

# The Parish of Powick

## Annual Report for 2019

**Context Note** - clearly, as this report was being pulled together, the Parish of Powick, and the wide benefice, was impacted by the Powick/Teme floods in February 2020 and of course the Covid Pandemic. This report is written to reflect our activities in 2019. The impact of these events will be reflected in the 2020 annual report.

### A. Aims & Purposes

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with The Reverend Gary Crellin, the Vicar of the Parish of Powick, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the responsibility of fostering an appropriate relationship with our Church-aided schools in the parish – Powick and Callow End Church of England Primary Schools. The Parish of Powick, through the PCC, are responsible for the church buildings at Powick and Callow End and the churchyard at Powick.

### B. The Vicar's Annual report

This report covers my first full year in the benefice - January 2019 to December 2019. Each parish report reflects our collective ministry across all four churches, across the five communities that make up the benefice. With regards to my report, within the report, I reflect on the ministry across the whole benefice as well as pertinent issues for each parish as there are some differences. In so doing it hopefully illustrates the rich variety that exists across each parish, as well as opportunities for sustainability and corporateness as a group of churches moving forward. It was a year of adjustment for me, as I became more aware of God's call for me as your priest and Vicar in these different and varied communities, nestling in the Malvern and Worcester hinterlands. Throughout this report, I really want you to keep in mind the parable of the mustard seed as you read it. Could that help us with our future planning.

The six-yearly revision of the Electoral Roll saw considerable changes in those professing to be members of the church in Powick and Callow

End, with a significant reduction noted (see report from the Parish Electoral Officer later in this report). The changes to the roll required me to reduce the size of the PCC. Some good people stepped aside to allow the downsizing to happen. More may be required of the PCCs moving forward, so we need to pray for all those stepping up, or down, at the Annual Meetings for their stewardship and support for the churches locally. The roll is only one measure of activity within the church. As well as active worshippers, such rolls demonstrate commitment to the aims and objectives of the wider Church. That commitment is of course valued and welcomed, but I have to ask the unpalatable question as to why are our worshipping numbers falling? Where are the volunteers to permit activities to continue in our churches? Where are the Mustard seeds falling?

In the last year, we have implemented a new Website for both parishes ([www.oldhillsmalvern.co.uk](http://www.oldhillsmalvern.co.uk)), improved and widened our social media presence on Twitter, FaceBook and NextDoor. Magazines in both parishes continue to be important means of outreach. A weekly pew sheet, The Link, including the week's prescribed lectionary scripture is available to take sway, and latterly has been posted on the website.

I did instigate a Parishes' Review at Petertide for both parishes but to be honest this has been trumped by the Diocesan Open Conversations which were launched at the end of 2019. It seems little point to me to plan on our own: we need to see and assess, and crucially participate, in this wider review which will have far reaching consequences into 2020 and beyond. We are fragile (yes, it's taken me a while to get my favourite F word into this

report after preaching about it regularly in 2019). That said, some interesting conversations have been held with both PCCs on building use and our outreach into the communities we serve. For some people that attended the first tranche of Diocesan Open Conversations, they reported that they felt a real Saul/Paul moment. Mustard seeds, again.

More positively, we have had a good year for weddings (13 across the parishes) and our church-based funerals services have held their own against increasing competition from civil celebrants in the funeral market. We have supported many and varied families with our funeral ministry. We have lost, though, some good friends - both in death and moving away to live nearer to younger relatives or to seek a better environment within which to re-retire. We have had a good number of baptisms but no one coming forward for confirmation. Families are choosing to explore baptism via a private service which I know irritates some. It does allow me to explore baptism in different ways and although the church welcome is somewhat limited, I am confident that the parable of the mustard seed lives through these services.

Our service pattern largely has remained unaltered in twenty years and some of our service booklets are of that age too. I have unashamedly begun a process of refreshment for our liturgy and I am pleased that *Living Communion* and its seasonal derivatives have been, by and large, well received. I will persevere with *Forgiven Loved and Free*. I do find it surprising that despite offering large printed BCPs, people persist in squinting at the old BCP books. It's the same words I have provided: just larger print. The *Café Church* model feels so right to worship in that manner at St James'. We have had some interesting discussions there. Poverty in Malvern? How to land a (MAF) plane in the jungle to name but two. *Café Church* works and will continue. We have trialled some new technology and microphones in Powick and I am awaiting to spend a nice grant from the Friends and some substantial donations there to support its

introduction for a new Family Service which is in development.

We continued to remember and commemorate the Fallen at Remembrances Services in all four churches - and we will continue to do that. We do need to continue to make these services relevant to a generation that is both dying out and a generation who's only experience of war and brutality on TV screens. That means reaching out and engaging with the young and working age families as well as honouring and respecting the veterans.

This year saw an expansion in our capacity to reach out to children and families - not just within our three Church Schools and nursery provision, but in the streets and closes of our village communities. With Kay Shuard and Vicky Whitehouse licensed on September 2019, we do have the seeds for good and faithful outreach. That was such a good news story for the benefice and I thank God for their calling and developing ministry. Christmas 2019 was interesting - on the one hand, the communities went crazy for 120 knitted angels. We had some good service numbers and tried some new things - Carols at the Madresfield Club with the first village panto was supported by a brass band carol concert at Guarlford, and traditional Lessons and Carols and Christmas morning services, too in most churches. Something for everyone.

Our congregation is the greatest resource we have to support and further our mission. We are blessed in being the custodians of a church in each community (excepting Newland) and four churchyards. As well as being a testimony to Christian worship over the centuries, they can be our greatest burden. Heating, sound system and toilet issues have dogged me in this past year. Plans to reorder Powick are in development. I am very grateful for all the working being done there by a small, largely non-churchgoing but committed, group to describe the future of St Peter's and bid for the money needed so to deliver that vision. Its all hands on deck as that group develops its outline bid for Phase 1 funding. That funding

will be crucial to ascertain the future size, shape and community vision for our largest church in the benefice – and one that is nestling in a community with so much history and provenance.

We have had useful input into the churchyard at Powick from the Probation Service. I hope this relationship will develop over time, and with other churchyards across the benefice too. I am grateful that the building works at St James were carried out smoothly. With the cooperation of the Headteacher at Callow End School, worship continued in the village which was very important for me and the congregation so to happen. I want to give thanks for the benefactors that made the new floor and carpeting a reality for St James, the tenacity of the PCC to persevere with the Limecrete/concrete debate with the Diocese and the donation from a local family that allowed a new altar cushion and bench refurbishment to be undertaken in memorial to a local villager

As ever, I want to take this formal reporting opportunity to give my thanks to the wardens, vergers, sacristan, sidespersons, treasurer and PCC secretary that have tried to keep me on track this past year. There will be some notable changes at this APCCM so a more public tribute will be made at each meeting to those concerned. This year at Powick will see the last as warden for both Lyndall Brown and Lyn Snooks. Both are stepping down after many years of faithful and dutiful service. I thank them for their help and support in my developing ministry. Likewise, Philip Betts stood down earlier in the year but will present his final accounts as treasurer after many years. His wise counsel and financial acumen has left a good set of “books” for our “virtual” Treasurer, Jonathan Daly from Hanbury to take over. My thanks are also prayerfully extended to our Ministerial Colleagues (lay or ordained) who maintain our rota of worship, to all the many volunteers that clean, prepare refreshments, tidy up, open up, arrange flowers, ring the bells etc for all they do to make our Churches a faithful witness to an ever present but mysterious God in our midst.

Where are we going next year? God knows.....for sure.

Rev Gary Crellin 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### **C. Objectives and Activities**

The PCC is committed to enable as far as it can as many people as possible to engage with worship within our churches. The PCC maintains an overview of the worship provided across the parish. It is the hope and ambition that our services put worship of God at the centre and likewise enables each person to put faith into practice through the developed liturgy, preaching, ambience of the church setting and décor, music, and of course through prayer.

### **D. Church Attendance**

The weekly services averaged about 23 in each congregation but the special services attracted larger congregations. This is a drop from last year's reported average attendance of 28 and reflects small changes (through moving away, health and deaths) within the regular congregational strength at both churches. The PCC hopes that numbers will increase again, of course and progress of outreach to our communities continues, and we develop our longer term mission.

The church services are under represented by children and families and this will be an objective for the Vicar and PCC in the coming years. The licensing of two lay ministers and our outreach and schools' ministry is pivotal to make this happen.

### **Electoral Roll Report : As at the 31<sup>st</sup>**

December 2019 There were 72 people on the Electoral Roll, of whom 13 were non-resident in the parish of Powick. The Roll was issued afresh this year. A L Crellin (Electoral Roll Officer)

## E. Review of the Year

### i. The PCC

The PCC met five times during the year with an average of 90% attendance. The Parish Standing Committee has met eight times to attend to delegated actions originating from a PCC or to attend to key operational matters, such as the development of the Powick Heritage Project Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Application. Any delegated actions from the PCC are attended to and reported back.

The PCC is aware of its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC continues to use "Safeguarding Toolkit" provided by the Diocese as a way of self-assessment to seek to ensure it fulfils that duty. The parish utilises the Safeguarding Dashboard for its safeguarding practice and to help support administration (see separate report from our Benefice Parish Safeguarding Officer in the Annual Meeting).

The Parish has also resolved, with GMN parish, to seek a partnership in the delivery of safeguarding support and to co-join with Malvern Link with Cowleigh Parish for the provision of an effective and joint safeguarding support to both benefices. Additionally, Jo Attrill will assume the revised role of Parishes' Safeguarding Support Officer from the Annual meetings across the benefice. After many years of service, the PCCs and communities should give thanks for all the work that Kay Shuard has done to develop the "PSO" role as she hands the baton on.

### a. Fundraising

Our fund raising activities during the year raised much needed funds towards the upkeep of our churches across the parishes. See the annual accounts and treasurer report for the detail.

### b. Joint working

Services and fundraising opportunities are shared between both churches. Due to the

physical comfort, technology and layout of St James' Callow End, the Café Church and Messy Church/Lord's Alive Family service tends to be based at St James'. Group Services on fifth Sundays (aka Fourward in Faith) services have had variable attendance.

### c. Pattern of Worship

The Pattern of Worship has by and large remained the same in the past year - with services at Powick at 11am (and a fortnightly 8am BCP Communion) and Services at Callow End St James at 9.30. Services types vary from Morning non eucharistic worship to Holy Communion. Matins is on the decline. The *Living Communion*, introduced last autumn, is the staple offering for The Eucharist during Ordinary Times and it is supplemented by seasonal variations.

On the fifth Sunday, the Benefice comes together for Communion – rotating between the four Churches of the Benefice. A review of worship is somewhat overdue.

### d. Occasional Offices

Please see Statistics for Mission for information on our Baptisms, Funerals and Weddings and our overall missional position (see annex to this report which presents pertinent data rolling on since 2010). There is good potential to build upon the numbers of people we have helped in the coming years.

### e. Festivals, High Days, Holy Days

These were observed. In 2019, services were held in all four churches on Christmas Day, Easter Sunday and each church had some form of harvest and Remembrance Service. Each church offered up its own opportunity for prayers and devotions on Good Friday. The churches of the benefice are also sharing services: for example, due to the comfort, form, access to kitchen/toilets, technology etc, St James' tends to be the base for Café Church. Of particular note was the coming together of the benefice at St Peter's to give thanks for the ministry and mission of Open the Book across the three schools in the benefice.

## **f. Fabric of the Churches**

The PCC carried out repairs and maintenance to both Churches including Churchyard maintenance at Powick. A link with the County Probation Service is being explored after a successful pilot at the Newland Churchyard was received positively by the Wardens and Standing Committee at Powick.

Quinquennial inspections of Powick Church were brought forward, to support our plans for a Heritage Lottery Bid, in time. Of serious concern has been the failure of the WC and supporting trench arch drainage system at Powick. This has necessitated the toilet being taken out of action until the situation can be reviewed and options to fund and repair in a more appropriate manner can be detailed. The hire of mobile lavatories was sanctioned by the PCC and were booked for use at Christmas 2019.

A high level rope service and remedial works were undertaken in February 2019 on the tower of St Peter's by Heritage Stone Access Limited after reports of falling flashings were noted. A comprehensive report of findings is available for the PCC to reflect upon, and to incorporate such findings in the HLF proposal for the future repairs and reordering of the church.

Due to the generosity of a local benefactor, and good stewardship of parish resources, the new floor work at St James was started after some rather technical debate with the Diocese as regards the merits of Limecrete v concrete. The church is hoping to return in time for Christmas (note: the drying out took longer than expected so did not open until early 2020)

## **G. Charitable Giving**

The Parish does not have an overall tything principle. It prefers to host events that promote fellowship and Fundraising for good causes - such as St Barnabas, MAF, and Historic Churches. Through the Café Church

service, regular opportunities for additional giving have been put into place, with supplementary donations being made to Christians Against Poverty (Malvern Debt Centre) and MAF.

## **H. Our Deanery**

We have maintained our membership commitment to the Deanery Synod, Churches Together in Malvern and the Link Churches Group thereby linking our churches with the wider structures of the Church to engage in mutual matters of interest or concern, for example Buildings and Mission. In 2020, new Deanery Synod representatives will need to be elected for a new five year term under new terms of engagement.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

### **Unrestricted Funds**

Income on our unrestricted funds increased by £10053 before transfers compared with 2018, bouncing back from a reduction of £7330 in 2018 compared with 2017. Fees increased by £5193 more than doubling the sum received in 2018. Other significant increases were one-off gift aid (£1517) and open plate collections (£1159). Whilst these increases more than compensated for the reductions in 2017, fee income is very volatile and it is difficult to rely on fee income at this level for budgeting. There is also an underlying reduction in the numbers of gift aid regular givers through death and moving away from the area.

Despite reducing the payment of Parish Share to £27600, overall expenditure increased by £4270, partly due to ongoing new expenditure and partly through one off expenditure for the new display boards at St Peters. Nevertheless, there was an in-year surplus of £7013. After moving £4352 to the St Peters Designated Fund as a contribution towards the works urgently needed to replace the drainage from the toilet at St Peters, the PCC has retained reserves of £19623. £4623 of this is to meet a projected deficit in the 2020 budget.

The amount of unpaid Parish Share in 2019 is £17204 (2018 £12038). The aggregate amount unpaid for the period 2014 to 2019 is £47346. The PCC has only budgeted to spend £27600 on Parish Share in 2020. The amount requested is £45700.

## Restricted and Endowment Funds

These are funds which have been given for specific purposes and can only be used for those purposes e.g.: maintaining the churchyard, maintaining St James'. They enable us to meet a number of significant costs, particularly in relation to the maintenance of our buildings and the churchyard.

During the year the value of the restricted funds reduced by £14406 (2018 +£4331). This is mainly as a result of the repairs to the floor at St James' and the purchase of display boards at St Peter's.

The value of the investments in the Endowment Funds increased by £20440 (2018 -£2331).

The largest single item of expenditure during the year was the cost of the floor at St James' - £19348. Following re-tendering of the churchyard maintenance contract, the ongoing cost of churchyard maintenance at St Peters reduced to £4830 but it required a contribution of £586 from the General Fund to meet this cost. For legal reasons the Parish Council have discontinued their grant for churchyard maintenance, although they did give a grant of £1000 towards the cost of the display boards at St Peter's.

Overall, income increased from £62190 in 2018 to £79460 in 2019. Expenditure increased from £56203 in 2018 to £87394 in 2019.

## Reserves Policy

The PCC has reviewed its reserves policy and agreed to vary its existing reserves policy as set out below. The existing policy is to maintain a useable reserve on the General Fund of £15000 made up as follows:

£3500 as "working capital" to be able to make necessary payments each month in advance of income being received £7000 -2 months running costs in reserve  
£3000 - to meet the cost of replacing the printer when required  
£1500 - for repair or replacement of essential items of equipment

The PCC has agreed to keep Reserves at the end of 2019 at £19623 to assist with funding a deficit budget for 2019 with a target for reserves at 31.12.20 of £15000. Reserves at 31.12.18 were £17564.

## Legacies

A legacy of £1000 was received during the year. Following consultation with the executors this was used towards the cost of the display boards at St Peter's. The PCC's policy on legacies is that it welcomes gifts in wills and our policy is to use them to fund significant development projects in the Parish - buildings, equipment or staff.

As circumstances change over the years, it may not be possible to fulfil specific donor requests, so church members are encouraged to leave gifts in their wills for the general purposes of the Parish. The PCC will discuss with executors the most appropriate use of the gift in the light of current projects and the donor's known areas of interest in the church (e.g.: children and youth, music, buildings). Gifts of less than £250 may be used to assist with the cost of maintaining the churchyard at St Peter's.

## CHARITABLE GIVING

In 2019 the PCC made a grant of £150 to Callow End Village Hall from the Coffee Shop Fund. £2964 (2018 £843) was paid to charities as a result of collections for them in our churches. In addition, £394 (2018 £514) was raised for the Children's Society from collection boxes. £394 (2018 £1523) was raised in Christian Aid Week from collections in the Parish by Church Members. £351 was raised for Mission Aviation Fellowship and £491 for Mission Morogoro. The Coffee Shop donated £547 to Link Nurseries (part raised in 2018) and £427 to CAP Malvern.

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. All those who attend our services/ members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC met on 5 occasions during the year. During 2019, the following served as members of the PCC:

**Incumbent:** Revd. Gary Crellin (Chairman)

**Churchwardens:** Lyndall Brown (Vice-Chairman), Lyn Snook

Deanery Synod Representatives: Philip Betts (Treasurer), Paul Higgins

**Elected Members (including licensed ministers):** Sally Gurney, Sheila Lynes, Ken Harris, Meg Allsopp, Julia Davis, Ros Davies, Frances Betts, Jonathan Slade, Michael Briggs and Kay Shuard

## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

St. Peter's Church is situated off Upton Road Powick near Worcester. St James' Chapel of Ease is on Upton Road Callow End near Worcester. The Parish is part of the Diocese of Worcester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 31 The Greenway, Powick, Worcester WR2 4RZ. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2019) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. The PCC's bankers are Lloyds Bank Plc.

This annual report was approved by the PCC on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and signed on their behalf by Revd. Gary Crellin (PCC Chairman) on onward tabling at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners (Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting)

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The Reverend Gary Crellin  
Incumbent and PCC Chair