

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, NASH

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Rector of the Blackthorn Chase Benefice: Rev Jaqueline Dove

Bank: Lloyds Bank

Parochial Church Council (PCC) membership

Members of the PCC are either *ex officio* or are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The following served as members of the PCC during 2022.

Rector of the Blackthorn Chase Benefice	Rev Jaqueline Dove
Associate Priest	Reverend John King
Licensed Lay Minister & Fabric Officer	Mr John Hamilton
Church Warden	Mrs Margaret Morgan
Treasurer	Mrs Margaret Hedges
Electoral Roll Officer, Secretary & Deanery Synod Representative	Mrs Pamela (Pam) King
Other elected members	Mrs Wendy Gladwin Mrs Jane Harvey Mrs Marilyn Malarkey (from ACPM) Mr Stuart Chaplin (representing Thornton)

Annual Review 2022

Administrative information

All Saints', Nash, is situated in the middle of Nash, a small village in Buckinghamshire between Milton Keynes and Buckingham. The church was designed by G E Street and the foundation stone was laid in November 1857. A Thornton benefactor gave the land on which Nash church was built, so the parish is called Thornton with Nash and consists of the two villages.

The PCC is a charity exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.

The new Blackthorn Chase Benefice - consisting of Beachampton, Thornton with Nash, Thornborough and Whaddon, had been operating as a Benefice from September 2020, but was formally approved by the Church Commissioners on 26 July 2021.

Church services

Following the ending of most of the formal covid restrictions, services were held on most Sundays throughout 2022. The singing of four hymns resumed and the only change from pre-covid times is that communion is administered with the priest intincting the wafer.

Excluding baptism, marriage and funeral related services, there were 44 services with a total attendance of 867 adults and 48 children in total. The average attendance on a normal Sunday is 19. Except for the major festivals, the service pattern continued to be Holy Communion on the first and third Sundays with morning or evening prayer on the second Sunday, and a family friendly Church4All on the fourth Sunday. When there are five Sundays in the month the fifth Sunday is a Benefice Service which rotates round the four parishes in the Benefice. In June there was a Jubilee Praise Service to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. The evening service in October was a choral Evensong with the "Nash" choir. The church also held an All Souls Service to remember loved ones. The mid-week Sacred Space meditation took place throughout the year in the Church – the figures for those attending are not included in the above service and attendance figures.

The weekly "Church at Home" sheet continued, giving readings, a homily, and intercessions. It was distributed by email with a few copies hand-delivered for those without internet access. Thanks are due to Pam King and Rev Dove (and to those who contributed homilies and intercessions) for producing this sheet and to Pam for the delivery.

There was one funeral. There was one burial, and four burials of ashes. There were two weddings, one renewal of marriage vows, and one baptism.

There were no services in Thornton Church during 2022.

The Church Electoral Roll had twenty-six members including three non-residents.

Review of the year

The APCM to review 2021 was held on Wednesday 18 May 2022 in All Saints' Church. The Annual Report and the Financial Statements for 2021 were approved.

Margaret Morgan was re-elected Church Warden for a further year. The other officers and PCC members continued as before, with the addition of Mrs Marilyn Malarkey as a PCC member.

During 2022

- The Prayer Group (with six regular members) continued to meet on a fortnightly basis to support the work of the Benefice, Nash Church, individuals in difficult situations and various national and international events.
- The Nash Fellowship (with ten members) met nearly every two weeks and was led by Rev Dove and Margaret Hedges. Members appreciated the opportunity to meet and share, and to study a range of biblical and other themes. Thanks are due to Eileen Horton, Delia Higgs and Margaret Morgan for hosting the group.
- Sacred Space – a short time of meditation in the Church was led by John Hamilton with up to eight people attending.
- A soup lunch was held on Ash Wednesday following the communion service.
- Activities for young children were held on Good Friday and Christmas Eve. The children enjoyed various craft activities related to the relevant church festival.
- The Church participated in the Nash Fete, which returned in 2022, and the Annual Produce Show.
- The Church organized a harvest tea and auction of fresh produce on the afternoon of the Harvest Thanksgiving Service – the dried goods were donated to the Buckingham Food Bank.

- The Church continued to have responsibility for the bi-monthly Nash church/village magazine with Mrs Anna White as editor.
- The Church organized a collection for Christian Aid by delivering envelopes to all the houses in Nash with a small number of secure places for their return. This raised £262 (before Gift Aid).
- The Church organized a “spring” clean of the church and a churchyard clear-up in November in association with its patronal festival. The Gift Day held at this time raised £4,564.
- The Church again organized carol singing round the village in December and £348 was raised for Willen Hospice. The singers were thanked with refreshments afterwards.

The church building and churchyard

The review period saw a large amount of time and effort devoted to the repair of the church roofs, the consideration of the replacement of the two paths serving the Church and how to replace the current lighting and heating systems. In each case finding a suitable contractor who was both suitable and able to tender for the work has proved problematic.

Several slates had fallen or slipped on the north roof and to a lesser extent on the south roof. After lengthy searching both during and before the review period and involving discussions with seven different contractors, who often provided different and sometimes conflicting advice, a contractor was found, namely King Roofing of Buckingham, who was willing and able to carry out the necessary repair work. This involved the replacement of missing slates on both the north and south roofs, fixing those that had slipped, relaying the western side of the porch roof, replacing the soaker on the western end of the south roof, removing a bird’s nest (once empty) from the bell tower and reinforcing the existing bird protection in the bird tower. This was all completed by July 2022.

The church bell can now be rung after a lengthy period when this was not possible owing to a bird’s nest below it preventing movement of the bell.

The main path to the church is in a poor state of repair, exacerbated by the very dry summer in 2022. Discussion amongst the PCC over how to replace the existing two paths serving the church had been ongoing for some time. Agreement was reached during the review period on the type of path required and a contractor was found who was willing and able to carry out the work. As the churchyard is in a Conservation Area and the church is a grade II listed building planning permission for the work is required as well as a faculty from the Diocese. The proposal is for the side path from the Village Hall to be doubled in width to facilitate disabled access from the car park. Both paths will be paved in identical slabs. At the time of this review discussions are ongoing with the Diocese over their requirements and once these have been established a further planning application can be made (an earlier planning application to Buckinghamshire Council had been made but was withdrawn after it became clear that the Diocese would want some changes to the initial proposals).

The lighting in the church is provided by lights in the eaves, which means that replacing light bulbs when they fail is difficult and requires the installation of scaffolding. The lighting is a mixture of halogen floods and LEDs. Many of the halogen bulbs have failed with the result that the lighting is poor in parts of the Church. Consequently, the PCC wishes to remove the existing lighting and replace it with lights on the side beams which would allow access for bulb replacement by way of a ladder.

The PCC experienced the usual problems in finding a contractor to do the work, four electricians came to the Church to look at what was required but none were willing or able to do the work. The PCC then approached Church Lighting Systems, who came to the Church and provided a comprehensive estimate for the work. Church Lighting Systems have experience of this type of work in churches and have installed a new lighting system at St. James Church, New Bradwell. Members of the PCC inspected that work at St. James and were suitably impressed by what they saw. As a result, the PCC commissioned Church Lighting Systems to produce a detailed specification setting out what is proposed. This has now been sent to the Diocese for consideration and approval and the PCC is currently in discussion with the Diocese over this.

In addition, the infra-red heaters on the walls of the church need replacing. Unfortunately, the elements in many of the existing heaters have failed despite the fact the heaters are no more than about twelve years old. It is not possible to obtain replacement elements with the result that the PCC has decided to replace them with alternative heating arrangements. A video audit of the Church's energy use and requirements has recently been carried out by some of the members of the PCC with an energy consultant from the Diocese. The recommendation from the consultant was that the most appropriate form of heating for the Church would be to replace some of the existing infra-red heaters with under pew heaters on the basis that, while they can be moved, the pews are too heavy to move by accident; in any event if there is slack in the lead to the heater from the supplying socket this would allow for any slight accidental movement of a pew. Some of the existing infra-red heaters could be retained in the Chancel and by the entrance door to provide heat in areas that would not be serviced by under pew heaters; faulty elements in those heaters could be replaced by elements taken from those heaters which would be removed. If under pew heaters were not possible then replacement infra-red heaters would need to be considered. This has yet to be fully discussed among the PCC although initial discussion with the Diocese has commenced in order to ascertain their views.

The grass in the Churchyard continues to be cut by a member of the village, for which the PCC is grateful.

Finance

The Financial Statements and associated notes, which have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, are attached. They have been independently examined by Mr L York, ACIB, The £3,217 of income tax reclaimed from HMRC under gift aid and the gift aid small donations scheme – which amounts to over 13.5% of our income - has been added to the associated type of giving and not listed separately.

Following the death of the Blackthorn Chase Benefice Treasurer, fees have been paid direct to the respective PCCs. Part of these fees had to be paid to the Diocese by the end of January 2023. As the Nash accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, the fees from July onwards are included gross. The amount paid to the Diocese in January was £256.

In May 2021 Nash PCC asked members of the congregation to consider making monthly bank transfers rather than weekly collections by cash or cheque and this has benefitted the church by having a regular monthly income, supplemented by the generosity of those who continue to donate through the brown envelopes. This enabled the PCC to pay its parish share in full and, by committing to monthly payments to the Diocese, to get a 1% reduction. 2022 was the first full year of these extra regular monthly donations and so this heading was higher than in 2021.

Summary: The 2022 Financial Statements show a surplus as receipts, although £624 lower than in 2021, were £5,893 higher than payments; this good result arises from several factors:

- Collections and regular giving were up by just over £3,000.
- Fees were up by £919, as a result of two weddings, which reduces to £653 when the diocese payment is taken into account.
- There was a fete in 2022 which resulted in £1,575 of income.
- The dry summer meant reduced expenditure on grass cutting (and we were not charged for two cuts).
- Apart from the roof repair (£3,873), there were no other major items of expenditure on the fabric.

2022 was closer to a normal year than either 2020 or 2021, and so expenditure under some headings was closer to previous levels. The main expenditure issue, apart from the roof, was the increase in the cost of electricity to heat and light the church. Comments on the various headings are included in the detailed notes.

Parish Share 2023 and beyond

Nash's 2023 parish share is £8,866, an increase of £500 on the 2022 level. The Diocese has reviewed how it calculates its parish share allocations. The Diocese allocates share to Deaneries and leaves Deaneries to allocate to parishes. If the Diocese's formula had been applied to the Blackthorn Chase, the Benefice's parish share would have increased by nearly 50%. But the Chair of Deanery Synod regarded that as unrealistic and allocated a much smaller increase for 2023. The PCC needs to remember that the parish share allocated to the Blackthorn Chase Benefice represents only just over half of the incumbent's employment costs.

In 2022 the church again recorded a healthy surplus. These funds are likely to be needed in 2023 and subsequent years for expenditure on paths, lighting and heating.

Thank you

Particular thanks go to the Ministry Team for the Blackthorn Chase Benefice led by the Reverend Jacqueline Dove, ably assisted by Rev John King (and his wife Pam), Rev Rupert Bursell, John Hamilton LLM and the Rev Ron Bundock.

Nash Church would not function without the hard work of the people who give of their time to help the church to operate. We are a small parish and depend on the dedication and hard work of all who help to facilitate the work of the church. In particular thanks go to:

- To each and every member of the PCC for their valued contributions.
- Our Churchwarden.
- Our organists and volunteer choir members.
- The Treasurer.
- Our Fabric Officer.
- All who carry out the valuable work of cleaning the church;
- Members of the village who helped us clear-up the churchyard and clean the church, and who contributed so generously on Gift Day.
- For those who carry out all of the other work and assistance which is not specifically mentioned above.
- Michael Williams, for continuing to pay for the village website, on which the church (and other village organisations) have pages.

Nash PCC, December 2022