

Parish of Ashford Hill with Headley Diocese of Winchester



Annual Report for the year ended
31st December 2015

Highlights of the year

- Work to repair parts of the roof and associated fundraising
- Preparing a Benefice Mission Action Plan after a very thorough Shaping Church process where we listened to the community on their needs for a changing church
- Carrying out the appointment process for a new incumbent
- A successful fete

Administrative information

The parish of Ashford Hill with Headley 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 until August 2015 was the Rev Lucy Thirtle. She was licenced to another benefice in September 2015, and we have been in a vacancy period from then. It is expected that our new Incumbent will be licenced in April 2016.

Ashford Hill with Headley Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

There are two parish churches – St Peter’s Headley in Newbury Road, Headley and St Paul’s Ashford Hill. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, Fox’s Lane, Kingsclere, Newbury.

The membership of the PCC during 2014 was as follows.

Vicar	Rev. Lucy Thirtle (until August 2015)
Churchwarden	Penny Stewart (H) (Vice-Chair of PCC to August, co-chair of PCC from August) Georgi Selby (AH) – (co-Chair of PCC from August)
Deanery Synod member	Alison Goodyer
Elected Members (6)	Rachel Chamings (from Apr13) Susie Sainsbury (re-elected Apr 15) Evelyn Hiscock (from Apr 13) Colin Scott-Malden (from Apr 13) David Fowler (from Apr 13) Dave Chamings (from Apr 13) Marilyne Simmonds(elected Apr 15)
Secretary	Emma Rivers (non-voting member)

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Members are elected for a 3 year term. All regular worshippers are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. :

Officers of the PCC

Vice Chair: Penny Stewart (co-chair from August 2015)

Co-chair (from August 2015): Georgi Selby

Treasurer: Colin Scott-Malden

Secretary: Emma Rivers – Benefice Administrator (non-voting)

Safeguarding Officer: Emma Rivers

Electoral Roll Officer: Rachel Chamings

Certain tasks are delegated to sub-Committees as follows:

Fete Committee

Finance Committee

Full reports from these committees follow.

Objectives

The Ashford Hill with Headley PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the parish churches and their churchyards.

Annual report of PCC

The PCC met 6 times during the year in addition to a brief meeting following the Annual Meeting to elect officers, and several meetings specifically covering the vacancy process. The average level of attendance was 86%.

The main items of business were:

- Formally approving the plans for the repair and maintenance work on St Paul's church, fundraising to cover costs and monitoring the project
- Put a great deal of effort (through various working parties) into the vacancy process to ensure that we prepared all necessary documentation, convened meetings, liaised with Diocesan staff and interviewed on schedule. This resulted in an appointment being made for our new incumbent sooner than planned.
- approved and encouraged a cross-benefice communication strategy throughout the vacancy period ensuring everyone was aware of what was happening with regards to the appointment process
- monitoring financial position of the parish
- receiving reports on the state of the church buildings and churchyards
- receiving reports from various groups
- adopting and supporting the Benefice Mission Action Plan
- arranging a party to welcome newcomers to the parish
- agreeing special services in the parish (i.e. Seder Meal, celebration of baptism)
- approving work on churchyard trees
- appointing a second churchwarden in the parish
- approving a prayer request system at St Paul's
- approving and supporting 4 new members the Lay Pastoral Visitors team in the benefice
- approved the local fee for the services of vergers at Pastoral (Occasional) Offices
- Reviewed and approved policies on safeguarding, finance, Health & Safety and churchyard regulations

This report was adopted by the PCC at its meeting on 29th February 2016

Signed: Penny Stewart & Georgi Selby (Churchwardens)

The following sections give more detail on the life of the parish.

Ashford Hill Churchwarden's Report.

2015 was an interesting and challenging year. The benefice and especially St Paul's church faced the following issues by working together to find the way forward:

A churchwarden for Ashford Hill

Penny Stewart resigned as churchwarden from Ashford Hill after working tirelessly doing the job for both parishes. It was unsustainable and exhausting. Georgi Selby became churchwarden for Ashford Hill in May.

The Vicar leaving the benefice.

Lucy moved on from the benefice for family reasons. This was a good decision for her and her family; but great loss to the benefice. St Paul's church hosted her leaving lunch on Sunday 30th August. It was a very moving occasion.

Managing day to day issues of the parish during the vacancy.

The churchwardens and PCCs (with Benefice administrator Emma) organised the general running of the parishes, each having specific responsibilities including liaising with the Diocese and Bishop David of Basingstoke on the defined process for getting a new Vicar. Our volunteers achieved amazing results in keeping the church tidy and clean and the vergers managed events big & small.

Finding a Vicar.

The process of documentation (thank you Maggy Wallace) and liaising with the Diocesan authorities was time consuming, often frustrating but eventually rewarding. Bishop David put forward a priest who he considered would be ideal for our benefice. We agreed to interview this person. In early December Alison and Georgi were part of the interview panel who selected (as we are now aware) our new Vicar Ben Read.

The necessary renovations to St Paul's church building.

The architect's quinquennial inspection identified urgent repairs needed on the roof, spire, flint work etc. Paddy Dring kindly stepped forward to spear head the building project and fundraising. The roof renovations were virtually finished by Christmas thanks to the team involved. The work is divided into 3 phases. Phase 1 the roof, flint work and renewal of the stairs in the spire, plus the roof, flint work, internal plastering. Phase 2 building internal toilets, kitchen etc. Phase 3 (only identified this year) renewing the rotten wooden floor.

Fundraising the £200,000 needed to do the do the work.

This massive challenge has been met by dedication, enthusiasm, and great generosity and love. Our everlasting gratitude to those who share the vision of our spiritual and community church, for now and the future. We have nearly raised the money for the 1st phase and believe as we go forward we will be able to pay for the other phases, God willing.

Community use of St Pauls.

Through 2015 the church has hosted many community and spiritual events including the Seder meal, inspiration speakers, concerts, general sale and an art and craft weekend. Our amazing team is growing. They (often inspired by Vanessa Martin abundant enthusiasm creativity and music) have produced concerts, workshops, singing, and much more. We are looking at possible ways of developing St Pauls as a viable community self-funding building. The excellent team of volunteers kept the smooth running of the church going whatever.

We are blessed with a beautiful church which we can develop as part of the benefice. 2015 has shown us we can move forward in Christ name. Thank you.

Georgi Selby, Churchwarden of Ashford Hill

Churchwarden's Report – St Peter's, Headley

There have been no great works at St Peters in the last year as the Benefice has been busy with St Paul's. Quotes were obtained last year for the bell repairs and when this is done we will be replacing the missing tiles and repointing the brickwork at ground level.

The deadwood was removed from the oak tree overhanging the path from the car park and the little gate was rehung and the light post was re-fixed. The churchyard has been kept tidy by Ray and Pete Coventry to whom we are very grateful. The church has also been kept warm by the diligent Diane Crook, and regularly cleaned by Wally Kingston and his family. Thank you also to Judy Merton's team of flower arrangers.

On August 30th we bid a sad farewell to Lucy, David and William and we had a full church at 6 pm for her final service. Then the Vacancy started and it has been an interesting time with various visiting clergy, several of whom we have entertained to breakfast.

Remembrance Sunday was well attended and ably conducted by Tom Sneyd at St. Paul's and Barrie Hiscock at St. Peter's. The Service of Commemoration and thanksgiving for the Departed was a very moving service conducted by Bryony White. She also filled the church for the lay led Crib service on Christmas Eve and also continues to lead the regular Tuesday morning prayers at St' Peter's.

We are all very much looking forward to the arrival and Ben and Bethany.

Penny Stewart, Churchwarden of Headley

Worship

The monthly Sunday pattern of worship continued through the year. Parish Communion services at Ashford Hill on the 1st Sunday at 8 a.m. and 4th Sunday at 10.30a.m. During the vacancy the pattern of service continued. The numbers of people attending the services were good, especially as they were not always aware of who the priest was taking the services.

Advent started with the Dress Up Sunday service. It was greatly enjoyed by those taking part. The children who did the readings and singing were very gifted. The Christmas services at Ashford Hill were well supported. The church being completely packed for the Candlelit Carol Service and again for morning communion on Christmas Day.

Mission & Outreach

The mission and outreach work continued, but lead by the demands created by the vacancy and focused on getting a new vicar.

We were pleased to have 4 weddings at Ashford Hill. The flowers from one of the weddings were left and graced the church for 2 weddings, 2 concerts, an art and craft weekend and a funeral, and of course looked beautiful for our usual services.

There were 4 funerals in the benefice throughout the year. Sadly one was a former churchwarden Graham Swait, who worked tirelessly for St Paul's and St Peter's Churches for many years guiding the church through many changes.

David Wynne's family in his memory gave St Paul a painting on 'Christ in the Wilderness by a famous artist Peter Rogers a friend and contemporary of David's. This now hangs in the David Wynne Lady Chapel at St Paul's church.

On the last Sunday in August St Paul's church hosted the farewell lunch for Lucy, where presents were given to Lucy, David and of course William. Many people came to show how much Lucy's ministry was appreciated.

St Paul's church is continuing to be community focus during 2015. Cheam School started the year with a fundraising concert. The Kingsclere Singers' concert included children from Ashford Hill primary School and Park House School. The schools performed their own pieces as well as joining with the Kingsclere Singers in the finale. The church was full to capacity.

The Art and Craft weekend brought many local artists and crafters together. The church was transformed into a huge gallery. The "spectacular scaffolding sculpture" at the west end of the church was the talking point. It demonstrated clearly the ongoing necessity of the building renovations, as did the external scaffolding and the work on the roof.

The Ron Goodwin Tribute concert was successful. The music he wrote for St Pauls "The church at Ashford Hill" had words set to it on the theme of St Paul's letters by a talented local poet. This was sung by the benefice choir and a guest soloist.

Halloween was celebrated with Simon Hiscock organising a huge bonfire party with traditional games, apple bobbing and of course sausages in the church field. The sparks of the bonfire leapt into the sky 30 feet or more.

Ashford Hill Primary School again this year celebrated Easter, Harvest and Christmas in St Pauls Church. The church was packed with mums and dads - the late comers having to sit at the back amongst the internal scaffolding.

Although the outreach group was disbanded the initiative of doing something special on the 5th Sunday continues. The inspirational John Wright was invited to share a Men's breakfast and his well-attended "God and Gershwin" event was very though provoking.

The Ashford Hill with Headley choir practices prior to the 10.30 Ashford Hill Service. It joins Kingsclere church choir as a benefice choir for special services. Vanessa Martin (organist) put on some drumming workshops for everyone. It was interesting and the rhythm of the drummers was not always synchronised with the banging of the roofers above.

Lay Ministry

Penny Stewart stood down as churchwarden of both churches and focuses on the needs of St Pater's church Headley. Her dedication and unstinting work is greatly appreciated as she singlehandedly fulfilled role of Churchwarden. Georgi Selby became Ashford Hill's churchwarden in May.

Georgi is well supported by the excellent team of occasional vergers – Loraine Cusworth, Marilyne Simmonds, Sheena Crisford and Ali Goodyer at Ashford Hill.

They work together on managing the programme of all services especially marriages, funerals and special events. They have done an impressive ministry keeping the church viable when the all renovations are under way. Ann Hoddinott and Annie Hill continue their successful work at Headley Church.

Gary Cusworth with his team of volunteers continues to maintain the churchyard at Ashford Hill which looked beautiful with the wild flowers flowering profusely. Dave Chamings cuts the grass.

Michael Rixon cuts the hedges. The church in its surroundings is a credit to all the effort of the volunteers.

Ann Rixon and Lorainne Cusworth for AH and Ann Hoddinott and Annie Hill for Headley continue to research and develop the detailed plan of the respective churchyards. This work has paid dividends when families search for the graves of their relatives/ ancestors.

With the major building work, and replacing the roof, the whole of St Paul's church gets covered in dust, dirt, and of course building materials; so we are greatly indebted to Marilynne Simmonds and Alison Goodyer for the constant hard work in keeping the church presentable. Wally Kingston unceasingly work ensures Headley church is always clean.

The Rev. Neil Britton led six studies in John's Gospel at Tom and Mary Sneyd's home on Tuesday's and at the Ship in Ashford Hill on Wednesdays this autumn. Part of the study involved watching a DVD of a dramatised version of the Gospel of John. Good times of sharing were had on both occasions.

Stewardship of our resources

Buildings and Churchyards

The massive undertaking of renovating St Pauls Church was begun, in consultation with the Vicar and churchwarden. Paddy Dring took on the huge task of leading the project and managing the various stages as well as complicated negotiations with the architect and builders. He spear-headed the job of talking to Greenham Trust for some match funding money. A team talked to possible financial donors.

During the year the renovations progressed. One temporary casualty was the church clock which stopped at 4pm. A big thank you to Brad Murduck who has wound the clock faithfully for years. He was willing to continue but the stairs were too unsafe. There were many other issues to overcome; one was the uncertainty of fine weather. The concern was that bad weather would prevent the work on the roof and the church would be open to all weathers. It was incredible when the majority of the external work was completed by Christmas. We owe a huge thank you to Paddy for his dedication and determination to complete the project successfully.

The amazingly generous response from so many people has been wonderful, thank you all. The money raised (over £110,000 to date) has paid for the re-roofing.

The fundraising appeal is ongoing as there are three phases of work to be done. Phase one is nearly complete. There is a team in place updating the parish on progress and organising fundraising events throughout this year and next year. We are most fortunate to have Vanessa Martin who is not only our gifted organist, she is also arranges many activities for the church and to raise money. The church is gradually becoming a greater part of our community.

Finance

Regular reports were received from the Treasurer. The full financial report for the year appears at the end of this report.

Our thanks go to Colin Scott-Malden for his continuing work on maintaining the accounts.

Benefice Matters

Throughout the vacancy, the churchwardens, administrator and lay chair of the PCC have met to ensure the smooth running of the benefice. This has enabled the workings of the benefice to be

planned as a whole which has brought both parishes closer together. Worshippers from both parishes travel to a church in the other one either occasionally or regularly as well as supporting other church events. Kingsclere parish has their own Annual Report which contains information on all that has happened during the year. It is available on the benefice website.

Ashford Hill has started a prayer group, who meet Mondays at 9.15. Originally at the church, but then at the community room in the Ship, as the building work was disruptive and noisy. This links with the other prayer groups at Headley and Kingsclere

Reports from Sub-Committees or other officers

Fete Sub Committee

Our annual fete took place on Headley Recreation ground on Saturday, 6 June. The sun shone on us and the stars came out: Emerald Fennell, star of 'Call the Midwife', opened the fete at 12 noon. In fact, the combination of wonderful weather, an army of committed volunteers and one of the best attendances ever helped to make the fete a real success, raising some £6,500 for our the parish.

We were entertained by Feel the Beat dancing academy, the ever-enjoyable Santa Maria Belly Dancing Academy, concert band Berkshire Maestros, showing off the real talent of young musicians from the local area and JLD Dancing School – all very lively and adding to the colour and atmosphere of the day.

The Dog Show offered its unique combination of Cruft's contenders and Heinz-57 rare breeds, displaying a variety of talents from unbelievable obedience to true character – best demonstrated in a new feature at this year's fete: Temptation Alley, alongside the Dog Show arena.

And, surrounding the 'performance' arenas, were the stalls, where you could spend your money on a vast range of interesting things from the edible to the incredible.

The success of the fete depends totally on the willingness of individuals to give up their time and exercise their organisational abilities and show off their willingness to work with others to the collective benefit of all.

We are very lucky in Headley and Ashford Hill that there are so many talented people who work together to deliver the goods. You know who you are – this is just to acknowledge your contribution and to say THANK YOU. Well done for producing another great day.

Andy Tooley

Benefice Mission Action Plan (BMAP)

A cross-benefice group was formed to engage with our communities to establish what they liked, disliked and more importantly what they need from our churches moving forward to the future culminating in a Benefice Mission Action Plan. This proved invaluable in terms of the vacancy process. A great deal of effort (through various working parties) was put into the vacancy process to ensure that we prepared all necessary documentation, convened meetings, liaised with Diocesan staff and interviewed on schedule. This resulted in an appointment being made for our new incumbent sooner than planned.

Maggy Wallace

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met during the year. Its main focus is on maintaining the financial footing of the parish, as well as looking the fund raising appeal, and for possible charities/trusts for requesting money for the renovation.

Parish Magazine

2015 saw the magazine flourish and it made a reasonably healthy £1,447 profit for church funds - up by over £500 from 2014. September's issue saw another landmark for the magazine as we went to colour for our new look to the front and back covers and some of our advertisers also went to colour for their advertisements which helped to increasing our profit. Again we must thank our printer and all distributors for their support and help as without them the preparation and delivery of the magazine would be extremely difficult.

Sandra & Michael Everitt

The PCC continues to be grateful to Sandra and Michael Everitt for their dedication to producing an excellent magazine. The magazine has become an amazing techno-coloured thing of beauty. Looking at the cover brings a smile, even before reading the articles. Thank you Sandra and Michael for enhancing our reading matter and the church's finances.

Whitchurch Deanery Synod Report

Our parish is represented on the Deanery Synod by Alison Goodyer, and across the benefice by Rev Lucy Thirtle (until August 2015), Chrissy 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

The main focus of outreach this year has been our progress with our sister church in Mityana, our co-ordinator Revd Dodie Marsden presented us with progress from the water project and the visit to Mityana.

Treasurer Report

We have discussed the changes to finances within the dioceses, the parish share contributions for 2015, the share allocation method and the Diocesans Working Group and how these will affect the contributions made by individual churches and the changes this will bring to our full time ministry team within the dioceses.

Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee

Regarding the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee, we felt a little let down as nothing appears to have come out of all our hard work in Kingsclere, Ashford Hill & Headley, except for ourselves but as to the deanery we wait and see.

The Rural Dean

Reported to us by the Revd Kelvin Inglis on the activities happening in the Rural Dean, the mission and evangelism courses, the ministry team appointments and movements with in the benefice, Deanery evensongs, to try and encourage younger people to become involved
Chrissy Green - Deanery Synod representative

**Ashford Hill with Headley Financial Statement for year ended
31'st December 2015**

<u>Income</u>	2014		2015	
Income from Donors				
Planned giving	36528		34148	
Income tax recovered	8631		8740	
Non Gift Aid	2205		1355	
Collection and other giving	1637		2117	
Sundry donations	6002		3300	
Income from Activities				
General	981			
Fete Gross	7687		9698	
Fete net		4844		6694
Fundraising	357		131683	
	150			
Magazine	6519		7085	
Parochial fees retained for PCC	7818		3111	
Grant from Greenham Trust				
Grant from Ashford Hill PC	750		750	
Legacy				
Income from Investments				
Interest on unrestricted funds	239		172	
Interest on restricted funds				
Interest on McSwiney fund			88	
Friends of Ashford Hill (restricted fund)				
Incorporated Church BS				
Payments received for Diocese	2999		1186	
Retirement collections/Miscellaneous				
 <u>Total Receipts</u>	 82502		 203433	

Payments	2014	2015
Church Activities		
Diocesan Parish share	38892	38892
Incumbent expenses, inc. secretary	6090	2337
Assistant Clergy expenses	32	368
Church running expenses, electricity, insurance	6612	4365
Church Maintenance: organ tuning, fire inspection	2843	1477
Support costs	77	88
Churchyard maintenance: tree & grass cutting	2470	300
Magazine printing	5616	5760
Salaries/Honorariums:Verger, organist	2224	1345
Title deed registration		60
Other PCC property upkeep	130	
Payments to Diocese	2569	1616
Cost of services/licences	90	70
Bank charges	40	
Church Administration costs	2456	3003 Fete costs
		19213 Architect fees
Capital expenditure	9181	94253 Construction
		195 AH Floor
Remembrance Day	396	669
Miscellaneous	0	
Total Payments	79719	174010
Total Receipts	82502	203433
Excess of receipts over payments	2783	29423
Balances as at 01-01-13	64883	59083
Excess of receipts over payments	2783	29423 See note below *
Creditors Previous year (unpresented cheques)		-48
Debtors Previous Year		
Creditors (unpresented cheques)	48	
Debtors (uncleared deposit)	-8631	8631 Gift Aid for 2014
Total	59083	97089 Calculated figure

* The Excess for 2015 (£29423) includes the amount raised in fundraising for the roof project. The majority of costs for the project will come in 2016

Notes: Clergy expenses includes telephone, postage, stationery, transport, secretarial assistance office equipment, maintenance of robes, hospitality, provision of locum tenens and visiting speakers

Gift Aid Tax rebate applied for in 2014, paid in Jan 2015

Some expenses are shared with Kingsclere.

Figures are rounded to nearest £1

Bank Accounts

	Balances as at 31-12-2014	Interest 2015	Balances as at 31- 12-2015
Deposit Account	31682	172	31855
McSwiney Bequest account	16200	88	16289
Current Account	11201		48946
Totals	59083	260	97089 Actual figure

Deposit Account Breakdown

Restricted (Development and Fabric Fund)	14492		N/A
Designated (Floor Fund)	Moved to General fund		
Unrestricted (General Fund)	17190		
	31682		

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO
THE PCC OF ASHFORD HILL WITH HEADLEY

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2015 which are set out on pages

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The charity's trustees 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 charity 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 management committee 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 give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with s.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 *R. Hopes*

Dated ... *12.3.16*

R. Hopes, FCA
Bell House, Ashford Hill, Thatcham, Berks. RG19 8BB