

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the parish of St Mary, Kingsclere

For the year ended 31st December 2014



Charity Concert November 2014



Remembrance Day 2014



ABC Service



Kingsclere School's contribution to the nativity festival



Bank Holiday Fete – August 2014



Our Giant Christingle made at Messy Church Dec 2014



Messy Church

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Highlights of 2014

- Launch of Messy Church – 4 sessions held – encouraging response
- Pastoral Visitors extend role to supporting funerals ministry
- Encouraging increase in regular giving
- Very successful Garden Safari event raising over £2000
- Another very successful Fete fundraiser despite terrible weather
- Numerous Fabric projects completed or progressed
- C of E Funerals Project materials trialled including Gravetalk events
- Nativity Scene Festival
- Attending Trish’s installation in her new benefice

Introduction and statutory information

The parish of Kingsclere is one of two parishes which together make up the United Benefice of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley, within the Diocese of Winchester, within the Church of England. The Incumbent is the Rev Lucy Thirtle. The Assistant Curate, Rev Trish Bancroft, completed her training in the benefice in June 2014 and was licensed to a different benefice later in the year.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of working with the incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical – together with care of the church buildings and churchyard.

Kingsclere PCC has defined its mission as **“to live and share the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in and around Kingsclere, in partnership with other Christian churches in the village.”**

The parish church is St Mary’s which is situated on Newbury Road, Kingsclere. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, Fox’s Lane, Kingsclere, Newbury, RG20 5SL.

The membership of the PCC during 2014 was follows:

Vicar (Chair)	Rev Lucy Thirtle
Curate	Rev Trish Bancroft (until June 2014)
Churchwardens	Janet Sturgess Eileen Selsey
Deanery Synod Members	Chryssie Green Nicholas Selsey Steve Jaques
PCC Members	Diana Hughes (from April 2013) Neville Hughes (from April 2013) Sandy Liddeatt (from April 2012) Sharon Meads (from April 2013) Debra Power (from April 2012) Anthony Savin (from April 2012) Mary Sneyd (from April 2012) Maggy Wallace (from April 2012) Sarah Mussett (from April 2014) Peter Davies (Treasurer – coopted member from April 2014)
Secretary	Emma Rivers (non-elected)

PCC members are elected for a three year term according to the Church Representation Rules.

At its APCM in 2005, Kingsclere passed a resolution to set a limit of 3 years for continuous service (unless elected in another capacity) after which an individual would be required to step down for a minimum of 1 year. This has been in operation since April 2006

Officers:

- Vice Chair – Maggy Wallace
- Emma Rivers, Benefice Administrator, acted as secretary for the year
- Peter Davies took on the office of Treasurer from April 2014
- Chryssie Green was re-elected as Electoral Roll Officer.

Sub-Committees:

The PCC fulfils its responsibilities by delegating to various Sub-Committees.

The Standing Committee is a statutory sub-Committee and made up of the Vicar and Churchwardens (ex-officio) and at least two reps but was not appointed this year as it has not been required for several years.

Other Sub-committees or task groups were:

- **Fabric Sub-committee:** Eileen Selsey (Chair); Nick Selsey; Janet Sturgess; Rev Lucy
- **Fete Sub-committee:** Rev Lucy (Chair), Sarah & Graham Hewitt; Tracey Lethbridge, Sandra Couchman, Kate Green, Anthony Greayer; Amanda Hatcher
- **Benefice Outreach Group:** Rev Trish Bancroft (until June), Susie Sainsbury (AHwH), Georgie Selby (AHwH), Alison Goodyer (AHwH) Maggy Wallace (K), Steve Jaques (K), Jane Freeman (K)
- **Fundraising working group** (Debra Power, Clive Mussett)

Reports from these and other groups appear later on in the report.

What has the PCC done during the year?

The PCC met 6 times during the year in addition to a brief meeting following the Annual Meeting to elect officers. The level of attendance was 70%.

During the year, the PCC

- welcomed Mr Steve Wells, Headteacher of Kingsclere Primary school to a meeting so that he could share a report about the school, its plans for development and its involvement with the parish and deanery via the Mityana link
- proceeded with the installation of an aumbry in which to keep reserved sacrament
- approved a 5-year fabric plan incorporating projects arising from the 2013 Quinquennial Inspection and those which were part of the Keystone development plan; received regular progress reports on these projects and approved significant expenditure to enable some major work to be completed – see later fabric report
- discussed and commented on the Deanery Mission Action Plan
- gave approval to arrangements for Rev Trish's leaving services
- gave approval to changing the signatories on various accounts in which PCC funds were held
- approved the submission of data to the diocese on which the new Parish Share (Common Mission Fund) contribution would be based
- supported the principle of aiming for the Bronze Diocesan Environmental Award
- approved a review of the Benefice Administrator's salary
- approved the authorisation of John Price as a Communion Assistant (principally at the 8am service)

- discussed whether not to hold Saturday morning coffee on the days of the Village Market and supported the idea of it continuing weekly if at all possible
- reviewed the purpose of the Keystone Project fund and agreed that it “*should be retained as a fund to enable the PCC to meet costs related to fabric, decoration and capital aspects where funding from FoSM is absent or inadequate. The money should be held in a restricted fund of the main PCC account under rules which will keep it open to grants and donations barred from contributing to the running costs of the church.*”
- approved the local fee for the services of vergers at Pastoral (Occasional) Offices

In addition regular reports were received from the Treasurers of the PCC and the Keystone Project accounts, the above mentioned sub-committees, the Foundation governors of Kingsclere Primary School, the Tower Management Committee, the PCC representative on the Friends of St Mary’s, the Deanery representatives to ensure that the PCC were monitoring and supporting all the activities being undertaken in its name, including the development of Messy Church and the activity of the Lay Pastoral Visiting Team.

A full report of Fabric matters discussed and progressed is included under the report of the Fabric Sub-committee.

The PCC would like to record its thanks to the Friends of St Mary’s for their contribution to the work on the fabric of the church throughout the year.

Rev. Lucy Thirtle, Chair

The above report was adopted by PCC at its meeting on 24 March 2015

Signed:

Lucy Thirtle

Chair

Churchwardens’ Report

2014 has been another busy year, but thanks to so many of you who work tirelessly to support the church in many ways, the church always looks beautiful and services proceed without a hitch. (Some time ago we listed all the people who help to support the church – those involved with services, brass cleaners, flower arrangers, bell ringers etc etc and it came to well over 100 people!) So ‘Thank you’ to everyone.

This year a particular thanks to the team of people who have cleaned the church every week through all the seasons, come rain or shine (and cold). We are delighted to report that we now have two ladies who have taken on this role.

Work related to the fabric of the church has been significant this year, and you can read details in Nick Selsey’s report. The Diocesan Advisory Committee(DAC) has been very supportive of our work, and we have had two meetings with them here in Kingsclere to discuss details of major works.

We continue to meet regularly with Rev Lucy and Penny Stewart, Churchwarden for Ashford Hill & Headley, and with Nick Selsey as Fabric Sub-Committee.

Janet Sturgess & Eileen Selsey

Spiritual life – Worship, nurture and prayer (Living the gospel)

Regular Worship and Pastoral Offices

The monthly pattern of services has been maintained throughout the year and it is thanks to our able and dedicated team of Lay Worship Leaders (Hazel, Maggy, Bryony) that we are able to offer 3 main services a month consistently. Our grateful thanks to them.

There were 10 weddings, 10 baptisms and 18 funerals for this parish but, taking into account those from Ashford Hill with Headley, a record high across the benefice for both weddings and funerals.

Rev Lucy

Worship at Rose Hodson Court

A monthly midweek Holy Communion service at Rose Hodson Court now provides a service to the wider parish too with several non-residents of the Court joining on a regular basis. Numbers are regularly 9-12. Quarterly Songs of Praise services were also held and we were grateful for the services of Hilary Chawner who played the organ for two of these. It looks like we will need to draw more on lay leadership from all the denominations if this service is going to continue to be viable.

Rev Lucy

Prayer Circle and Prayer Diary

This is a small, co-ordinated prayer group, who include in their personal prayer at home, any requests received through the Benefice by Lucy or others. Information is kept confidentially within the group.

At the end of the year, we started working on the production of a Benefice-wide monthly Prayer Diary. This is intended to help bring us all together, as a prayerful Christian community; asking for God's blessing, and guidance on the things we do, or hope to do, in our churches and villages; for those who are ill or experiencing difficult times, and indeed for every person who lives here, by reviving a cycle of prayer for all our individual roads and areas. After the publication of the first one, all comments, suggestions and ideas warmly welcomed!

(The small Kingsclere-based Prayer Circle will continue, responding to any urgent prayer requests that may arise).

Bryony White and Evelyn Barr

Children at St Mary's – Junior Church

During 2014 we have welcomed more leaders to Junior Church. This now means the sessions are planned and delivered by a team of 6. We run Junior Church during communion services on the 1st and 3rd Sunday in each month. There are a regular group of attendees at Junior Church who enjoy learning Bible stories, usually making something and worshipping God in their own way.

Sarah Mussett & Emma Rivers, Junior Church Leaders

Music

This year the choir has continued to work hard to provide music to support church services in the Benefice. At Christmas we enjoyed singing with the 'new' members of Ashford Hill choir and hope that these links will continue in 2015-16.

Friday evening choir practice gradually became impossible so we now rehearse before our 10.30 services, a change which has been very beneficial. More choir members attend at this time and the involvement, especially from the Junior members, is noticeably improved!

Thank you to all the choir for your loyalty it's not always easy to sing enthusiastically at 9am!

We are pleased to confirm that Annabel has been offered a music scholarship at Marlborough and will begin there in September. Their gain is unfortunately our loss, but we wish her all the best in her studies. We hope she will join us whenever she can particularly to play the organ.

St Mary's continues to have a good pool of organists. Thanks to all of you who have relieved the pressure this year. I hope you have enjoyed playing as much as I do!

Hazel O'Leary, Organist & Choir Leader

Flower Arranging Team

Members of the Flower Group met in February to sign up for the Rota. All agreed that the previous year had gone well, resulting in beautiful arrangements of fresh flowers in church throughout 2013, except for Lent and Advent. Many appreciative comments had been received from visitors to the village as well as members of the congregation, which is always encouraging.

Everyone was thanked for the considerable thought and planning they put into their arrangements as well as their generosity in funding the flowers. A lively discussion took place on "Different ideas for Festivals," some of which were implemented to great effect later in the year at Easter and Christmas.

The cost of flowers at festivals continues to be a major concern and sincere thanks are due to those church members who contribute towards these special Sundays in the church year; in particular those who fund an arrangement to celebrate a happy family occasion or commemorate a loved one. It would be really helpful if more people could be encouraged to do this.

Linda Elvin, Suzy Stokoe and Pam Ashworth

Tuesday Morning Bible Study Group

We have had an interesting year with a wide range of studies. Bryony's visits have led to lively and thoughtful discussions. We hope Bryony will continue to encourage us in 2015.

Maisie (for Ralph, Norma, Margaret and hostess Jill)

St Mary's Belltower

The bells have been rung for most services in 2014. Scaffolding, needed for restoration work, prevented access to the tower for a short period at the end of the year.

Ringers have met regularly on Monday evenings for practice. The tower currently has 12 full members, two not having attended since January 2014. The numbers at practice nights vary between six and 12 with several of the Burghclere and Ecchinswell ringers giving their valued support. Thanks go to Helen, Tim, Ros and Simon for all their teaching and mentoring work.

Maintenance of the bells has been carried out this year by Martin Newbery and John Simpson of Ecchinswell tower. Nothing major has needed to be done. The Maintenance Record Book has been updated to include work carried out by Matthew Higby Bell Hangers since 2010.

Several ringers have attended courses organised by the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers and the Ecchinswell Bell Restoration Trust. Topics covered included Plain Hunt, raising and lowering and trebling to Doubles methods.

During 2014 the bells were rung for six weddings. Eight quarter peals were rung, four more than last year; to celebrate the following on these dates:

14 February, the marriage of Nicki Williams and Kevin Long, friends of Simon Lipscombe.

21 April, the 88th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II

26 May, the birth of Thomas Whan on 25 May (a second grandson for Maggie Hiller).

29 June, Trish Bancroft's last service as curate.

2 July, Rev Lucy's 10th induction anniversary.

4 August, 1914 changes half muffled, to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of WWI and to remember those who lost their lives in the conflict.

13 August, Trish Bancroft's 50th birthday.

13 October, a birthday compliment for Simon Lipscombe and a get well wish for Mike Winterbourne, a ringer in our Andover District.

A peal, lasting three hours, was rung by Helen's 3rd Thursday peal band.

The end of year financial report of the Kingsclere Bell Restoration and Maintenance Fund shows assets of £836.91 and the Kingsclere Bell Ringers account has a balance of £841.49.

Gill Gardner is in the process of opening another account for the primary purpose of handling monies for bell ringers' wedding fees.

Maggie Hiller - Tower Secretary and Gill Gardner - Tower Treasurer

Pastoral Care

The team of Lay Pastoral Visitors* has continued to be a much valued asset enabling us to offer pastoral care to a good number of individuals in the parish. Twice during 2014, Rev Lucy was contacted by an agency (Social Services/Cruise) to ask if we were able to support individuals. It was wonderful to be able to respond positively to these requests, something that wouldn't have been possible without our excellent team. Most of the team have one or two (or more) individuals who they visit regularly for support and company. This year, our number of Home Communicants has grown to 4 or 5 and supporting this number has been made manageable thanks to Bryony White's valuable ministry in this area.

During 2014, some of the members of the Team volunteered to support Lucy in trialling materials for the Church of England's Funerals Project which involved them being linked to a funeral conducted in the parish and offering follow up cards and visit support if needed.

The Visitors' team meets three or four times a year with Rev Lucy for mutual support and confidential sharing of related issues. Please contact Rev Lucy in the first instance if you, or someone you know, would welcome a visit.

**The team: Rod Eldred, Steve Green; Sarah Musset, Mary Smith, Mary Sneyd, Janet Sturgess, Di Tait, Maggy Wallace, Bryony White*

Rev Lucy

St Mary's Guild

St Mary's Guild had another successful year, under the Chairmanship of Pam Kitch, with a range of interesting activities and talks. Members enjoyed events such as afternoon tea on The Rose barge; considering who they would like to consign to Room 101 (no comment!!); the annual lunch at Sasso's; talks on 'Staying safe in the NHS' and 'Sunken Treasure – Our Heritage' plus a Christmas party with a visiting seasonal celebrity!

Members continue to raise considerable funds (nearly £800) for various charities including Naomi House, Air Ambulances and Living Paintings.

Meetings take place at 2.15pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Kingsmill room. A short service is followed by a talk or activity and concludes with tea and cake and chat. All welcome.

Maggy Wallace (acting in Chair Pam Kitch's temporary absence)

Outreach (sharing the gospel)

Benefice Outreach group

The Outreach Group continued its work under the guidance of Maggy Wallace and Georgie Selby following Trish Bancroft's departure. A range of activity was undertaken including:

Choir: a new choir was started at Ashford Hill, with Vanessa Martin as organist and Georgie Selby as Choir leader. Choir practice is every 3rd and 4th Sunday. A number of different events have already been held including carol singing; singing in the United Benefice Choir; and introducing some original new pieces to the congregations. Monthly special events are held that are open to everyone.

Gospel Women: an interesting and challenging series of evenings were held in the run-up to Christmas, looking at the contribution of women in the gospel. This will be run again in 2015/2016 as there is clearly more for us all to explore.

Visiting preachers: the idea of inviting visiting preachers to talk at evening services started in December 2014. The first guest was Nigel Butler from the Kennet Community Church, who reminded his listeners that Jesus was with us all year round, not just to be 'taken out of the attic' for Christmas.

BMAP (see elsewhere in report). The group's work is currently being amalgamated with that of the Diocesan Mission initiative (BMAP) to ensure that mission/outreach activities continue to be offered, developed and expanded. The group will re-convene in due course.

Maggy Wallace

Messy Church

2014 saw the introduction of Messy Church in the parish. This initiative is a prescribed format which sees those attending join in craft activities and a short worship based on a Bible story or teaching and then we all share a hot meal together. We have been very lucky to have some dedicated volunteers at each session, without whom we couldn't do it. All who have attended both young and old have had lots of fun. It is aimed at families who can come together and worship in an informal way and often a hot meal cooked by someone else is a welcome treat for busy Mums and Dads! We ran 4 sessions on Tuesday afternoons in March, June, October and December at the Primary School during the year and have welcomed over 50 families in total. The themes of the sessions have been the story of Noah, the Good Samaritan, "I am the good shepherd" and "I am the light" - Messy Christingle.

Sarah Mussett

Kingsclere Church of England Primary School

Your PCC has three representatives on the Governing Body of Kingsclere CofE Primary School (KPS) – Rev. Lucy Thirtle, John Liddeatt and Nick Selsey. Rev. Lucy is a permanent governor, because she is our Vicar, and John and Nick are each roughly half way through their second four-year terms as governors.

During 2014 and in the first months of 2015, the staff at KPS, led by Steve Wells, the Head Teacher since April 2013, have been concentrating on strengthening the school in all its aspects – new staff, teaching, sports, extra-curricular activities, school meals and school buildings. All of this has been part of the long process of moving the school from the disappointing judgement of the OFSTED inspectors in February 2012, when KPS was judged to be 'In need of improvement'.

And all of this hard work has paid off. After a full inspection by OFSTED in February 2015, KPS has been judged to be 'Good', with the behaviour and safety of pupils being judged 'Outstanding'.

The full report can be found on the KPS website, <http://www.kingsclereprimary.com>. This is a great tribute to the hard work of all the KPS staff, at all levels.

What next? KPS will continue to provide the village and its surrounding area with sound, good-quality, wide-ranging education, supported by Rev Lucy and St Mary's.

Nick Selsey

ABC

There is inevitably a high turnover of children and mums/carers coming to ABC but, although numbers sometimes dip, new mums and carers still find their way to us or come as a result of a baptism so we remain buoyant. Sometimes we have only 1 or 2 children and carers at the official starting time of 9.30 but invariably a few more arrive by the time we've started. It's lovely to have older children returning to worship with us when it's a half term or holiday. Emma had to step down from the leadership team towards the end of the year but the number of volunteers on the rota to provide coffee and refreshments grows. We could do with one or two more to share the leadership of the sessions – no special skill required – we now have service plans, ideas and props for many of the stories we revisit in our two year cycle.

Rev Lucy

Saturday Coffee at St Mary's

Saturday coffee takes place every week in the Kingsmill Room. This is a very popular social event much enjoyed by a regular friendly group and some occasional visitors. Thank you to the helpers whose numbers have grown this year. They are: Eileen and Nick Selsey, Heath Denness, Rosalind Rutherford, Ann Roberts, Barbara Baylis, Margaret Armstrong, Hilary Byatt, Evelyn Barr, Sara Hannan, Joan Witcher and Mary Sneyd. They supply the delicious cakes and serve the coffee and tea. The team has been joined for three months by Alex Allam as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

Mary Sneyd

Partnerships

Ashford Hill with Headley

In addition to the regular meetings with the Vicar of the three churchwardens, the main joint benefice activity is the Outreach Group. However, worshippers from both parishes travel to a church in the other one either occasionally or regularly as well as supporting other church family events. We should not overlook the need from time to time for ideas and events which will encourage those who don't usually participate in joint benefice events to do so.

Rev Lucy

Whitchurch Deanery Synod

Our parish is represented on the Deanery Synod by Rev Lucy Thirtle, Chryssie Green, Steve Jaques, and Nick Selsey. The Deanery Synod meets three times a year, at different church halls within our area. The reason for the Deanery Synod is to understand the relationship of each parish within our diocese, how we are affected by the decisions taken by Winchester and Canterbury.

Mityana Outreach

Continued progress with our sister church in Mityana, our coordinator Revd Dodie Marsden presented us with progress from the water project and the visit to Mityana, their continued mutual beneficial association with the schools, orphanages and hospitals. Our primary school and church links, the progress made with the piglets, water schemes and the focus on helping the people of Mityana to progress to a sustainable future is showing positive results.

Deanery Mission Action Plan (DMAP)

The main focus of the Whitchurch Deanery last year was the Deanery Mission Action Plan; this all seems very positive and will hopefully encourage us to build a better relationship between deanery and parishes and out to our wider community.

One of the action points for the Deanery which draws on the Diocesan Priority of 'Belonging Together' is the creation of an online directory of resources (human and material) which each parish can access in cases of need.

Treasurer's Report

We have discussed the changes to finances within the dioceses, the parish share contributions for 2014, the share allocation method and how these will affect the contributions made by individual churches. The Parish Giving Scheme has been adopted by many but not across the whole Deanery.

Chrissy Green - Deanery Synod representative

Ecumenical Links

The Good Friday Walk of Witness was once again a very well supported ecumenical event. In September, members of all three congregations enjoyed a warm and friendly 'bring and share' Harvest lunch at the Methodist Church. Fr Patrick was a regular visitor to KPS to lead Collective Worship and was present for the school's Easter worship. He also regularly contributed a Reflection or Minister's letter to the Tower magazine.

Towards the end of the year, Fr Patrick announced that the RC Diocese of Portsmouth had agreed that the chapel of SS Peter and Paul in Kingsclere would be closed with the congregation expected to worship from then on at Tadley. Preparations were put in place for a united act of worship at the end of January so that those members of other denominations could stand alongside our RC brothers and sisters in saying farewell to a cherished place of worship.

Sadly John Beadle's commitments elsewhere meant his contribution in Kingsclere had to be limited but we enjoy his presence at our occasional meetings at the Vicarage. We were sad to lose Trish from our happy ecumenical fellowship.

Rev Lucy

Resources (supporting and enabling the mission of the church)

St. Mary's – The Building

During 2014 and the first two months of 2015 the PCC has been concentrating on two priorities:

A) Keep the water out and the building sound: this has involved a great deal of work on the buttress next to the Kingsmill Door, on the Stair Turret, on the roofs of the Nave and the South Transept, on the parapets and flintwork of the South Transept, on repairs to the East Window and to various damaged stones and ground-level gutters. Individually these are a bit dull, and quite a lot of the works can't easily be seen from the ground, but, as anyone who owns an old house will know, maintenance now or very big bills later. Total cost of all this – around £ 30,000. And very many thanks to FOSM for their generous support which covered around 60% of the total.

B) Improve access to the Kingsmill Room: the step at the external door has been replaced by a slope (reusing the existing stones): this will make life easier for anyone using prams, push-chairs or wheelchairs: at the same time we have replaced/repared various stones around the door as well as fixing a large area of wobbly flints above the door. This project, costing around £7,400, was covered by a grant from the Greenham Common Trust.

And, as a stand-alone project, we have installed an Aumbry in the South Transept.

You can see a display of before/after photos of these projects, showing how much has been achieved.

Looking ahead to 2015, we have a bit more work to do on keeping the weather out and the building sound, at an estimated cost of around £3,000. The major project is to have the main body of the church rewired, for safety reasons. This will not happen before October, at the very earliest, and may cost up to £92,000. Once that is completed, the church will need redecoration, at an estimated cost of £34,000. Again, FOSM have very generously indicated that they could meet up to 50% of the cost of these two large projects.

At the same time, work will, we hope, re-start on refurbishing the Kingsmill Room – new plaster where needed, decorate, new floor.

It all looks a bit daunting, but we have the support and goodwill of the congregation and the village and the promised support of FOSM: and we need to go grant-hunting. Achievable? Definitely.

And finally, many thanks from the PCC to the Maintenance Team (Tom Sneyd, John Liddeatt, Andrew Kitch, Ray Peach, Steve Green and Steve Jaques). At least once a month, one of them goes around the church, to ensure that small problems are spotted and fixed before they become big and expensive ones.

ps: all of the costs listed above exclude VAT, as we benefit from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, through which we reclaim all VAT paid on repairs. So that's 20% extra we don't have to find.

Nick Selsey, PCC Member responsible for fabric

Social and Fundraising Report

Two major events were organised this year :

In February, thanks to Lorraine Titcombe and Pete Murray of Titcombe and Murray Independent Funeral Directors, we held a very successful Valentine's Dinner and Dance at Ashford Hill Church, with proceeds split between the two parishes. Ashford Hill Church was transformed into a spectacular venue, and Pete Murray sang the night away providing wonderful music for the dancing. Excellent hot food ensured a wonderful evening for all.

In June the sun shone for our Garden Safari. 14 gardens were opened for the event, which saw around 250 people visiting them. The village was abuzz with keen gardeners trying to see all gardens. A fantastic £2017 was raised, which has gone towards the Keystone Project.

Eileen Selsey

Celebrations in Light

We received about the same number of bookings over the last year as for the year before. We are beginning to get to know those who make regular bookings each year and have been requested by one young man to reserve a date in memory of a deceased family member for the next ten years. We occasionally get requests at short notice and do our best to accommodate these and are grateful to the editors of the Tower who have also accepted some late additions.

Over this winter we have had an extended period of lighting for security reasons while the scaffolding has been in place and have received many comments from residents who have appreciated having the church light up throughout the dark nights. We hope this will attract more bookings in the future.

Andy & Sarah Bates

Keystone Project

2014 has been a quiet year for Keystone, at least as far as funding major refurbishments. Most of the time has been spent trying to find a final solution for the Kingsmill Room floor. Having started the year thinking a wooden floor would be a good way to replace the current carpet tiles, the PCC goes into 2015 intending to lay down stone – easier to maintain, very long working life, in keeping with the church, in the same price league as wood (surprisingly). And during 2014 we had one or two problems with water coming in from above, which has played havoc with already weak plaster. The plaster is now being analysed, to establish what action is required prior to re-decorating

Keystone has, however, been a strong supporter of other current refurbishment projects, paying our Church Architect's fees and a further slice of those for the Electrical Consultant, without whose expert advice we cannot go forward.

Now that the Kingsmill Room roof is sound, 2015 will, we hope, be a bit more positive – replace plaster, where necessary; proceed with the new stone floor; widen the door to the Chancel. All of these come under Keystone's mandate. And, most importantly, ask its users to look hard at the kitchen, to see what needs to be done to make it more user-friendly.

Nick Selsey - Keystone Project

Stewardship and Giving

The introduction of the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) for gift aided donations to St Mary's has been a great success. 40 people have signed up for the scheme, of whom more than half have agreed to an annual inflation uplift. The scheme has made a huge improvement to the cash flow with the gift aid being received by the parish within 10 days of the donation, compared with several months for envelope and standing order donations. The annual inflation uplift will help keep Church income increasing in line with inflation, although donors still have the opportunity to change their mind about the inflation increase, should their personal circumstances change.

The PGS scheme has also reduced significantly

- the amount of cash being handled,
- the scope for error and
- the work for the people who count the cash, take it to the bank, maintain the financial records, claim the gift aid, etc.

If anyone who still gives using envelopes or the Standing Order scheme would like to change to the PGS scheme, please contact me.

Tony Matthews, Gift Aid Secretary.

Kingsclere Tower Magazine

The Tower production and distribution has continued smoothly this year. Sarah and Nicki, the editors have been refining their part of the process and introducing new systems to streamline the editorial and layout process. Andrew Kitch has been efficient in his role which concerns purchase of the paper and printer components and I have for the time being taken back the chairmanship of the Management Committee. I am grateful to all the many volunteers involved in the editing, layout, assembly and distribution of our Village Magazine. It has been agreed that in due course, some form of written constitution will be helpful as well as having in writing the relationship of the Tower to St Mary's Church. In the meantime, the Committee decided that it would mark the 50th anniversary of the Tower in June 2015 with a special anniversary edition. Our finances (next page) are in rude health despite the purchase of a new printer this year, thanks to Les Wallace – Advertising Manager and Treasurer.

Rev Lucy, Chair of Management Committee

Kingsclere Tower Current Account January to Decemeber 2014

<u>Income</u>	
£4,301.85	Opening Balance on Current Account
£7,174.00	Advertising Revenue
£25.00	Miscellaneous
<u>Expenditure</u>	
£448.12	Staplers
£1,228.50	Type setter
£1,801.50	Paper
£2,424.00	New printer and service
£397.00	May Tower
£292.80	Ink and Master rolls
£840.00	Hire of Kingsmill Room
£50.00	Leaving present for chairman
£62.00	Christmas Chocolates
£77.50	Stationery and expenses
£93.99	Miscellaneous
£3,785.44	Closing Balance on Current Account

Kingsclere Tower Community Reserve January to December 2014

<u>Income</u>	
£7,310.71	Opening Balance on Savings Account
£9.24	Interest
<u>Expenditure</u>	
NIL	
£7,319.95	Closing Balance on Savings Account

Les Wallace, Treasurer, Tower Management Committee

Fete Sub-Committee

Well, it had to happen. After 10 years of often very good weather and nothing worse than some blustery occasional showers, August Bank Holiday Monday 2014 was thoroughly wet and miserable from beginning to end. The wet weather plan had to be put into operation with as many stalls as possible moving inside the church. Sadly there wasn't room for every stall so we were hugely grateful for the cheerful resilience of the unlucky stallholders who had to be outside. Steve, the ventriloquist, who came to open the event nobly battled on under a gazebo with a few heroic souls braving the rain to make it worth his while. It probably wasn't the best year to launch the new attraction of the Pimms Tent!

However ... miraculously, despite much lower numbers than usual, the eventual proceeds were fantastic, thanks to the Home Accessories stall surpassing its previous amazing totals with a large

amount being generated by sales of donated items after the event, as well as generous match funding from Vodafone – thank you to those employees who applied on our behalf.

And as so often happens, adjustments made of necessity actually revealed a better solution. So, for example, teas will continue to be served in the church rather than Kingsmill Room.

A huge thank you to members of the Fete Committee, many of whom were new this year and threw themselves in with gusto!

Rev Lucy, Chair of Fete Sub-Committee

The Kingsmill Room

Apart from church activities such as ABC, choir practice, Junior Church, Grave Talk and Saturday coffee mornings the Kingsmill Room has been used by FOSM, the church flower arrangers and the Care Group for their AGMs. Care Group lunches are held, monthly, here as is the meeting of St Mary's Guild.

The Kingsmill Room is the base for the printing and assembly of the Tower magazine.

This year has seen the ukulele group and the Guitar Society regularly use the room for music practise. Roedel, the builders working on the exterior of the church, have used the room to store their tools. Thanks go to all users for their patience whilst this was taking place. Grateful thanks to John Liddeatt who has now taken over responsibility for the room.

Janet Sturgess - Churchwarden

Churchyard Wild Flower Area

There have been sixty flowering species this year! From snowdrops in January to Autumn Hawkbit in September with Heath Spotted Orchid, Hogweed, Red Bartsia, Smooth Hawsbeard and Marjoram as new arrivals. Seven Orchid species are now present, but they are at risk from a visiting Muntjac deer.

These areas have also attracted Common Blue, Ringlet, Meadow Brown and Silver-Washed Fritillary Butterflies as well as Solitary Bees, Hoverflies, Bumble Bees a colony of Black Ants, Moles and a host of small moths that could attract Bats.

As these areas are now becoming havens for wildlife, it is encouraging to know that our local Biodiversity Office now has a photograph recording the splendid spring display of Meadow Saxifrage as part of the national campaign to encourage wild life areas to be set up in all churchyards.

Ralph, Rod & Diana

***St Mary's Church
Kingsclere***

***Financial Report
Year ending
31st December 2014***