Vacancy			
16. Vacancy			
17. Vacancy			
18. Mr G Barley	Elected	2017	2020
19. Mrs J Trigg	Elected	2017	2020
20. Mrs J Deboorder	Elected	2017	2020
21. Mrs E Kavanagh	Elected	2017	2020

The names of sidespersons can be seen on the rotas for the two churches.

A Word from the Rector

On Sunday 5th March 2017, we had a fantastic celebration for the 50th Anniversary of St Chad's with 182 adults and 65 children in attendance meaning that we ran out of chairs (what a wonderful problem to have!). It was good to welcome back previous incumbents: Revd Malcolm Kelly (1980-1992) and his wife Miriam, Revd Brian Harris (1993-1999) and his wife Alison; Revd Diane Watson (2000-2007). Also present were regular members of both St Bartholomew's Thurstaston and St Chad's Irby, representatives of the groups who use the St Chad's facilities throughout the week, ecumenical representatives from Irby Methodist Church and pupils, staff and parents of the local schools.

For several weeks in advance each member of the congregation was encouraged to put some stitches into a leaf which would be combined to make a banner, the end result was stunning.

The service included a presentation by Dawpool Primary school on St Chad, a presentation by Irby Primary School following a local history project about our building, a presentation by St Chad's Seniors on the future of the church and prayers led by 1st Thurstaston Guides. The singing was greatly enhanced by a joint choir from the two primary schools.

This was all followed by a magnificent buffet provided by members of the congregation. The photo time line, which began with a newspaper cutting of the opening service on Feb 19th 1967 and ended with a photo taken at our family service on Feb 5th 2017, created a lot of reminiscing and sharing of memories.

As well as celebration and joy, the year has been one in which we have grieved for no fewer than six of our regular congregation members who continue to be greatly missed. And alongside these we have joined the parish in grieving for two young families, one of whom suffered the trauma of losing both parents to cancer within a week of each other and the other who suffered the tragic loss of their father.

The Confirmation Service in October was also a source of joy as four young people and three adults made commitments to follow Christ.

The link with Dawpool Church of England Primary School has grown stronger throughout this year with the children leading two family services as well as being involved in the Golden Jubilee celebrations. In May, Year 4 led a service based around the theme of "Sheep and Shepherds", and in November, Year 3 led a service entitled "Seeds of ...". We look forward to more of these services in 2018 and to discovering new ways in which the links can be further strengthened.

2017 has also seen us begin to face up to some of the challenges of church decline and the pressures of modern society. We experimented with "Saturdays Together" and in 2018 will continue to explore new ways of connecting with young families.

I am writing this in Epiphany 2018 and I have been particularly struck by the reading from Isaiah 60:1-6. It begins with the words "Arise, Shine" and goes on to paint a vision of people coming out of darkness and returning to the light, coming from every direction – old and young, firm and infirm. So I invite you to imagine what 2018 could look like with people flooding into our churches and to pray for that to happen.

Revd Jane

Some highlights of this report

- *St Chad's Golden Jubilee – page 1*
- *More use of St Chad's as a community resource – page 3*
- *Continued strong links with Dawpool School – page 3*
- *Increased communication between PCC and Congregation – page 4 and 15*
- *Participation in national initiative - Thy Kingdom Come – page 6*
- *Setting up of a FaceBook Page @stchadsstbarts – page 6*
- *Increasing use of Text Donations and Easy Fundraising – page 8*
- *More people working together (eg Finance Team) – page 9*
- *Commitment to promoting safe practice – pages 10-12*
- *Wide range of activities for all – page 12*
- *Confirmation Service – page 16*

REPORT ON THE BUSINESS OF THE PCC AND OTHER CHURCH MATTERS



The Parochial Church Council met seven times during the year and the Standing Committee twice. The Council has established several committees so that detailed issues can be explored and examined and recommendations brought to the Council meetings. This report is in four sections: PCC discussions related to the two churches; committee discussions; safeguarding and other matters.

1. DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO THE CHURCHES

St Bartholomew's

Roof

In January, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) trustees concluded that our grant application was less urgent than one for a church partly propped up by scaffolding. All other successful applications were by churches in a far worse state of repair. We were strongly encouraged to resubmit in February and apart from minor changes to the descriptions of the activities, we were told that everything else should remain the same. The HLF was clear that we could not have done more in presenting the application. Our application was again unsuccessful in February. Since then, the HLF scheme for church roofs has been absorbed into a general scheme for all historic buildings. Early in the spring, the church roof was damaged in a storm. Repairs were completed by April.

Churchyard

The Archdeacon required us to obtain a report from an arborist on the trees in the churchyard. Because of the cost of the work identified, the PCC decided that only a dangerous ash tree and an adjacent sycamore would be removed. This required permission from the diocese and the Local Authority Tree Officer: the two trees have now been removed. The 2016 Quinquennial Report said that the timber shed should be removed or replaced and it has now been demolished.

Parts of the electrical circuitry require updating and investigations are continuing. Loose tiles in the nave were re-fixed and made safe by Mr Peter Whitehead. The security lights required attention from Mr Jon Oliver. Damage to the banner stand near the altar was repaired by Mr Whitehead, who also repaired the wooden weather board below the main

door, Mr Oliver installed new lights above the altar and the installation of the rope handrail in the bell tower was completed. All the fire extinguishers at both churches passed their annual inspection.

St Chad's

Some door locks have been repaired but more work is needed on the double doors in the north west corner of the main hall. Both boilers passed their annual inspection. Repairs to the bulging floor had not been completed at the end of the year and external advice had been sought.

A private firm quoted £1,600 to repaint the lines in the car park, which was considered too expensive. The work might have to be done by hand. With greater use by outside groups, the arrangement whereby a parishioner voluntarily cleaned the extension was no longer practical, so the Standing Committee agreed that the cleaner for the main hall should be asked to do it. A community team redecorated the main hall.

As more groups were making use of the New Building (the extension) of St Chad's as a community resource, within the limits set by the Planning Authority, it was agreed in principle that new locks would be fitted to the door at the end nearest the road and on the main hall user door. An extra door with a magnetic lock and a time-control was installed at the end of the corridor, replacing the gate. This work was necessary if we were to let the building for hire. The PCC authorised the work on the locks and doors immediately and delayed work on improving the heating. Changes were also made to the positions of the light switches in the large room of the extension and the corridor, which were not convenient for those entering the room by the new door at the end near Roslin Road.

2. COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

Mission and Outreach Committee

In January, the Mission and Outreach committee reported that they had recognised that having very different churches was a significant advantage. They had identified excellent outreach to people from a very young age with the Tots and Tinies group and good links with the Brownies, other groups of young people and Dawpool School, where Mr Burrows, the head teacher was very keen to develop links between the church and the school. They were however concerned that some people who had not attended a service for a few weeks felt uneasy about returning. We had to ensure that everyone was welcome without reservation, whether they attended because of a deep faith or for social reasons.

A meeting with Mr Burrows was arranged with the aim of finding how the church could help the school. This culminated in providing volunteers for an after-school craft club (which we hope to start in April 2018) and assistance with a Year 5 "School Venture" weekend at Barnstondale in April 2018.

Activity groups were an effective form of outreach and Revd M Fletcher and Mrs J Parmenter had expressed interest in leading groups. Mrs J Deboorder met Mr Burrows, who was very positive about closer links between the church and the school. The PCC was told that the Diocesan Lay Conference at Swanwick had been excellent, providing many suggestions for the development of mission and outreach.

Buildings Committee

New door guards were obtained after a child's hand was caught in the hinge of a door at St Chad's. It was noted that although children should be accustomed to doors, they might be under less supervision while in church. Children had been seen playing with electrical sockets and the safety plugs were often not replaced. Hall users would be

reminded to replace them after using the sockets and the caretaker and cleaner asked to check them routinely.

Worship Committee

In January, Mr Smale, chair of the Worship Committee, informed the PCC that a service was being planned for March 5th to celebrate 50 years since St Chad's was opened, with the intention of having as many children involved as possible. It was attended by 65 children and 182 adults, including Revd Kelly, Revd B Harris, Revd A Harris and Revd M Fletcher. Revd D Watson had been unable to attend the service because she had been asked at short notice to lead a service in another parish, but she came to St Chad's immediately afterwards. Children and young people from Dawpool Primary School, Irby Primary School, the St Chad's seniors and the Guides had been very involved in the service and had all been thanked. It was without doubt a wonderful event.

Following comments by parishioners, the Committee had reviewed the balance of services and considered the possibility of a tea-time service at St Chad's on the last Saturday of the month. This became an event called Saturdays Together. The barbecue in July was very successful and was enjoyed by many parents and children. The Committee felt that Saturdays Together had been a reasonable success in social terms and was considering whether it should be continued. The Committee is hoping to find a permanent organising team for the event.

Finance Committee

The Committee had noted that the role of Honorary Treasurer had changed hands several times in recent years, sometimes causing significant difficulties. After discussion, it was agreed that:

- Correspondence addresses would be changed to the Parish Office over a period of time
- A secure letter box would be purchased and fitted at St Chad's
- Bank signatories would always include the Treasurer and Churchwardens (ex officio).

In January, following recommendations from the Treasurer and the Secretary, the PCC approved new financial controls under which the Parish Administrator would be authorised to spend up to £25 a week; larger amounts would require progressive levels of authorisation. This was to be monitored for a year and reviewed by the PCC in 2018.

The Standing Committee could be involved in financial decisions and as Church Representation Rules do not define a quorum for any committees, it was agreed that the quorum for that Committee, with six members at that time, would be four members.

Mr Turnbull referred to three particular areas of concern:

- We should obtain two quotations for work by contractors if the costs were over £250 and three if they were over £3,000. In some cases, such as work on the bell tower, it would not be possible as there were too few firms able to undertake the work.
- Under charity law only the PCC [or the Standing Committee] could authorise expenditure, which could cause delay. One solution would be to delegate budgets to individuals and to agree that they could authorise expenditure within certain limits.

- The arrangements for expense claims were not clear, although most claimants provided receipts. He circulated a draft of a new expenses claims form.

The PCC noted the concerns and the proposals are being implemented. In response to a suggestion of a Quinquennial Fund for St Bartholomew's and a similar fund for St Chad's, the Treasurer said that although it would be helpful, the essential problem was that we were spending considerably more than our income.

So that the Parish Administrator could purchase stamps and other small items for the office, the PCC agreed that she should have a Business Card with authorisation for up to £25 per transaction and a requirement to inform the Treasurer if the transaction exceeded £10. The limit of the card itself would be £300. On rare occasions, such as when floats were needed for the Christmas Fair, a larger amount could be specially authorised and withdrawn.

In April, as the date of the Annual Meeting loomed, the Independent Examiner was still busy with the accounts and in view of the amount of work involved, Mr Turnbull suggested that in future we should pay an accountant to prepare and audit the accounts.

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2016 later in April. The Independent Examiner was satisfied that they were correct and balanced and had provided a certificate to that effect. They were based on Receipts and Payments, which records movement of money in the year the movement occurs. The 2015 accounts had used an approach known as Accruals, which records movement of money at the time of the activity that generates it. The Treasurer explained that the change from accruals to receipts and payments might have made it more difficult to compare the 2015 and 2016 figures, because of changes to some headings; reduced use of "netting-off" (ie reporting only the balance of the income and costs of an activity. He had been strongly advised that it was much better to report costs and income separately and was encouraging that approach as much as possible); and an expected receipt of £10,133 from Gift Aid, which under a Receipts and Payments system would not appear in the accounts until it was received. Previously it would have been shown as an accrual that had not been received. After a short discussion, the Treasurer said it could be recorded under Assets with a note stating its approximate value.

Later in the year, Mr Kevin Marley replaced Mr Turnbull as Honorary Treasurer. The Rector thanked Mr Turnbull for all the time he had spent and the attention he had given to understanding the accounts and financial systems of the parish, and for the huge amount of work that he had done in reducing costs, particularly for energy, and streamlining procedures. All members endorsed her comments.

Mr Marley did not wish to be a member of the PCC but would provide written reports and attend PCC meetings when necessary. The Honorary Secretary stated that he had received clear advice from the Diocesan Secretary that the terms "PCC member" and "trustee" were identical in meaning for church charities, so Mr Marley was not a trustee and would not be able to take part in any financial decisions unless specifically authorised. Members noted that some churches employ firms of accountants to act as their treasurers, who generally work in the way that Mr Marley proposed, and agreed that Mr Marley should receive copies of PCC minutes.

Mr Marley said that although the present policy of mainly reactive maintenance was a more costly way to maintain grounds and buildings, the financial restrictions made it the only way to proceed. Some major works would be necessary in the not too distant future. If they were not addressed, income would be reduced at both churches.

Our investments were mainly restricted trusts or endowments, except for the Tudor Trust, as Mr Marley had confirmed in discussions with a solicitor and a financial expert. He asked the PCC to authorise the withdrawal of approximately £8,000 from the Tudor Trust to address immediate concerns, after which we could introduce a planned maintenance schedule that would reduce costs in the long term. It was decided that if Mrs Tudor's surviving relative agreed that this was in accordance with Mrs Tudor's wishes, the arrangement proposed could proceed.

3. SAFEGUARDING

In April Mrs K Timmins, the Safeguarding Officer, discussed the "Safeguarding Agenda", referring to information packs that she had provided for everyone present. She said she would send the Rector a set of redesigned forms for distribution to all PCC members / trustees.

At the next meeting, in June, the revised policy paper from the Safeguarding Officer was discussed in detail. Most regular users (such as the Guides) had their own policies. Those who did not, such as occasional users, had to agree to comply with our policy. This was agreed unanimously and the new hall hire form includes a note stating that users will adhere the parish policy on safeguarding. Hall hirers will also be reminded on the form that any damage should be reported within 24 hours.

4. OTHER MATTERS

Our representatives at the Diocesan Lay Conference were Mrs Julie DeBoorder and Mrs Julie Parmenter. Mrs J Trigg had agreed to be our new coordinator for the Women's World Day of Prayer and the service will be held in St Chad's in 2018. Students from Hugh Baird College, Liverpool, had agreed to design an on-line Advent Calendar for the Parish Website at no charge, as part of their project work. Members thanked Mrs Trigg, who had made the arrangements. We accepted an offer from the Deanery Synod to arrange a course on dementia awareness. In March, the PCC was informed that Mrs Kate Butler had been appointed as Parish Administrator and DBS checks were in progress. Mrs R Carter had retired from her post as governor of Dawpool School after 19 years of service and Mrs K Robson's appointment was due to expire on 9th October. The PCC appointed Mr K Marley and re-appointed Mrs Robson as Foundation Governors.

"Thy Kingdom Come" was a national initiative taking place between 27th May and 4th June. At the March meeting, an activity box was examined by all members and very well received. It was hoped that boxes could be given to 20 families who attended church.

Some members of the congregation of St Chad's had been disappointed that they could not attend a service at Easter. The PCC had previously agreed on joint services at Christmas and Easter, alternating between the churches. This would be reconsidered at a future meeting.

Inspired by what she had seen at the Diocesan Conference, Mrs Parmenter had set up a Facebook page. The Standing Committee agreed to ask her to speak about it at the next PCC meeting. It was agreed that it would be developed slowly and that Mrs Parmenter (Facebook editor), Mr Perry and Mrs Whitehead (churchwardens) and Mr Harford would monitor it.

Bishop Peter intended to visit the parish on 22nd April 2018, exactly 10 years after the Rector had been inducted. The PCC agreed to invite him to two services and we heard in November that he had agreed to come to the services at 9.30 am and 11.15 am.

The responses to a questionnaire completed by parents of children at Dawpool School had prompted Mr Burrows, the head teacher, to suggest annual church services for each

year group in the school, in which the children might first lead an activity and then go into Junior Church. The arrangements would be required approximately once a month, allowing for school holidays and other events.

A parishioner expressed concerns about the difficulties created on Remembrance Sunday by the numbers of people who had gathered around the War Memorial, holding back those who had attended the first of the two services in the church so they were unable to see the final stages of the service. Discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

The Council discussed a questionnaire entitled "Giving for Life", and noted that although discussions about giving, especially within church services, could lead to some embarrassment, giving was important as a response to God's generosity. Members did not know if the congregations were aware of the consequences of the fact that we could only afford to pay 60% of parish share. Of the practices listed on the questionnaire, our priorities were to maximise gift aid, including the small donations scheme; to ask members of the congregations to review their giving; and to communicate effectively with givers to explain the context of why additional giving was important. We should also focus our communications on what we do that is good and successful.

Graham Barley (Honorary Secretary)



TREASURER'S REPORT

2017 has been a year of stabilisation after a challenging couple of years. My thanks go to Chris Turnbull and the rest of the finance team for their sterling work in putting the accounts back on an even keel.

I took over from Chris in October/November and have spent the last couple of months getting to know the system and familiarising myself with the mechanics of the PCC finances. With that in mind my report will focus not only on our current position and the performance over the past 12 months but also on the measures agreed to help us to move forward and achieve financial stability.

PARISH SHARE

We have again only been able to pay 60% of our parish share, which again rose by 2.5%, due to the need to maintain our financial position and keep the three months reserve that we prudently hold.

We should all be aware that should the position of Rector become vacant while we are unable to pay our full parish share, the diocese would review our financial viability and might decide to amalgamate us with another parish, provide part time ministry or both.

ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE BETWEEN 2017 AND 2016

INCOME

Planned Giving

Planned Giving is our main source of income. It remained at the same level as last year but saw a drop in numbers with nine leaving the scheme and only four new members. It represented 51% of our total income, not including the gift aid that is due.

As attendance at church becomes more erratic due to whatever pressures families and members are experiencing, it becomes more important that more members are encouraged to join and current members are encouraged to set up standing orders to eradicate any gaps in their financial support of the church.

Donations

The income from donations was slightly higher this year mainly due to a very generous one-off donation by the bell tower members to cover the costs of works on the tower.

We need to champion the newer ways of donating including text donations and easy fundraising. These are modern ways of donating and can be done when purchasing goods and services on line with no cost to the purchaser.

Everyone should be encouraged to read our legacy policy and think about including the church in their will.

Gift Aid and GASDS

This provides us with very valuable income and is vital to our accounts as it makes up nearly 12% of our total income. It is cost free to the donor as long as they have paid enough tax throughout the year. With this in mind could everyone who is eligible sign a gift aid declaration and also can current members let the Planned Giving officers know if you have moved or are no longer eligible or have changed your name.

At this juncture I must thank both Chris Turnbull, Chris Smale and Roger Dennison for the amazing work they do on this area which can be very time consuming and laborious.

Fees Received

Unfortunately, fees received were down this year by 27% and future bookings are at a similar level and are a concern for future income.

Hall Hire

Income was only slightly higher this year but still a very important area of income and with some improvements planned for the coming financial year will hopefully see this increase. My thanks to Jean Heath, Chris Rostock and Kate Butler for their tireless work on bookings, invoices, debt collection and QuickBooks entry.

Investments and Reserves

In 2017 we started to receive the benefits from the Tudor Trust and our income from investments rose by 17%. The other investments performed adequately and returned similar figures to previous years.

We have been able to maintain our reserves at a decent level by not paying the full parish share but the nature of our situation means this needs to be maintained for the continued financial health of the PCC and to cover any unexpected expenditure which can occur at any time.

We plan to liquidate a portion of the Tudor Trust in order to complete some much needed maintenance at St Bartholomew's, meaning a small reduction in income each year compared to a much bigger saving on ongoing maintenance.

The ongoing Open Door issues and roof grant applications will be looked at again during the coming year but there has been no change of note at present.

EXPENDITURE

St Bartholomew's Overheads

Maintenance and costs at St Bartholomew's rose by 44% this year mainly due to the Tree Report and its required work, and the ongoing state of repair which is costing more each year. This will hopefully be addressed with the planned expenditure in the coming months. Many thanks to all who work so hard at keeping things in check.

St Chad's

Maintenance and costs at St Chad's reduced by 27% this year mainly due to some excellent new utility contracts negotiated by Chris Turnbull.

Assistant Clergy

Our expenditure on Assistant Clergy fees were reduced by 70% over the year. Our thanks go to you all for your unwavering support and generosity.

Administration

The administration costs incurred in running the parish reduced by 4% again mainly due to a new phone contract negotiated this year.

SUMMARY

By introducing a new budget and its associated responsibilities, we hope to have a tighter control over our costs going forward to enable us to focus on the income generating and mission objectives. Once it is agreed and all quotes have been obtained we will be able to use the liquidated assets (as previously discussed) to reduce our ongoing costs associated with St Bartholomew's.

Having only been in the position of Treasurer for a couple of months I would like to thank everyone for their support and in particular the other members of the finance team who have been a great help while I am still finding my feet.

The finance team comprises:

Accounts Partner	Chris Rostock
Parish Giving Officers	Chris Turnbull and Chris Smale
Banker	Roger Dennison
Parish Administrator	Kate Butler
Signatory and cashier	Roger Jackson
Hall Hire Officer	Jean Heath
Payroll Officer	Patsy Brady
Committee members	Chris Williams and Malcolm Studholme

Kevin Marley (Honorary Treasurer)



SAFEGUARDING

1. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

The government is continuously reviewing legislation and guidance to ensure children and adults at risk are kept safe as far as possible. It is our responsibility to ensure we do all we can to make the environments we work and worship in safer for vulnerable people.

Our policy at St Chad's and St Bartholomew's is based on the policy and procedures outlined in *Protecting All God's Children*, published by the House of Bishops', 4th edition 2010, and Diocese of Chester Safeguarding And Vulnerability Policy and Procedures : 'SAFE IN OUR CARE '.

The Safeguarding Policy and its procedures were adopted in April 2017. It will be amended in line with any recommendations or good practice guidance from the House of Bishops and will be reviewed annually. These procedures may be adapted specifically to meet the needs and practices of St Chad's Irby and St Bartholomew's Thurstaston as required.

Within the adopted procedures there are several forms for general use within the Parish, covering:

Comments and Complaints	Approval of Activities and Events
Incident Reporting	Consent Forms in relation to the display of Photographs
Parental Consent for Activities / Events	Images Consent Forms for the use of photographs and videos
Risk Assessment Forms for Activities	Hire Arrangements for Church Premises
Volunteer Declaration in relation to their duties	Application Form for Volunteer Roles
Guidance Notes for the role of Parish Safeguarding Coordinator	Recommended Good Practice Guidance for the Leaders of Children/Youth Groups

2. Parish Safeguarding Coordinator

The current Safeguarding Coordinator appointed is Mrs Kathryn Timmins. Kathryn has no pastoral responsibility for the children or vulnerable adults within the Parish. Kathryn is responsible for the administration of all DBS correspondence, references and online checks through CCPAS.

3. Children's Advocate

Currently the Parish has decided not to appoint a separate person to act as 'vulnerable person's advocate' whom children or vulnerable adults could talk to about any safeguarding concerns they might have.

4. Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Details

Details are currently displayed on Church notice boards along with contact details of local authority safeguarding boards.

5. Safer Recruitment and DBS (Disclosure & Barring) Vetting

All volunteers currently working with children and vulnerable adults have registered for DBS checks. References from two referees are requested along with suitable

identification checks prior to DBS certificates being issued. New volunteer applicants are asked to complete a pre-appointment questionnaire and declaration in relation to any previous offences.

New volunteer applicants are asked to sign a consent form in relation to the sharing of their personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998.

DBS checks are completed and retained by CCPAS. This is an on-line service which works well for these purposes and DBS certificates will be requested to be renewed at regular intervals.

6. Appropriate Insurance Cover

The Parish is responsible for ensuring adequate annual insurance cover for its Church activities.

People requesting hall hire are asked to ensure that they have also made appropriate insurance arrangements. They are advised that they need to ensure risk management strategies are in place for the activities they wish to engage in and that it is their responsibility to provide adequate supervision for children and young people taking part in these activities.

7. Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) and Joint Safeguarding Policy Arrangements

St Chad's Irby with St Bartholomew's Thurstaston do not currently have any such joint partnership arrangements in place.

8. Safeguarding Concerns

In the event of a safeguarding concern or referral being made, under the current arrangements, any such referrals should be directed to the Safeguarding Coordinator Kathryn Timmins or Reverend Jane Turner who will liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and the relevant local safeguarding authority.

Currently no safeguarding referrals or concerns have been raised.

9. Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding Training for volunteers is arranged by the Diocese. The Safeguarding Officer and all new volunteers have attended this training. Dates of any new safeguarding training events will be circulated.

10. Safe Working Practice

Risk Assessments forms are in place and should be carried out and recorded for all new activities and should be assessed at least annually.

11. Agreements with Offenders

Offenders who become known to the Church and who pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults and who wish to take part in activities or Church worship should enter into an agreement which should be reviewed on a regular basis.

The Safeguarding Officer has not been informed of any new or recent offenders who require such Agreements

12. Confidentiality

Safeguarding referrals and all relevant sensitive information should remain confidential and should only be shared with local authority safeguarding boards and the Safeguarding Officer for the Diocese.

All personal information in relation to volunteers and sensitive information in relation to safeguarding referrals must be stored and locked away in a safe place, inaccessible to anyone other than authorised personnel.

13.Current DBS Registrations

Thirteen people within the Parish currently have DBS certificates. Some now require renewal to remain compliant and they are being contacted with re-registration instructions. The Rector or the Safeguarding Officer will provide details of DBS certificate holders on request.

The Parish commits itself to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust. The current policies and procedures have been adopted and are in place in order to ensure that the Parish is compliant and has robust safeguarding protocols in place.

I believe that provided the current policies and safeguarding procedures are followed and adhered to, the Parish will remain compliant.

Kathryn Timmins (Safeguarding Coordinator)

CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT

Two church services have taken place nearly every Sunday throughout the year at St Bartholomew's, while at St Chad's services have taken place nearly every Sunday and Wednesday.

There have also been many special services, an extremely successful St Beartholomew's day in late August and other church-related or community activities. They included:

- January to June Multi-Sensory bible (15 sessions)
- March to April Lent Course (5 sessions)
- 5th March St. Chad's Golden Jubilee Service
- 30th April Annual Church Meeting
- 6th May Big Brekkie
- May to November Saturday Together (5 sessions)
- 2nd June Summer Barn Dance
- 8th June Wirral Youth For Christ
- 24th June Books, Bags, Badges & Beads
- 15th July Christmas Child Coffee Morning
- 16th July Church Farm Picnic
- 26th August St.Beartholomew's Day
- 20th September Dementia Awareness
- 30th September Harvest Supper
- 5th October Wirral Foodbank Service
- 29th October Evening of Remembrance & Thanksgiving
- 12th November Film Review 'The Shack'
- 12th November Remembrance Sunday
- 18th November Christmas Fair
- 4th December Christingle Service
- December Advent Services (4 sessions)

At St Bartholomew's early in the year, Storm Doris damaged the roof and trees growing by the low boundary wall at the back of the churchyard. The roof was repaired and the two damaged trees were felled – an ash and a sycamore.

There were several loose tiles in the nave. They had been identified in the latest Quinquennial report as requiring urgent attention. They were made safe by cementing and grouting by Mr Peter Whitehead. Also identified by the Quinquennial report was the timber shed located to the west side of the old tower. It was described as dilapidated and unsafe. This was dismantled and the wood disposed of by Mr Malcolm Studholme, Mr Peter Whitehead and Mr Peter Trigg.

Other repairs carried out by Mr Peter Whitehead were reattaching the weather board under the main door and reattaching a support to the banner stand by the front left of the altar.

Our thanks go to Mr Jon Oliver who has continued to maintain and repair the lighting and Mr Malcolm Studholme, who has continued to assist in many aspects of the day to day running of the church, particularly, the boiler and health and safety issues.

Mr Archie Peat has spent many hours weeding and tidying the Garden of Remembrance for which we are very grateful.

St Chad's has been used regularly by the Mother's Union, Evening Mother's Union, Weight Watchers, Merry Widows, Irby Artists, Bats & Balls, SOSO, and Exercise with Baby, Baby Sensory, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. Several private functions have taken place throughout the year.

The New Building, as well as being used for some of the above, is used in term time on Sundays for Junior Church while main service takes place.

During the Summer Close Down the main hall was re-painted. The gutters and down-spouts were cleared thanks to Mike Rostock. Thanks, too, to Jon Oliver for keeping the lamps lit and to Archie Peat for getting the lawnmowers and grass trimmers serviced. Also, a massive thank you to the grass cutting team of Chris Turnbull, Mike Rostock, Will Hughes, Chris Smale and Peter Robson for seeing that the grass cutting was done throughout the summer months.

The activities in both churches, including the services, have involved a large number of our parishioners, and we are thankful for everyone's contributions. Finally, but perhaps most importantly, we as a parish thank our Rector, Revd Jane Turner, for all the hard work she does and the support she provides for us all.

Now we pray that our Lord gives us his blessing as we go forward into 2018.

Chris Perry and Liz Whitehead (Churchwardens)

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Rural Deanery of North Wirral has members from each of 14 parishes. Thurstaston parish has three representatives – Chris Smale and Malcolm Studholme and a vacancy. Representatives are appointed on a three year cycle (casual vacancies can be filled during the 3 years) which comes to an end in 2019, so there is an opportunity for people to offer to serve the church in this valuable role.

It meets four times a year under the chairmanship of Rev Peter Froggatt of Christ Church Barnston, who is the Rural Dean, while the lay chair is Lesley Young. The secretary is Alan McGraa. It has a Mission and Standing Committee which discusses and manages deanery synod finance and discusses and plans the deanery meetings.

This year's meetings were:-

February – We hosted this meeting at St Chad's. We heard about preparations for the "Believe in Birkenhead" mission at which Archbishop John Sentamu would visit and speak at several events. The main focus for the meeting was the national initiative, "Thy Kingdom Come", which would be held during the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost.

June – this meeting was held at St Bridget's West Kirby and the speaker was the diocesan missionary, Lyn Weston. We looked at:-

- How do we connect with our communities and reaching out to all ages?
- Reaching out in all sorts of places and activities.
- Attracting young people – need to go out of church buildings?
- Using Messy Church and finding a way to follow up and turn people into disciples.

September – this meeting was held at St Nicholas' Greasby and the speaker was the diocesan Youth, Children and Families Missioner, Jonathan Masters. He helped us to think about:-

- why it is important that younger generations are part of the church;
- how we can encourage younger generations to be part of the church.

November – this was the lay forum and was held at St Hildeburgh's Hoylake. The speaker was the Warden of Readers & Pastoral Workers, Revd Vivien Gisby who referred to Chester Diocese as being the only diocese where Pastoral Workers are fully licensed lay workers (as is the case with Readers). The initial year's training for both is the same, this being the Foundations For Ministry course. Thereafter training differs to suit the differing roles of the two ministries.

Meetings for 2018 are planned for the following dates:

- 12 Feb – Meols, Archdeacon Mike on the report "Setting All God's people free"
- 16 May – New Ferry – Diocesan Director Education
- 10 Sep. – Upton - Mission Links
- 24 Nov. – Newton (Lay Forum) – Acorn Listening Trust

The Rural Dean is keen to promote cooperation between parishes and to ensure that meetings provide valuable opportunities for reflection, mutual support and sharing of good practice. To that end, the lay chair has said that Deanery Synod meetings are open to all parishioners, not just the elected representatives.

Chris Smale and Malcolm Studholme (Deanery Synod Representatives)

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

At the APCM in 2017, the roll contained 217¹ members from 149 households.

During the past year 10 members have been deleted from the roll. During the recent revision I added 6 new members who applied to join. The Electoral Roll now has 213 members from 144 households.

Helen Williams (Electoral Roll Officer)

CHARITIES SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



LEPROSY MISSION

On behalf of the Leprosy Mission may I thank both congregations for your continued support. £236.05p was collected in October through your Leprosy boxes.

Unfortunately this form of giving seems to be less popular, as the annual total has been steadily declining over the years. Please be reminded that a one-off donation at any time in the year would be most welcome.

Thanks to a visit in March from Nick Calland of the Leprosy Mission, a retirement collection raised a further £115.

Remember, Leprosy is a dreadful but curable disease.

Pat Hulme



THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Jean Heath (648 6015), Elaine Kavanagh (648 1721) and Barbara Kozer (648 3512) co-ordinate fund raising for the Society in the Parish.

The annual 'Thank You' Coffee Morning was held in September, a month earlier than usual and at the request of the Society, to enable us to collect and pay in any old £1 coins before 16 October, the date upon which they ceased to be legal tender. The venue also changed to Jean's home, where she is happy to hold the event in future, and we raised £193.75 from Bring and Buy items - £117.25 and Donations of £76.50.

Our thanks go to our Box Holders and others who kindly attended and made the event so successful.

The total from House Boxes amounted to £981.98, a further increase on the previous year's total. The Society informs us that collection boxes are vital in helping towards

¹ Due to an administrative error, this was incorrectly reported last year as 223

their mission of supporting disadvantaged children and young people. They were able to work with over 18,000 vulnerable children and youngsters last year, bringing life-changing support through their services around the country, which included helping families trapped in poverty and debt, providing support to young carers and combating the evils of child sexual exploitation.

We would appeal to anyone who would like to keep a box in their home to get in touch and we will happily supply one.

The Christingle Service in early December at St Chad's raised a further £69.55.

Jean Heath (648 6015)

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church meets at St Chad's during the service in term time, excluding family service days. Presently there are two groups, Sparklers for children age 2½ to reception class and Starblazers for school years 1 – 6. The wide age range in the latter has come about because at present there are not enough numbers to subdivide them, but year 6s have the option to and usually do join seniors a year early.

The lower numbers of children gave us some concern, so I sent out a letter to parents asking for feedback and invited honest criticism. Those families that replied were very positive and told us their children enjoyed it and would come more often if it were not for family and other commitments. Parents were very positive and encouraging quality not quantity!

During the year the children and leaders set about creating a display in the windows to follow the seasons changing, the children produced snowy scenes for the winter, flowers for spring, apples appeared on the tree for the summer. For harvest a fabulous red tractor drove across the middle window accompanied by bales of wheat and fruit and vegetables.

In March Seniors took part in the service celebrating St Chad's 50 years, along with Dawpool and Irby Primary schools. They gave us a thought provoking glimpse of a future virtual reality church, but brought us skilfully back to earth with a reminder that you cannot get a hug from a computer screen!

In July the children and seniors presented the Book Giving Service entitled "WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBOURS?" It was based on the Good Samaritan story, but brought up to date by being about Everton and Liverpool supporters. The congregation wore red or blue, with each colour on its own side of church. The actors were in red or blue football kits. Sparklers led percussion enthusiastically to the Match of the Day theme tune. Seniors and Starblazers gave a superb performance acting out the football supporters and leading the congregation to join in with the story. Interactive readings involved a Taizé style adaptation of a well-known song, ending with simple prayers inviting everyone to light candles. They all received their books and the Seniors shield was awarded.

Afterwards we finished our summer term with a picnic at St Chad's in the back garden. We had planned to go to Royden Park but it had rained hard in the morning and the

forecast was not good, hence the decision to stay in reach of shelter. However, the sun shone in the end and we played games and enjoyed our picnics.

During the summer holidays, St Beartholomew's Day was another success for the brave bears and their owners. A few temporary stuck parachutists were eventually freed, much to our and their owners' relief. Junior Church leaders, helpers and their friends and families all helped to set up/clear away and provide stalls and refreshments. The children's raffle and lucky dip were enjoyed and "sweets in a cup" went down well. Delicious cakes were donated by church members. Mike Rostock kept us all safe from floating/plunging teddies and Richard Turner judged the skill of our brave bears who launched off the tower to parachute down towards a marker. The three nearest to the marker received prizes. A great day was had by all.

October was a very emotional time for me. I was very proud to see our seniors Charlotte, Daniel, Henry and George being confirmed, which made everything seem worthwhile.

The *** Christmas Nativity *** service was produced by the collaboration of all the leaders (apart from me) and they did a fantastic job. We saw and heard the story of the nativity through all the children and Seniors. The Seniors' voices were so clear and wonderfully read and the children were endearing as usual. The crib had a last minute wobble, patched up by some hasty sticky tape repairs, but held up for the duration thankfully. It was a lovely service enjoyed by all and I know there was a lot of preparation and hard work by many, thanks to all the leaders and helpers who always make it such an engaging service.

Many thanks to the Junior Church leaders and helpers (and their friends and families) without whom nothing would get done and who have given their time so generously. Thanks to Reverend Jane for her enthusiasm, organising skills, advice and support and thanks to everyone who meets together with me whenever I have to plan anything, and who have supported me and shared the load.

God Bless,

Julie De Boorder.

SENIORS

During 2016/17 the age range within this group was wide, with two members celebrating their 18th birthdays in year, compared with the youngest who was in year 6 at Dawpool. However, this only added to the breadth, interest and involvement of activities that were undertaken.

The Nativity Service was taken from an original script written by Tearfund, and led by Seniors narrating the script, accompanied by the younger children enacting different parts. The Book Giving service had a theme on the Good Samaritan but was brought into the 21st century by portraying opposing Liverpool and Everton football fans.

At Easter, the Seniors took part in reviewing a number of different case studies, based on a "who done it" script. It was a 21st century depiction of Judas; the disciple who missed the message of Christ.

From September, the group have been working on refreshing their knowledge of the Ten Commandments and this will hopefully lead to a new display being established in their room.

Janet Trigg



WELLSPRING

Wellspring is a monthly Prayer Group (open to anyone in the parish) which was launched in May 2011. We meet in the Rectory on the third Monday of each month from 8-9pm. It is good to have people from across the congregations coming together to pray.

We pray for individual members of our congregations and for events and issues within the life of the parish. During this year we have shrunk from an average of 5-6 people down to two or three, so at the end of the year we decided that we would temporarily discontinue these meetings and explore different styles of prayer meeting in the New Year.

Revd Jane Turner and the other members of the group



BELLRINGERS' REPORT

In 2017 stair rails were fitted to the spiral staircase leading to the ringing chamber (a central rope fitted due to inadequate space for a full rail) and the stairs leading to the Belfry. This has greatly improved the access to the tower and safety in accessing the belfry.

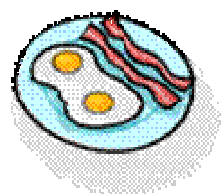
We are grateful to the PCC in facilitating this process. Funding for this work was provided by the Bell Ringing team from the payments that they would usually receive for ringing at weddings. After two years of collecting these payments we have now fully funded these essential changes. My thanks go to the team for their support in this project.

There were three quarter peals rung during the year. The first on 8th February 2017 (Cambridge Surprise Minor) was rung by a Chester Guild band to commemorate the life of Tony Power a local ringer from West Kirby. The second on 29th October 2017 (10 Doubles Methods, Variations and Principles) was rung by a Wirral band for the Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance at St Chad's. The third on 8th November 2017 (Plain Bob minor) was rung by a Wirral band.

Our annual 'Christmas meal' was held in the village at Zeera in February. This was attended by 13 ringers and we enjoyed an excellent meal with good company.

We currently have 15 ringers – we unfortunately only retained one of last year's beginners but have taken on two new recruits who are ringing and doing well. They have now both progressed to ringing on their own in rounds with the rest of the band.

Peter Robson



MEN'S BREAKFAST

A group of men have continued to meet bi-monthly for breakfast.

Matthew James

CHURCH RELATED ORGANISATIONS



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

EMU January – December 2017

Our branch of EMU (Evening Mothers' Union) meets monthly during the school term at St Chad's, usually on the last Wednesday of the month at 8.00pm. We would love to welcome new members. Please come along and give it a try. We have a varied programme to suit all tastes.

During 2017, we went for a New Year meal at Lino's in Hoylake and a summer meal at the Jug & Bottle in Heswall. Our meetings included, a talk on Fostering, a demonstration by our regular Jane of Jane's jewellery, a talk from Ray Ward on 'Operation Christmas child', a visit from a pack of Husky dogs, with their owners and a talk about their charity R.E.A.C.H., a visit from Wirral Foodbank and finally a craft evening with Chris Carlson, making gifts for the church Christmas Fair.

During November we collected approximately 15 Boxes for the Operation Christmas Child and gave a donation of several handmade items.

Please visit www.mothersunion.org/ or www.mothersunionchester.org.uk to find out more about the work of Mothers' Union

Chris Rostock – Branch Secretary

1ST THURSTASTON GUIDES ANNUAL REPORT 2017

We have enjoyed another year as joint leaders of 1st Thurstaston Guides and have enjoyed many and varied activities through the year.

- **Challenge badges:** We have undertaken many challenges and our guides have achieved great things!
 - Three amazing Guides have completed their Baden Powell Challenge Award – well done to them! The Baden Powell Challenge award is the highest award a Guide can achieve. Although it was sad to say goodbye to them at a farewell meal in Heswall.
 - We also have a couple of leaders in training who are due to complete their training very soon
 - The Guides have demonstrated their love of food by completing many activities that have involved making and eating food, but have also balanced this out by having some active evenings – netball, trampolining, boating.
- **Special Interest Nights:** We have had some fun special interest nights over the last year including:
 - Boating on the marine lake
 - Chippy coin walk
 - A 'ready steady cook' style evening



- Trampolining including a trip to Jumpin' Josephs
- Trip to the Yog Bar in Hoylake and games of rounders on the beach.
- Litter picking on Thurstaston beach
- Weekend day trip out to Manley Mere
- **Community Events and Fundraising:** We have had some fun organising community and fund raising events
 - Taken part in a District Thinking Day event
 - Children in Need charity event
 - Helping out at St. Chad's Christmas fair
 - Taken part in a District summer party to celebrate all that our District commissioner has done within guiding over the years, as she was retiring.

We also attended Church Parades during the year, including the Remembrance Day service at St Bartholomew's Church.

We have also been fundraising for one of our guides who left us this year to go to senior section. She is one of a select few that are going to Malaysia in 2018 on an international Guiding adventure and has been doing an amazing job in fundraising to pay towards her trip. Our current guides have also had some fundraising events to try and help out. We're sure she'll have an amazing time and can't wait to hear about it when she returns!

All in all, we have had another wonderful year and managed to involve the girls in a wide range of activities. Some of the guides who had to leave us this year have gone on to remain in guiding and joined the senior section as well as becoming young leaders with other units which is fantastic. We wish all the guides who have now left us all the best for the future.

Ellie Randall, Gaynor Vaughan, Lily Foster and the Guides!

3rd IRBY BROWNIES

We have had a fantastic first full year at St Chad's. The unit has been able to expand to 28 Brownies thanks to Mandi Fletcher joining us as a third leader.

The Brownies have been very busy this year completing several guiding interest and challenge badges. There have also been four opportunities for overnight trips, including two sleepovers at Hadlow Fields, a two night PGL trip and a camping trip at Magic and Mayhem where the girls got to learn circus tricks. Plus day trips to Liverpool Empire theatre to watch Cinderella and to a Science Jamboree day at the University of Liverpool.

We enjoyed the district summer party at Hadlow Fields and hosted our own fundraiser sports day – thank you to all the parents and families for their support. The Brownies also enjoyed continuing our tradition of making 100 Christingles for the Christingle service!

As always we are looking for people who would be interested in offering regular help during our meetings which are held on a Monday evening between 6.45pm and 8pm. Also anyone who has a particular interest or service which they think the Brownies would be interested to learn about please feel free to get in touch as we are always looking for new ideas for our meetings.

Gemma Willerton, Lynn McCoy and Mandi Fletcher

2nd IRBY RAINBOWS

We've had an exciting year with our full pack of twenty Rainbows taking part in a variety of activities.

We have met with the other Rainbow pack and have had fun taking part in some Guiding Challenge Badges. The one which was the most fun for the girls was the Clever Cloggs Engineering challenge badge, hopefully we will produce some future engineers.

We have also had some fun craft nights.

Rainbows have attended Church Parade at both St Chad's and St. Bartholomew's.

We also attended and fundraised at the District Thinking Day Event in February 2017.

We'd like to thank St. Chad's and our parents for their support throughout 2017.

Karen Fearn

TOTS & TINIES

Each Thursday morning during Term Time, Tots & Tinies meet at St Chad's Hall, Irby from 9.30am-11.30am. The playgroup welcomes parents and carers with babies and children up to pre-school age. There is a charge of £1.50 per child and accompanying adult, with a supplement of 50p for each extra child.

Each week the children are provided with a snack of fresh fruit, toast and a drink. Adults are invited to help themselves to tea/coffee, biscuits & toast. This provision is funded from the cover charge.

Parents and carers are invited to supervise their own children in this friendly group environment. The children freely interact with one another whilst using a wide variety of activities. These include a reading corner, crafts, large/small play toys, jigsaws – all of which encourage fine and large motor skills and social skills.

The group is co-ordinated by Allison Youds, with help from Lucy who has been preparing crafts, Alan and Elaine Jones have been providing snacks. A sing song/music session follows snack time and a story finishes each session.

Parent volunteer helpers put equipment out and away and help with the dishes at the end of each session.

Tots & Tinies welcomes on average 30 children and parents/carers each week. It should be noted the safety and supervision of each child is the sole responsibility of the child's attending parent/carer at all times.

Throughout the year there have been several events such as a Teddy's Bear picnic, Race for Life for Cancer Research, a visit to Church Farm, Easter Egg hunt, Father Christmas visited and there was a Christmas party. Individual birthdays are celebrated each week.

Numbers continue to grow and it has been lovely to welcome baby brothers and sisters. Please contact Rev Jane Turner if you are interested in any aspect of Tots & Tinies.

Allison Youds