

PARISH OF PLUMPTON WITH EAST CHILTINGTON CUM NOVINGTON

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

ALL SAINTS CHURCH 28th APRIL 2024

ANNUAL REPORT

Administrative information.

The Parish is a charity but exempt from registering with the Charity Commission within the meaning of the Charities Act 1993.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council.

Priest in charge	Rev. Anne Dunlop
Churchwardens	Mr Howard Wood Mr Jay Haque (until June 2023) Mr Andrew Meredith-Jones (until January 2024) Deputy: Mr David Dawson (until July 2023)
Representative on Deanery Synod	Mr Peter Baker Mrs Kathy Baker Rev. Anne Dunlop
Elected members	Mrs Josephine Butler (Social Committee Officer) Mrs Janice Doran (Parish Safeguarding Officer) Mr Alan Fraser-Harris Mr Eric Gill Mrs Tina Lambert Mrs Angela Spinks
Ex-officio/Co-opted	Mr Kelvin Speirs (Treasurer) Mr Robert Doran (Health and Safety)

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, Churchwardens/Deputies, members of the Deanery/Diocesan/General Synod, and members of the Church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and co-opted members voted on by the PCC. The number of lay members on the PCC is governed by the number on the Electoral Roll which in this year was nine.

Members are encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

The primary objective of the PCC of Plumpton with East Chiltington cum Novington is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as expounded in the doctrines and practices of the Church according to the usage of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility for the care of the buildings. They also work with the with the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

A service of Holy Communion is held every Sunday in the Parish at All Saints and on occasion during the year at East Chiltington and St Michael and All Angels. Additional services are held at Easter (The Triduum) and at Christmas as appropriate. A service of Compline is held nightly via ZOOM. A midweek service of Holy Communion is held on Tuesday at 11.30 a.m.

There were 56 on the Electoral Roll in 2023, with the October count averaging 30. There were no marriages, one baptism, nine funerals (five burials three interments of ashes) during the year.

The PCC met twelve times during the year; Finance and Safeguarding are Standing Items.

## **ANNUAL REPORT – Rev Anne Dunlop**

I wish to thank all of you for the many ways you have contributed to the work and mission of the Church during the year. We have achieved a lot, and the church is growing not just in numbers but also in our faith and commitment to being disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Developing Faith**

Many of you continue to engage with daily reading notes and I am sure, attest to how this has helped promote the understanding of what we believe and a growing familiarity with the scriptures.

### **Our weekly services.**

Our worship together each Sunday is the expression of the Body of Christ in this place. Gathering together builds friendships, forms networks and develops ideas. We each have a part to play and something to offer. My thanks to those of you who lead the prayers, read the lessons, welcome, provide transport, and refreshments afterwards. Thank you for your commitment, I know that you put a lot of preparation into what you do.

The choir has been a significant addition to our services and our thanks to Geoff and Angela Spinks and Judith Miller for maintaining this work. People from within the Parish of Plumpton and Offham and from the village have joined and their contribution, particularly at the Coronation was splendid. We look forward to a regular inclusion of the choir in our services and welcome other singers who may wish to join. Our grateful thanks to Judith Miller who plays the organ for us almost every Sunday in the year and at many other occasions.

We have a quiet, reflective mid-week service of Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. Compline is said nightly via ZOOM.

At Advent this year we returned to the shared chalice at Holy Communion after the previous simultaneous administration after the pandemic.

The church continues to be open daily.

### **Other developments**

We continue to be a Fairtrade Church in our purchasing as much as is possible.

During the year the use of the Sumup machine to enable card payments has developed as we have 'got to grips' with the technology. This has been of great help especially at the, now traditional, 'Harvest Produce Auction' when we raised for the charity Ripple.

Your generosity also raised funds for the Royal British Legion, and the Lent Appeal 2023 raised money for the Fur and Feather charity in The Gambia. Significantly we have maintained our Diocesan contribution (Parish Share) which was over £14000 in 2023.

The churchwarden will address the maintenance of the buildings, but at this point I would like to express my thanks to Peter Woodhouse for the cheerful willingness he offers us in fixing just about everything that needs fixing.

### **Our life together**

In many ways the congregation contributes to the life of the church and its place within the village of Plumpton. The Tuesday Lunch, now in its third year has a regular attendance of almost thirty. It is much appreciated as a focus for developing friendships and socialising, as much as it is for its delicious meals. These are managed by a team of volunteers – tirelessly and with considerable commitment and dedication and I am grateful for their commitment to this work.

Jesus spoke a lot about hospitality – it is a human need. In a teaching he said "I was a stranger and you welcomed me..." with the idea that what we do for others in his name is as to him. Those attending are not always strangers to one another, although we do welcome new people, but many live on their own and the Tuesday Lunch 'gets them out of the house' to meet friends.

In a similar way, the new Thursday 'Pop in Café' continues and has grown with a regular group averaging about sixteen each Thursday. This evolved as a response to providing a warm space over the winter months. It is run by people from the village and my thanks to Paul Mitchell, Jo and Nick Hale, and Anna Mackenzie-Dodds, for their commitment to this project.

So many of you give in various ways to make this Parish welcoming. My thanks to the teams who clean the church and those who provided transport, welcome people, and provide the refreshments after the service. Particular thanks to Jean Eagle who has passed on the responsibility for organising the flower rota after many years. Also, to Kate Gold and Howard Wood who find the volunteers to clear the churchyard each Autumn. Bob and Janice Doran who meticulously draw up rotas and much more. You all make it what it is.

In 2024 I was delighted to licence Andrew Meredith-Jones, Bob Doran, Janice Doran and Tina Lambert who, having completed training, were licenced by Bishop Martin as Lay Ministers of the Eucharist.

Our new website is now up and running.

Our Harvest services both at the church and at the college were a great success and our thanks to Carole Nicholson for managing the village event and Josephine Butler for all the work needed to set this up at the College. Josephine is stepping down from managing this social aspect of the church. For many years she has overseen the hospitality offered at the College, the last three times being no exception to her excellent attention to detail. A new team takes over this year and it is a hard act to follow.

Our service of Remembrance was well attended as was the later service at the Polish War Memorial.

Our work at Plumpton College has continued to develop and I am grateful to the Principal, Jeremy Kerswell and his team for facilitating this. Each Wednesday during term time we open St Michael as 'Reflective Space' and a team of volunteers mostly from the church along with others are there in the afternoon when the students have an 'enrichment period' – an opportunity to engage with the building and have someone to chat with. My thanks to all who volunteer to be part of this. It has also been my privilege to take part in the College service to mark Remembrance Day. The star of this event has always been Eric Gill who reads the Kohima Epitaph but not before he has explained to the young people just what it means. Many students have stopped behind to chat with him.

I have continued my engagement with the schools as a Skylark Foundation Governor and undertaken with others, inspections of the schools during the year, looking at quality of education and personal development.

We plan to provide something suitable for young families and children and this is an ongoing project; this may be a Family Service once a month. We are well on the way to having a new sound system installed with the help of Nick Satchell who has offered to fund this from the Millennium Fund monies.

I understand the Diocesan plan remains for Plumpton and Hamsey to become a United Benefice in due course. During the year we have had opportunity to join together for services, Easter, and Christmas. I hope that this engagement will increase over time.

My especial thanks to Carole Nicholson and Liz Meredith-Jones who between them use excellent administrative skills in the responsibility of the PCC secretarial post.

As we look back over the year, let us give thanks to God for all that has begun and continues within the Parish. There is a growth in faith and fellowship amongst us, we have a much stronger foundation and are a welcoming community. In the coming year it is planned to develop a Family Service on the first Sunday of the month at All Saints.

So, I encourage you. The living water that Jesus Christ gives us is not to be held inside but to outflow to those around. Begin to be sensitive to opportunities among the people you know. Ask God to help you share the joy and the love, the forgiveness and healing – the Gospel. Hear again the words of Jesus "You are to be my witnesses...". May God give his blessing.

Rev Anne Dunlop

Priest in Charge Parish of Plumpton and East Chilton cum Novington

## ELECTORAL ROLL – David Dawson

During the year one person was removed from the Roll (deceased). The Electoral Roll has been revised and stands at 56. Over 50 means our PCC number of lay members is nine.

## SAFEGUARDING –Janice Doran Parish Safeguarding Officer

There have been no incidents concerning safeguarding 2023. As part of the Warm Welcome initiative JD attended a national training course on Welcoming and Conversation Skills which included safeguarding awareness applicable for us generally but specifically to the Church Tuesday Lunch and Pop in Café.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023 – Kelvin Speirs, Treasurer

### General Fund Receipts and Payments

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Offertories		310
Free Will Offering	16051	15486
Tax Credits	3736	2917
Donations & Legacies	6156	7295
Fund Raising	8051	1423
Interest	444	416
Weddings/Funerals	5418	5952
Annexe	3854	2505
E. Chilton church hire		180
Hymn Book donations		1220
Miscellaneous	125	1736
	43835	39440
<b>Expenses</b>	17222	14400
Diocese	15473	10196
Utilities	10241	3546
Repairs/Maintenance	154	779
Church Yard	105	81
Bank Charges	3827	3377
Insurance	1358	1660
Parish Expenses	6063	326
Annexe	194	48
Miscellaneous		1903
Hymn Books		1667
Notice Board	1262	1461
Donations	218	307
Fund Raising	56117	39751
Excess of Receipts over payments	(12282)	(311)
Bank Account 1/1/2023	38762	39073
Bank Account 31/12/2023	26480	38762
<b>PCC Other Funds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
General Fund 1/1/23		
Interest	8809	8695
	282	114
General Fund 31/12/23	9091	8809

Church Hall Fund 1/1/23	1179	1163
Interest	38	16
Church Hall Fund 31/12/23	1217	1179
Sunday School Fund 1/1/23	13276	12943
Interest	522	293
Sunday School Fund 31/12/23	13798	13276
Current Value of Shares		
621 CBF Shares	14639	12831
3061 Fixed Interest Securities	4431	4197

## **CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT - Howard Wood**

### All Saints

In May 2023 the ten fire extinguishers in our three churches and annex were serviced and where appropriate replaced. After the lightning conductor failed its periodic test, remedial work was carried out before it passed a retest. In July the British Legion Standard under the supervision of Eric Gill was relocated to All Saints to a position at the side of the altar.

In September Saxum stonemasons carried out repairs and like-replacement to some of the Bath stone which had begun to crumble under the ravages of frost and constant soaking not helped, in one instance, by a leaking guttering at a cost of £7686.

During March/April 2024 Polegate roofing came to take away the churches cast iron guttering and one of the down pipes for rewelding and redecoration in factory conditions. This involved removing two courses of tiles. At the same time many frost damaged or broken roof tiles were replaced. We used a bequest to finance this much needed work.

Also, in March a picket fence and gate were placed around the entrance to the church cellar old boiler room for health and safety reasons.

The two church organs here and at EC were serviced and tuned In Autumn an enthusiastic team of volunteers helped to rake up strimming's from the churchyard and to help cut back hedges and to hand scythe the west lawn which had provided a magnificent display of orchids. Some very rare plants have been identified in this area only recently by Kate Gold and proves that our management system is working. Fallen headstones have been reinstated and mole and ant hills levelled. We are very grateful for the time, energy and monies put into the mowing and strimming of the modern part of the graveyard by David Stokes and David Hibbert from Wells Close.

Replacement kneelers have been identified for the communion rail and have been funded by generous donors.

We applied some time ago for our share of the monies created by the sale of the glebe land and Rectory as reported in my last report but at the moment it is not forthcoming. We might spend some of that money, once received, on a modern and hopefully more efficient heating system. This would require a faculty.

### Michael and All Angels. Grade 1 Listed Building

We have been working closely with Plumpton College to prepare the way for an application to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for a faculty to carry out major works on St Michael to extend its life and to increase its use. This year after a visit from an inspector from Historic England, St Michael was placed on the "Heritage at Risk Register". This should improve our chances of attracting external funding for the works proposed. In the meantime, we await a specification of works from our chosen architect with full costings from a quantity surveyor. We will then have to reach a legal agreement with Plumpton College about whether or how we can work together to raise what will be an enormous amount of money provided that a faculty can be obtained.

We are delighted That Plumpton College staff and students continue to maintain the church grounds in an environmentally friendly way according to a management plan.

### East Chiltington Church Listed as Grade 2

A decision was taken by the PCC not to hold our fourth Sunday in the month service at East Chiltington between October and May because of the lack of parking, for our increased numbers, apart from the church field which can get very wet.

During the year a new fence and gate were installed around the access to the boiler room.

A problem arose in the bell tower at East Chiltington with Jackdaws breaking through rusted wire barriers and their nest making had left damage and detritus. James Otway has kindly dealt with this and prevented the birds from gaining access in future. Whilst cleaning up James identified possible signs of death watch beetle trails in the floorboards. Expert advice is to be taken and any remedial work involving the oak beams below may need an application for a faculty. James has continued to organise work parties in the graveyards and Robin Burberry has done an excellent some excellent strimming. Other work parties helped to prepare the church internally and externally for weddings. Craig Wells continues to mow the church field and to take off hay.

No one has come forward from East Chiltington Parish council to encourage further use or improvements to the church so that possibility is on hold given that only one of our churchwarden posts is currently filled.

### All Saints Annex and Car Parking

May 2023 the overnight storage heaters dating back forty years were replaced by three modern, efficient, controllable electric heaters. In July the outdated fluorescent lights in the annex were replaced with modern energy saving lights which should save us some money. A key safe was fitted outside the annex removing the need for it to be unlocked and then locked up again after every booking. During the last week in January Fothergill Windows won the contract to replace the windows but not the doors, which were still in good condition, in the church annex.

We are still looking into the feasibility of providing an accessible toilet and baby changing facilities in the annex and positive progress has been made. We still have a problem in the car park when it rains heavily despite the efforts of Alan Harris to improve the flow to the soakaway. The inspection pit at the entrance to the carpark was repaired and a new heavy duty manhole cover provided by Stephen Bodsworth. At one point we had a flow of slurry coming from the leaking Station Road sewer, down past the lychgate but Southern Water were alerted by the developers and repairs were made.

A big thank you to all those who contribute in terms of monies, time, expertise or muscle to the maintenance of the fabric of our three churches. The grounds certainly look better than ever with more spring bulbs added this year. Your help and support are much appreciated, and you know who you are!

Howard A Wood  
Churchwarden

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – Robert Doran**

All hiring of the Annex and church requires Simple Quality Protects (SQP) Risk Assessments.

In the grounds: 'Trips and fall' Caution signs have been installed in the churchyard advising care with uneven surfaces. The exit from the car park onto the road improved by cutting back low branches which obscured vision.

In the Church: The legilium is now used and placed at floor level as an alternative reading stand for those who find accessing the steps to the lectern difficult. Access to receive communion is supervised to assist negotiation of the step between the chancel and church as required.

In the Annex: When used by the church, the setting up and down of tables and chairs is managed to avoid accidents to attendees.

## **DEANERY SYNOD – Kathy Baker, Peter Baker, Rev Anne Dunlop**

The meetings are an opportunity to meet people from other parishes, to hear the Diocesan finance report and other matters of interest and to ask questions. There were three meetings in 2023. In February the focus was Creation Care and specifically the care of church grounds. In June the ministry of Chaplains, with talks from Chaplains in Lewes Prison, University of Sussex and the Fire Service, and in October the Diocesan Director of Education spoke about ministry in schools.

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE – Josephine Butler**

During 2023 the PCC Social Committee were involved with:

May 7th	Coronation
May 13th	Open day Plumpton College
May 14th	Pet Service
June 7th	Strawberry Fair
Sept 24th	Harvest Festival St Michaels
Oct 1st	Harvest Festival All saints
Dec 12th	Carol Service St Michaels
Dec 17th	Carol Service at All Saints
Dec 24th	Crib Service Christmas eve
Tuesday Lunches	
Thursday Pop in Cafe	

## **WEB SITE – Rev Anne Dunlop**

During the year the website has been reinstated and is kept up to date.

PLUMPTON PCC

28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024