

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORT
of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
ST THOMAS at CLIFFE with ALL SAINTS, LEWES
for the year ended 31 December 2017

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

www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk

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 2017

Our aims and purposes as a charity

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Rector, Canon Richard Moatt and the Priest of St Thomas, the Revd George Linnegar, in:

promoting the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England;

promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic, and ecumenical:

knowing Jesus better and making Him better known;

practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest.

St Thomas' is committed to ordering its worship in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer and is a Corporate Member of the Prayer Book Society.

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,

which form the basis of our Mission Action Plan.

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognizing its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

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 2016 there were 57 people on St Thomas' Electoral Roll. During 2017 one person has died, one person is now too ill to attend church and five people have moved away. Therefore, 31 December 2017 there were 50 People on the Electoral Roll, comprising 30 parish residents 20 non-parish residents.

Attendance at Sunday morning service during 2017 has been on average 35 to 40 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 Christmas Eve and Christmas morning communion services (a total of over 160 people, over 100 communicants).

It is also encouraging to note how effectively our informal rota of organists has worked. 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 very good level of attendance.

Each meeting the PCC receives standing reports from the Rector, the Priest of St Thomas', Treasurer, Churchwarden, Deanery Synod Representatives, Children's Society, Churches Together in Lewes and in respect of 'Caring and Sharing', a scheme to support *My Father's House* project, Olinda, Brazil.

Community, Fellowship and Outreach

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 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.

This year has seen a number of special events which have been very-well attended and much enjoyed. These have included: two Saturday morning organ recitals by our organists (Susan Bain and Phillip Willatt); a Festal Evensong in thanksgiving for the completion of our 2016 Restoration Appeal; *Tea and Tripe - Readings and Music* (in celebration of George Orwell), a most entertaining afternoon with Miles Jenner and Susan Bain. In October, St Thomas Church participated in Lewes Festival of Light, providing a beautiful and fitting installation which captured the essence of the church and was the perfect ending to the town's 2017 trail.

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 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 churchwarden and PCC secretary are Feoffees' trustees 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 thank Joanna Hill warmly for her editorial role. We also thank Trevor Butler for our excellent web-site and for overseeing its use and development.

Special thanks are due to the flower team for the displays each week and, particularly, for the beautiful decoration of the church at festivals and feast days. We are grateful to all those who have kept the inside of the church and the brass so clean, well-cared-for and welcoming – and 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.

Visitors

Looking through the frequent entries in the Visitor Book shows a number of foreign visitors; visitors returning to the church on a regular basis; those with a previous family, marriage or baptismal link and those expressing thanks for

our prayers (following individual requests on our Prayer Board). The overriding comments refer to the peaceful and prayerful atmosphere.

A beautiful, peaceful church. Thank you for staying open for us to pray;

As restful as ever – a calm place to pray;

Inviting and peaceful;

Popped in again to say hullo to everyone – a beautiful church, thank-you;

Thank you for keeping the church open and for the beautiful crib and tree;

A beautiful English church.

We very much appreciate these comments.

Last, but by no means least, are our thanks to those who serve refreshments after services and those who arrange our social and fundraising events which are so appreciated and enjoyed by visitors and parishioners alike.

Provision of the church building for people to enjoy

Following the hiatus of the major building works and Restoration Appeal last year, the focus for 2017 has been on routine maintenance and safety measures, including some exterior painting, including doors and railings.

Our architect completed the church's Quinquennial Review which showed the way for a variety of work to be completed. We had a mandatory Asbestos Survey which identified asbestos in the boiler room which has subsequently been professionally encapsulated. Likewise, a test was made of the church's lightning conductor which revealed that the weathervane needs an overhaul since it is part of the conductor. A full Electrical Safety test was carried out, while all the portable appliances were subjected to a PAT safety test. We commissioned a Fire Risk Assessment which highlighted areas which needed attention and these were addressed during the year. We were also subject to a Risk Evaluation from our insurers (Ecclesiastical) and we await their report.

Following a flash flood in July 2017, we were grateful to East Sussex Fire & Rescue for pumping out the church. Our architect visited and advised that prevention of such a freak occurrence could prove costly and difficult with a listed building such as ours. Other suggestions/options were made which PCC is reviewing.

In preparation for further structural work identified in the Quinquennial, fundraising identified generous benefactors who were prepared to help, including further donations from the Chalk Cliff Trust, the Alan Evans Memorial Fund and the promise of further assistance from the Cliffe Feoffees.

A maintenance contract was set up with Thwaites and Reed of Rottingdean to protect the workings of our ancient turret clock - understood to be the second

oldest in the county – and we were able to call upon their expertise when a problem with the striking mechanism occurred.

During the year we suffered the occasional bout of vandalism and anti-social behavior, inside and out. On police advice, we reduced the height of some bushes to deter drug activity. Despite capturing images of a suspect responsible for breaking into the organ console, the police said they were unable to identify the person and could therefore not take the matter further.

Financial Review

We finished 2017 with total receipts (£58,075) exceeding total payments (£39,829) by £18,246 (detailed in the General (Unrestricted) Fund Receipts and Payments account).

After last year's fundraising for our building works, it has been a quieter year in this regard. However, payments have been made for some outstanding building repairs and maintenance (as detailed in the above section of this report). We have continued to receive donations and are extremely grateful to all those who have contributed, both from within our congregation and from further afield.

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 2017 we were able to recover the sum of £4,053 on reclaimed income tax. In addition, we were able to claim back the sum of £8,330 in respect of VAT on our restoration and maintenance works.

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £20,971 pa, being St Thomas' share of the Benefice payment to the diocese for our share of all churches' Parish Ministry Costs. This payment covers the housing, stipend and pension costs of the clergy, the church insurance and also a standard sum for diocesan central costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. In 2017 our contribution increased by 2.91% on the previous year. Currently our three churches are meeting 100% of the costs allocated to the Benefice.

We have been pleased to note a decrease in our energy costs which can partly be attributed to the fact that, as a charity, we have been able to pay VAT on our bills at the lower rate of 5%, with no Climate Change Levy.

There were specific collections towards the Diocesan Harvest Appeal, the Children's Society and Sussex Historic Churches Trust, including donations from the Charitable Giving account to the British Red Cross towards the South Sudan Crisis Appeal and towards its UK Solidarity Fund.

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 recent 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

<i>Rector:</i>	Canon Richard Moat	Chair
<i>Priest of St Thomas:</i>	The Revd George Linnegar	
<i>Churchwarden:</i>	Trevor Butler	
<i>Elected Members:</i>	Kate Kemp Ruth Crossley Sue Hammond	Treasurer and Secretary
	Joanna Hill Margaret Honeyman Rosemary Muddle Imogen Stewart	Parish Safeguarding Assistant Treasurer and Planned Giving
	Hannah Thorne	
	Helen Turner Carole Wright	Electoral Roll Officer
<i>Deanery Synod Representatives:</i>	Philomela Parratt Martha Bush	

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 Chair***

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..... *(date)*