

**The Parish Church of
Saint Michael and All Angels
Felton**



**ANNUAL REPORT
AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
For the year ended 31 December 2020**

Priest in Charge (from 31 August 2014)

Reverend James Harvey
The Vicarage
1 Benlaw Grove
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Bank

Barclays Bank Plc
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Independent Examiner

Mr Ian Bell FCA
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Background

St Michael's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest in Charge, Reverend James Harvey, in promoting the whole mission of the church in the Parish, that is, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also ensures effective maintenance of the church and of its fabric.

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are either ex-officio or are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

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

Priest in Charge	Reverend James Harvey	
Wardens	to October	Alan Ferguson Angela Smith
	From October	David Archbold Liz Scurfield
Lay Representatives to the Deanery Synod	John Marshall Mark Winter	(re-elected September) (re-elected September)
Elected Members	Alan Ferguson Anthea Smith Charlotte Clarke David Archbold John Inglis-Jones Kathy McConnachie Liz Scurfield Nick Morton Nigel Marsh Peter Groves Richard Evans	(from September) <i>Safeguarding Officer</i> <i>Treasurer</i> <i>Warden</i> (elected September) (from September) <i>Warden</i> (elected September) (from September) <i>Secretary</i>
	Retired September	
	Angela Smith Charlotte Bonnet Rev. Gabby Llewelyn Lindsay Tanner	

Committees

Standing Committee

This is the only Committee required by law and it has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Standing Committee comprises the Priest in Charge, Wardens, and two lay members of PCC.

Finance Sub Committee

The Committee comprises two Wardens, Hon. Treasurer, and one other member agreed by the PCC.

Church Electoral Roll

A new Electoral Roll was made in 2019. The number of members enrolled on the New Electoral Roll in April 2019 was 89. The number of electors on the Electoral Roll at 31st December 2020 was 95.

Debra Philips, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Review of 2020

The PCC met in January, at the end of which month the first two cases of coronavirus in the United Kingdom are confirmed in Chinese visitors to York, who were then brought to Newcastle for treatment. PCC met again in February, but shortly before we were due to meet in March all meetings, including the APCM scheduled for April 26th, were cancelled until further notice because of the coronavirus pandemic. We met on Zoom in May, July, September, October and November with few absences. PCC met live or on zoom seven times in 2020. Other committees and groups met as necessary and reported to the PCC.

With the permission of Bishop Christine, due to Covid19, the APCM held in church on 16th September and the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, with permission of Archdeacon Mark Wroe, on October 4th after 1100 am Holy Communion. At the APCM, four members of the PCC retired: Angela Smith, Charlotte Bonnet, Rev Gabby Llewelyn and Lyndsay Tanner and one new member was elected, Nigel Marsh. At the October PCC two more people had offered to serve on the PCC and were elected: Alan Ferguson and Kathy McConnachie. Mark Winter and John Marshall continued as lay representatives of the parish at the Deanery Synod. The PCC had nine elected members and five ex-officio members, the vicar, two wardens and two Deanery Synod lay representatives.

Inevitably, a considerable amount of the PCC time was spent on planning monitoring the provision for services live in church under Covid rules at 0800, Holy Communion and for a few Sundays between lockdowns in the Autumn and for online services. We carried out a survey of church members and attenders in the Summer to get peoples responses and ideas for both live, Covid safe arrangements and online services.

We carried out Buildings and Fire Risk Assessments for our buildings and grounds with the full reports received by the PCC in January 2021.

Through the year PCC also worked on West Window repairs, proposals to create more meeting and storage space, negotiating with Northumberland County Council to repair the long path across the churchyard and other maintenance and building matters.

The churchyard has been kept in excellent condition by David Philips.

Richard Evans Hon. Secretary

Safeguarding

In 2020, we maintained our strong Safeguarding presence by continuing to ensure all volunteers and church leaders are DBS checked and trained. We also upgraded our Safeguarding presence to ensure all our online activities were as safe as possible.

All safeguarding concerns and incidents were reported and recorded in line with our policies. Our annual audit was carried out in January 2021 complete with action points to maintain good operating practices. Details of the audit can be found in the Safeguarding folder in St. Michael's.

Anthea Smith, Safeguarding Officer + James Harvey

Churchwardens

The current Churchwardens were appointed at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners (AMP) on 16 September 2020. The AMP was much delayed by the Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid-19) and this report is therefore an overview of the year, a year much affected by Covid-19. The previous Churchwardens were faced with an unprecedented event which presented significant challenges to them both. It is a credit to them that alternative forms of worship were able to continue throughout the year. At the AMP, Nigel Marsh was appointed as Deputy Churchwarden and Nigel works alongside us to gain knowledge of the Churchwarden's role.

The typical pattern of services at St Michael and All Angels is a service of Holy Communion at 8.00 am plus either Holy Communion or lay-led services at 11.00 am. Prior to Covid-19, typical congregation numbers were between 11 and 15 at the 8.00 am service and between 55 and 70 at the 11.00 am service.

This pattern of services continued until the first Government lockdown when social distancing measures were initiated within the church and the pews marked accordingly. Hand sanitising stations were provided at points within the church. On 15th March St Michael's held its last Sunday services and the church closed. From 13th July, services of Morning Prayer were held on Mondays and Evening Prayer on Fridays. From 6th September, our normal pattern of two services on Sundays resumed with the 8.00 am service held in church and the 11.00 am service live streamed.

Live streaming of services was not a major success. The equipment required was graciously provided by a church member, but it suffered from age-related issues and the natural advancement of technology. Live streaming was not universally liked by many members of the congregation. However, pre-recorded services were quite successful, reaching out not only to our own members, but also to people in distant parts of the United Kingdom and abroad.

Whilst the number of communicants at the 8.00 am service remained steadfast at 15, there was a substantial decline in numbers at the 11.00 am service, these ranging from 20 to 37 people. It must be appreciated that many of the members were shielding and continue to do so. There is also a significant number of elderly members and we could not fully understand their reluctance, and indeed fear, of returning due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.

After the initial closure, the church remained open every day for private prayer and the church was visited by many people daily, lighting votive candles as part of their prayer cycle.

The pattern of two services each Sunday continued until 20th December 2020. Further Covid-19 restrictions resulted in a return to the single Holy Communion service at 8.00 am with pre-recorded services from the St Michael's family of clergy and lay people available on YouTube. Three ticketed candlelight services were held during the days before Christmas, but attendance was much reduced than in previous years and less than the safe seating capacity of the church at each event; about 40 people attended each of these three events.

We are very conscious that many people may feel distanced from the church and the community life of the village. The lunches and teas, organised by the community and assisted by the church, have not taken place during 2020. Together with the community group, it was therefore decided that afternoon teas would be delivered to all of the attendees at the lunches and teas on VE Day, 8th May 2020. This was followed by the delivery of Christmas treat boxes during the week before Christmas; 120 people were reached by these means and the gesture was greatly appreciated.

Throughout the Covid-19 restrictions, the Coffee Plus and Outrageous Women home groups have continued throughout by Zoom meetings on a weekly basis. Whilst there has been no Junior Church, the younger members of the church can maintain contact through Zoomerang.

There has been much slippage in undertaking repairs to the church fabric and fittings. These are now being addressed. Of particular note are planned repairs to the church roof, particularly over the vestry and organ loft where rainwater has permeated into the building. Covid-19 restrictions have caused delays with contractors and some interim repairs have not proved to be satisfactory. Planned repairs are programmed to be undertaken in 2021. All valuables remain in good condition. The churchyard has been maintained by one of our church members providing an attractive entry to our church.

Similarly, there has been no progress on the conservation repairs to the West Windows. It is probable that we will lose the grant offered by the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust due to the delay. However, this project will be addressed in 2021.

The Churchwardens are rightly concerned about the lasting effect of Covid-19 on attendance and the significant fall in numbers that were present during the autumn months. The PCC has agreed to the continuance of pre-recorded services into 2021 but it remains our objective to attract people back to church. Therefore, it is feasible that more emphasis will be placed on local mission rather than UK or world-wide.

St Michael's is blessed with a strong and enthusiastic group of lay leaders who lead services and preach the word. As we look into the future, their role as members of the Ministry Team will be used to the full. St Michael's is a close family which works closely together and we are very grateful to all of those who provide their time and talents to the work of the church. We look forward to the obvious challenges that we face into the future but we know that there are many who will help the church achieve its objectives. We also offer our sincere thanks to those who prepare and maintain rotas, undertake cleaning, arrange flowers, look after Junior Church and the young people, and carry out repairs; their assistance is greatly appreciated.

**David Archbold + Elizabeth Scurfield
Churchwardens**

Financial Review

It is a privilege to be able to report on another satisfactory year with regard to the financial position at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Felton. We are thankful to God for his provision in this respect and our appreciation to all those who have supported the church in so many ways, resulting in our healthy financial position. That we have achieved this during this challenging year of the pandemic is all the more remarkable and testimony to the support of so many people.

We have met our Parish Share payment in full and have also fulfilled our aspiration to tithe 10% of our income to our mission partners. Indeed, we have gone further than this, and made an additional one-off payment to the Northern Diocesan Board of Finance of £1.7k in recognition of the challenges faced by many of our sister churches in meeting their Parish Share.

Gift Aid has been recovered on a monthly basis during 2020 and the higher amount this year reflects the increased generosity of giving.

Planned giving to the General Fund has increased by around 10% from 2019 and represents more than 70% of General Fund income.

Within payments, our Church Service costs and Children and Youth Work costs are reduced in General Fund expenditure, the latter through making good use of the Church's Restricted Funds. However, the pandemic and inability to use the church building has also contributed to reduced expenditure during 2020.

The retained balance on General Funds is increasing but is not considered excessive when seen in relation to our responsibilities in respect of the church building (which will be significant in 2021 as we address longstanding needs to repair the building) and ongoing activities.

Turning to the Restricted Funds, we can also be thankful that the situation continues to be satisfactory and there is generous giving to these funds. The 'Building improvement fund' now stands at £21.8k.

The current balance together with ongoing donations for Children and Young People is sufficient to cover this work for some time, and this Restricted Fund has accumulated a further £5k during 2020, which reflects the limited opportunity to take forward this work during the pandemic.

The PCC continues to administer the funds held within the Felton Relief in Need fund. No Grants were made in 2019 but a generous contribution was received.

We have been blessed with two exceptional contributions during the year. Firstly, we received a second £10k contribution from Stewardship to support the administration of the Church (and will do for one further year). Secondly, we gratefully received a second anonymous donation of £1k to support the Senior's Lunches, which has been used to support the Christmas food gift boxes for parishioners during lockdown.

We are grateful for the generosity of so many people in the Church and look forward to fulfilling God's work in 2021.

Charlotte Clarke, Hon. Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of St. Michael and All Angels' Church, Felton, Parochial Church Council.

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and Independent Examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed *lwb*

Dated 31-3-21

Mr. Ian Bell FCA
10, Riverside, Felton, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9EA

Parochial Church Council of St. Michael and All Angels Felton

Receipts and Payments Accounts

for 12 months to 31 December 2020 (£)

2019	<u>General Fund</u>			
	Receipts			
32858	Planned giving	34958		
4008	Other giving	4897		
8773	Gift Aid	11434		
2162	Fees	1400		
<u>21</u>	Other income	<u>40</u>		
47822			52729	
	Payments			
27623	Parish Share - note 1	30751		
1095	Maintenance & repairs	276		
3000	Vicar's Expenses - note 2	3079		
3627	Insurance	3445		
2888	Energy & Water	2636		
4200	Giving - note 3	3356		
4559	Church service costs	3551		
196	Children & Youth work	0		
<u>2528</u>	Other expenses	<u>0</u>		
49717			<u>47095</u>	
-1896	Surplus for the period			5634
	General fund at 1 January 2020	Contingency Available	15000	
<u>32550</u>			<u>17550</u>	<u>30654</u>
	General fund at 31 December 2020	Contingency Available	15000	
30654			<u>15654</u>	36288
<u>54257</u>	Other funds at 31 December 2020 - detailed below			<u>69199</u>
84911	Total of all funds at 31 December 2020			105487
	Represented by			
84912	Cash at banks			105487.00

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	2020	2019	2018
Barclays Bank	£ 50700	£ 30,992	£ 23,715
Santander Bank	£ 5980	£ 4,652	£ 861
Virgin Money	<u>£ 48,806</u>	<u>£ 48,568</u>	<u>£ 48,205</u>
	£105487	£ 84,212	£ 72,781

Movements on Restricted Funds during the Year (£)

	Building Impmnt	Mission Partners	Children & Youth Wkr	Fireworks	Flowers	Holiday Club	Projector Equipmen	Admin Worker	Felton Rlf in Need	Other	Total	2019
Balance 1 January 2020	19230	1046	16926	77	470	0	0	9002	6566	939	54257	40231
Add Receipts												
Donations	2317.00		8557.00					10000.00	1000.00	1000.00	22874	30515
Collections											0	987
Grants											0	0
Gift Aid	530.00		1065.00						250.00		1845	2581
Fund raising											0	143
Voluntary receipts											0	0
Other	95.53		95.53					47.76			239	492
Transfer from General Fund			-240.00								-240	1636
Total Receipts	2943	0	9478	0	0	0	0	10048	1250	1000	24718	36354
Opening balance plus receipts	22173	1046	26403	77	470	0	0	19049	7816	1939	78975	76585
Less Payments												
Church costs incl salary	300.00		1623.46					5615.70			7539	8277
Upkeep of services			1292.83		31.00						1324	8390
Events & Evangelism			783.44							129.76	913	2150
Giving											0	1841
Fund Raising											0	1670
Other				0.00							0	0
Total Payments	300	0	3700	0	31	0	0	5616	0	130	9776	22328
Transfers	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0
Balance at 31 December 2020	21873	1046	22704	77	439	0	0	13434	7816	1809	69199	54257

In relation to Restricted Funds, flowers petty cash and coffee petty cash are only dealt with in these accounts to the extent that excess cash is banked. The balance carried forward in 'Other' is all in respect of Music Fund.

The PCC bank account also handled funds which are not under the control of the PCC and therefore do not appear in the accounts. These include wedding and funeral fees paid to the diocese, clergy and organist fees received from the diocese to cover locums, charity collection boxes and funeral collections for charities.

Total receipts for funds outside the control of the PCC	£1,871
Total payments	£1,871
Balance at 1/1/2020	nil
Balance at 31/12/2020	nil

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

- 1 Parish Share for 2020 has been paid in full plus additional giving of £1700.
- 2 A joint account with Longframlington PCC is maintained to pay for the Vicar's expenses and other items of expenditure common to both churches. Any monies remaining in this account at the year end have not been included in the assets of the PCC . A summary of the movements on this account is given below.

Felton and Longframlington Joint Ministry Account - (£)

(Twelve months to 31 December 2020)

Bank Balance at 1 January 2020		775
Receipts		
Felton	3047	
Longframlington	3000	
Diocesan Contribution for 2020	1258	
		7305
Payments		
Council Tax	2397	
Vicar's Expenses	1404	
Telephone/Internet	576	
Photocopier Lease	910	
Water Charges	418	
Photocopying Click Rate	187	
Mobile phone	317	
Stationery	171	
		6379
Credit for the period		926
Bank Balance at 31 December 2020		1702

- 3 Giving includes:-

Street Pastors	£ 1,000
Christians Against Poverty	£ 1,000
Tearfund	£ 1,000
Wansbeck Food Bank	£ 356
Total	£ 3,356

- 4 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- 5 Other than those assets vested in the church wardens on special trust (i.e. inalienable assets) which are listed in the church inventory, Felton PCC does not own any item valued at over £1,000. Items below £1,000 are not listed as fixed assets but the church wardens maintain an inventory of all PCC property.
- 6 Where Gift Aided donations are made to a restricted fund and where it is appropriate to do so, the tax recovered is credited to the fund and debited to the General Fund immediately. This is subsequently recovered from HMRC and credited to the General Fund when the annual claim is made.
- 7 The PCC resolved that, up to November 2017, all interest would be credited to the General Fund. There after interest will be credited to the restricted funds.

Reserves Policy

The PCC aim to maintain a balance within the General Fund of £15,000.

Priest in Charge report for 2020

2020 was an extraordinary year – for over half the year we didn't have any services in our wonderful church building because the church was closed as a response to the coronavirus pandemic. No-one could ever have prepared us for what was to come – and as with every year there were highs and lows, positives and negatives, open and closed doors.

The highs, positives and open doors

I distinctly remember saying 'our church building may now be closed, but the church definitely remains open – we've just gone online'. And that was the biggest change and for many one of the highlights of the year – not that we went online, but how well we were able to adapt and how we embraced new technologies, and new opportunities for creativity, involving more people and mission.

In September we reviewed our online experiences of pre-recording our services and posting them on YouTube and the majority of the feedback was very positive with variety and hearing from different people being most valued. Within this period we also spent time focusing on giving and the biblical theme of exile and how that might speak to our own metaphorical exile (exiled in our own homes).

Also in September in line with government guidelines, we restarted services in St. Michael's with social distancing, facemasks and no singing. For those that came to services in St. Michael's, it restored some sense of community, it restored being able to take communion (in one kind) again, and challenged us to re-think what worshipping God looks like. The 8 o'clockers with the least change fared best. For many, returning to gathered services remained unsafe and increasingly so as the 2nd wave of coronavirus started to take hold across the country.

In an attempt to bring the two worshipping communities – those in St. Michael's and those at home – together, we experimented with live streaming our services from St. Michael's. This increased our technical experiences and skills even further, involved new people from the community and helped us to consider the needs of both communities at the same time.

In the autumn we also had a mini-series on Creation – celebrating and exploring God's creation and our responsibility within it as we sought to meet the Church of England's new target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

And another word entered our vocabulary this year – zoom! Nothing to do with speed, but all about enabling meeting together to still happen (virtually) when we weren't allowed to gather in person. So Junior Church, youth groups, home groups and PCC meetings all went online – providing virtual cogs in church life to continue.

The lows, negatives and closed doors

Whilst there were many positives to 2020, there were significant lows as much of church life stopped and has yet to restart in early 2021. The greatest drawback of 2020 was the lack of being able to be with each other – for 6 months we operated online only and even for those able to return to St. Michael's in September it was partial community as we sat 2 metres from each other, passed the Peace through waving and couldn't share coffee together. 5pm service regulars feel like those uplifting services are now a distant memory. We cannot overestimate the impact of coronavirus on the corporate life of the church and on the mental health of us all.

Lockdown and subsequent restrictions interrupted baptism families and wedding couples and funeral families who had a to accept a limited way of saying goodbye.

Most significantly our mission, outreach and contact with our parish community was severely hampered as Food & Fun (outreach to parents, grandparents, babies and toddlers), Senior Lunches, Afternoon teas, Talking Marriage, Felton Fair and Thy Kingdom Come all pressed the pause or cancelled button. This remains a lament to us as a church.

However despite the circumstances, in conjunction with village members we were able to bless 100's (literally) of folk around the village with an afternoon tea for VE75 day, and a Christmas goodies pack – both highly appreciated. St. Michael's was also highly represented in the Felton Community Support initiative offering a phone and delivery helpline to those in need in the village operating in what has become known as Lockdown 1 (March - August).

One of the biggest impacts of coronavirus was on Felton primary school and on parents as they juggled home schooling on top of everything else. As a church we sought to serve the school in every way we could by providing recorded Open the Book stories, a 5 character rendition of the Christmas story by zoom, offering chalk drawings of hope on the church path flagstones, and supporting the school through three church Governors. Within this time a milestone passed as Alison Marshall stepped down from being a school governor after nearly 30 years, to be replaced later in the year by Sue Marsh.

Other areas of significance

In 2020, the whole world went even more digital, and we sought to follow suit by enhancing our website content and provision, as well as regularly updating Facebook and Instagram and our [achurchnearyou](#) page. One new couple regularly remind us that they joined the church because of our website!

During the year our provision for young people continued as all 3 youth groups (Years 10+, 8-9 and 6-7) went online via zoom. This was always a second choice for young people, but better than not meeting at all. So many people have been adversely affected by coronavirus, young people are towards the top of the list and our prayers remain with them. Also during the year the partnership with Alnwick Baptist Church finished, but that was replaced by a new ecumenical arrangement with Contagious (Christian youth charity) leading on all church youth work covering Alnwick and Felton.

Our support for our 3 Mission partners continued throughout the year, including a visit from Street Pastors in January and a virtual message from CAP in October.

Medals of perseverance go to Coffee Plus and Outrageous Women groups for continuing throughout the year on zoom and a big thank you to their leaders.

The year finished with a novel retelling of the birth of Christ and a big dollop of cheering up as we staged our very own Felton lockdown nativity filmed all around the village and including many important Felton landmarks. It was important to end the year with hope and even some laughter.

Finally, at the time of writing, I am aware this will be my last Annual Report as I move to minister in Darlington, so allow me to say a few personal words. My time and our (Ruth and our now young adults) time in Felton over the past 6.5 years has been a tremendous experience of learning, of fun, of experimenting, of seeing people grow and flourish, of friendships formed, of privilege, of blessing and of constant prayer. Thank you for the opportunity and being able to share it with such a precious people and parish.

James

Alnwick Deanery Annual Report to Parish APCMs for 2020

As we all know, 2020 was a very difficult year for everyone, not excepting the Church as a whole, and including our Diocese of Newcastle and its Deaneries and Parishes. This unusual situation has led the Alnwick Deanery Committee to offer the following joint report to parish representatives for their Annual Reports.

The pandemic situation led in many cases to the inevitable postponement of Parish APCMs (which should have included the appointment of Deanery synod representatives for the new triennium) until the autumn, and so, sadly, it was not possible to set up a meeting of the Alnwick Deanery Synod during the year, following the cancellation of the planned meeting in March (due to the beginning of the first lockdown period). The first meeting of the Synod elected in 2020 has taken place (via Zoom) and another meeting is planned for April 13th.

The new synod election is important because Deanery Synod members are the electors for the Diocesan Synod and General Synod elections due to take place in 2021. They can propose motions to the Diocesan Synod which can send them on to General Synod.

However, the Deanery Committee continued to meet during 2020 and has kept the local situation including Diocesan Finance and Parish Share issues, under review. Clergy members of this Committee are now Alison Hardy (Area Dean), John Sinclair, Helen O'Sullivan and Barrie Cooper, while Lay Members are Frances Allsop (currently Lay Chair), Audrey Truman (Currently Deanery Secretary) Jo Chillingsworth (replacing Ian Watson as Deanery Finance Officer) Jeff Reynolds and Hugh Williams (co-opted since the last meeting). Peter Robinson, our long-standing Archdeacon, departed and we welcomed his successor Catherine Sourbut Groves.

The Deanery Synod is a communications channel which sits at the heart of our church governance structures. It is a key place for the sharing and processing of information, asking questions, challenging assumptions, and being a catalyst for policy initiatives, changes and development. We normally apportion Parish Share to parishes which is a privilege and responsibility, and we are trying to raise a positive culture of mutual understanding and support between parishes. Our Area Dean has a vision for us to be influential in the imagining and reshaping of the church to make it fit for the mission of the Diocese 'Growing Church Bringing Hope'.

Succession Planning: as the Lay Chair, the Secretary and the Deanery Finance Officer would be due to stand down at the 2020 elections, representatives were asked to look for people who would be able to take on these positions. job specifications were prepared but these did not result in any nominations, so this process is on-going.

Parish Share: Ian Watson has reported that the final share paid by the Deanery for 2020 was greater than that which parishes forecast in June. The Deanery was asked to pay £417,666 but after three months it was obvious that this figure would not be reached, and during the following months the Diocese asked parishes for updates and eventually settled on a figure of £329,125 which was used as part of the budget setting process for 2021. Alnwick achieved £356,827 (85.43% of our allocation). Ian Watson has been a corner stone in the finances of the deanery, and we are very grateful to him.

We all look forward to the time when we can reconvene and the work of the Deanery can progress more normally.

Mark Winter + John Marshall