

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORT

The Parochial Church Council of

ST THOMAS at CLIFFE with ALL SAINTS, LEWES

for the year ended 31 December 2016

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St Thomas à Becket Church, Cliffe High Street, Lewes, East Sussex

Rector of the Benefice of Lewes Saint Anne and Saint Michael and Saint Thomas at Cliffe with All Saints:

Canon Richard Moatt
The Rectory, 57 St Anne's Crescent,
Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1SD

Priest of St Thomas:

The Revd George Linnegar, 20 Morris Road,
Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2AT

Independent Examiner:

Ms Sheila Massey, 6 Hayward Road,
Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2TW

Bankers:

Barclays Bank, The Old Bank, High Street,
Lewes, BN7 2JP

The boundaries of the parish encompass the former parish of All Saints in Lewes and extend from: Cuilfail and the Cliffe Industrial Estate in the east, to Station and Market Streets in the west; and from Davey's Lane in the north, to Court Road and the railway station in the south. In 2010 we became part of a new single benefice with St Anne and St Michael in Lewes.

St Thomas à Becket at Cliffe with All Saints

Trustees' Annual Report for 2016

Our aims and purposes as a charity

The primary objective of St Thomas' PCC is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

St Thomas' is committed to ordering its worship in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer and each year we host a service for the East Sussex branch of the Prayer Book Society. St Thomas' is a Corporate Member of the Prayer Book Society.

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Rector and our Priest, Brother George, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Our charitable objectives

The PCC's objectives and activities recognise the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and cover the following areas:

Attending to God - worship and spirituality; giving and stewardship

Building a Christian community – outreach and mission

Commending God's love – pastoral visits, prayer in the community.

These form the basis of our Mission Action Plan.

What we achieved and how we affected beneficiaries' lives

The church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary. Visitors attend by personal choice and it is our great pleasure to welcome anyone from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church.

Our services

Sunday	Sung Eucharist	9.45 am
	Evening Prayer	6.30 pm
Weekdays and Saturdays	Eucharist	7.00 am
	Evening Prayer	6.00 pm
Thursdays	Eucharist	10.00 am

On 31 December 2015 there were 54 people on St Thomas' Electoral Roll. Sadly, two of our congregation died during the year but we gained five new members which meant that, in December 2016, there were 57 people on the Roll, comprising 36 Parish and 21 non-Parish residents.

Attendance at Sunday morning service during 2016 has been on average 30 to 35 people.

Of particular note was this year's Crib service on Christmas Eve, where the children sang carols and took turns to come forward to place the figures and animals in the crib – a special and happy occasion heralding the start of Christmas. We were very encouraged by the numbers attending both this and the Midnight and Christmas morning services (a total of over 170 people).

It is also encouraging to note how effectively our rota of organists is working. Having a group of 4 or 5 players gives flexibility and cover if anyone is absent; but also, our organists offer different skills and interests which enrich our services and - judging by comments received – are appreciated by visitors and parishioners alike.

We have continued with the Bible Reading Fellowship notes and several members of the congregation follow the daily readings.

Review of the Year: our PCC

The PCC met five times during the year with a good level of attendance.

Each meeting the PCC receives standing reports from the Rector, the Priest of St Thomas', Treasurer, Churchwardens, Diocesan and Deanery Synod Representatives, Children's Society, Family Support Work, Churches Together in Lewes and in respect of 'Caring and Sharing'.

Community and Fellowship

Parish social events have included: the late-Summer and Christmas Fairs; Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party and Beetle Drive; Harvest Supper; carol singing and social evening; several very successful coffee mornings and most enjoyable tea parties – all in Cliffe Hall. The various social events, to which all – parishioners, nearby residents and those beyond the church congregation - are very welcome, are frequently advertised in the local press and details distributed around the town.

St Thomas' is very much part of the Cliffe community and these events are important to us in maintaining these close links. The church remains open from dawn to dusk and we receive many appreciative comments from people (both local residents and visitors) who come in for times of quietness and prayer during the day. We are pleased to welcome the Orthodox Parish of the

Nativity who hold their services in the church on Sundays and Harvey's Brewery for their lively annual Harvest Thanksgiving service.

We also value our close links with, and support of, the Cliffe Feoffees, a charity established by unknown benefactors in 1603 for the maintenance and support of the Parish Church of St Thomas in the Cliffe and the poor of the parish. The churchwardens are Feoffees' trustees during their term of office and thereby actively contribute to the benefit of the local community through their involvement in the charity.

St Thomas' *Parish News* is distributed free each month with details of services, events, dates and news. This is also sent further afield to those who have moved away and want to keep in touch. We express our thanks to Joanna Hill for editing and producing *Parish News* each month. We also thank Trevor Butler for our excellent web-site and for overseeing its use and development.

We are grateful to all those who have kept the inside of the church and the brass so clean, well-cared-for and welcoming – also to those who tend the garden. These are jobs which are undertaken regularly and faithfully week by week, which are appreciated by us all and by those who visit the church. There are frequent comments to this effect in our Visitors' Book.

The PCC would like to thank the flower team for the displays each week and, particularly, for the decoration of the church on feast days and festivals. A number of visitors were very much moved by the atmosphere, flower decorations and the music of our organists during our Harvest Flower Festival. The following were some of the comments received:

Beautiful, quiet, reflective and restorative place

Thank you for your prayers in this oasis of peace

Thank you for the flower festival – live organ music particularly appreciated

I introduced my best friend to my little sanctuary today. Time for reflection.

We also thank those who serve refreshments after services and those who arrange social and fundraising events for the church, which are appreciated and enjoyed by visitors and parishioners alike.

Provision of the church building for people to enjoy

It has been a busy time for the church as far as restoration work and fundraising.

A major building project saw a Faculty covering restoration of the West Window stonework (inside and out) as well as repair of the stained glass; eradication of a death-watch beetle infestation in the roof timbers of the South Aisle (necessitating removal and replacement); complete overhaul of the ancient Clock mechanism (the second-oldest in the county) along with repainting/regilding of the face; and stone, lead and roofing works to cure a leak affecting the Remembrance Altar. The total cost was in excess of £50,000 (including VAT, which we will reclaim).

Over 50 possible Trusts were expertly researched (using a professional fundraiser working *pro bono*) and our Churchwarden made application to a dozen identified as being sympathetic. Grants were received from Chalk Cliff Trust, the Alan Evans Memorial Trust and the John Booth Charitable Foundation, in addition to many munificent individual donations.

The Cliffe Feoffees were most generous and supported the work wholeheartedly: without their support the project could not have been completed. Also of enormous help was Harvey's Brewery who arranged a screening of the film 'Becket' and encouraged visitors to their Harvest Festival service to contribute most generously.

Generous support has also been received from the Orthodox Parish of the Nativity, Lewes Riverside Club, Cooper and Son Funeral Directors, the Brewers' Company and Lewes Tesco.

Further church events are planned for 2017 including a series of recitals.

The Appeal generated much media attention, including local radio, newspapers and magazines as well as social media coverage as the church launched its own Facebook and Twitter accounts. The opportunity was also taken to completely re-vamp and modernise the church website at www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk with an offer of *gratis* help from an internet specialist.

Our MP and the town's Mayor and Mayoress joined us for the Appeal launch on Trinity Sunday. They returned for our Harvest Thanksgiving and supported fundraising events with their presence.

With modest marketing, income at the church's two annual Fairs increased substantially. There was an opportunity to produce a colour Christmas card, detailing festive services, made available from many local outlets. While it cannot be attributed, there was a marked increase in attendance at services on 24/25 December.

However, over and above the fund-raising, these events and activities have brought a momentum to the church, in terms of renewed energy and the enjoyment of working together with and for the local community for the glory of God.

Finally, following a prolonged spate of low-level vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the church, the Police advised the installation of CCTV as a

deterrent, alternatively to lock the building when it was not in use. The PCC agreed to trial a basic 2-camera system, and to review the matter in order that the church could be kept open for its many visitors. The opportunity was also taken to review security lighting and take advantage of new, LED technology for automated cost-effective illumination.

Financial Review

We finished 2016 with total receipts (£82,833) exceeding payments (£75,138) by £7,746 (detailed in the General (unrestricted) Fund Receipts and Payments account).

As already mentioned, we have had a busy year fundraising. Nearly £18,000 has been raised by our own activities, grant applications and individual donations, with a further £18,000 being found from our own accounts. We are extremely grateful to all those who have contributed, both from within our congregation and from further afield. In particular, we recognise the valued financial support of the Cliffe Feoffees which has enabled us to carry on. The result has been that we have had sufficient funds at all times to meet the costs of the building works (outlined earlier).

We would also like to recognise the support of our Architect, Andrew Goodwin, who has ensured the smooth running of the project and made things a lot easier for the church.

On a month-by-month basis, we rely upon planned and other forms of regular giving and are grateful to all who contribute regularly in this way. In 2016 we were able to recover the sum of £1,995 on reclaimed income tax.

Generally, we can expect increasing pressure on finances in view of the rising costs of utilities, incidental expenses and payment to the diocese. In 2017 St Thomas' Parish Contribution to the diocese will increase by 2.91% and will be £20,971 pa.

The diocese makes the arrangements to pay all clergy costs and most lay workers centrally. It also pays centrally for insurance of church buildings, training, parish support, clergy housing, administration etc. In total these centrally-paid items are called parish ministry costs. The money needed to support these is the basis of the parish contribution.

There were specific collections towards the Diocesan Harvest Appeal, the Children's Society, Christian Aid and Sussex Historic Churches Trust, including donations from the Charitable Giving account to Family Support Work and to the *Voices in Exile* appeal.

Contributions for the local Foodbank and for the Olinda Project helping children and teenagers in Brazil (through the Caring and Sharing scheme), are collected each Sunday.

Reserves Policy

We are very dependent on the regular income from our CBF Church of England investments, without which our monthly income would not match our outgoings and we would be in a serious deficit position at the end of the year. The investments enable the church to carry on.

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on the general unrestricted fund as contingency against structural work on the building, additional unforeseen situations relating to the fabric and to meet the requirements of the forthcoming Quinquennial inspection.

Structure, Governance and Management of the Charity

The Parochial Church Council is a charity, but is excepted from registering with the Charity Commission within the meaning of Section 30 of the Charities Act 2011. Its governing document is the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

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

Ex-Officio members

Rector: Canon Richard Moatt (Chairman)

Priest of St Thomas: The Revd George Linnegar

Churchwarden: Imogen Stewart to April 2016
Trevor Butler from April 2016

Elected Members:

Martha Bush
Kate Kemp
Ruth Crossley
Joanna Hill also Parish Safeguarding Officer

Margaret Honeyman
Rosemary Muddle
Imogen Stewart from April 2016,
also Assistant Treasurer
and Planned Giving

Hannah Thorne

Helen Turner also Electoral Roll Officer
Carole Wright

Deanery Synod Representatives:

Philomela Parratt
Sue Hammond also PCC Secretary and
Treasurer

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (the Rector and the Priest of St Thomas), the churchwardens, members of the Deanery and Diocesan Synods and members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Members are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience, wherever possible.

This Trustees' Annual Report was **APPROVED** by the PCC and signed on their behalf by ***The Revd Canon Richard Moatt, PCC Chairman***

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..... *(date)*