**HOLY TRINITY, COLEMANS HATCH**

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT for 2020-21**

​**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

​​PCC Members 2020-21

​​​Ex Officio

​​​Rev Julie Sear - Chairman​

​​Warden

​​​Mr. Paul Double

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​​Elected Members

​​​Mr. Donald Clarke  - Hon. Treasurer and Giving Officer

​​​Mrs. C J Payne - Hon. Secretary

​​​Mr. Keith Luckhoo - Synod Rep​

​​​Mr. Robin Meyer  - Synod Rep

Mr and Mrs John van Maurik

​​​Mrs. Angela Ogle – Choir Director and Deputy Warden

​​Lay Reader - Mrs Donna Dewar.

​​Side persons

​​​Caroline Daszewska

​​​Mike Jones​

​​​Liza Jones

​​​Keith Luckhoo

​​​Jane Luckhoo

​​​Frances Stuttaford

​​​Maggie Higton

​​​Roger Cowsill

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**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

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The Coronavirus pandemic was the dominant feature throughout the year in the life of the church as it was for the local community as a whole. Following the national lockdown in March 2020 the church was closed. The gradual easing of the lockdown in subsequent months enabled the establishment of private prayer and then a pattern of said matins at 11 am on Sundays followed by a short communion service on alternate weeks.

Lockdown rules were again tightened in the autumn but relaxed in the immediate Christmas period which enabled the holding of a said Christmas Day service.  A second national lockdown after Christmas again resulted in a period of private prayer with the resumption on 21st February of said matins with alternate communion service at 11am on Sundays

In the latter period there was a welcome addition of a solo professional singer at the matins service, a feature which will be continued in the months ahead.

Discussion about the life of the church and how the services and activities for which it is responsible might increase the engagement of the local communities which the church serves was curtailed by the pandemic as in-person meetings could not be held.  These will be resumed as lockdown restrictions allow.

The Mission Action Plan remained with the following three areas of church life as the vision statement.

**Vision Statement and commentary**

Recognising the importance of our role as the Parish Church. Holy Trinity seeks to be at the heart of the community by being a welcoming and inclusive presence through worship, teaching, care, service and social activities.

The three main areas were Worship, Trinity Hall and hospitality; Grounds and Churchyard extension.

The period covered by this report included periods of church closure private prayer and said matins with short communion service as noted above. The pattern of these services will be subject of review as the lockdown restrictions are eased

None of the usual activities (including the vintage fete and the pet service) took place.   Trinity Cafe was unable to operate after the first lockdown.  The developing relationship with Ashdown house school was halted by the onset of the pandemic and then by the news that the school was to close permanently.  At the time of writing it is unclear whether or not there will be a successor

These challenges were accompanied by achievements. The really notable work done by Rev Julie and husband Trevor to produce online services was greatly appreciated by many, including an international component, so that Holy Trinity can genuinely be said to be “sending its message abroad”.   A great deal of work was also performed by Rev Julie and the other volunteers in supporting the community, particularly vulnerable individuals and families. Maintaining contact with isolated people and all those genuinely in need of practical help, including provisions distributed from the local food banks, has been invaluable in this period.

Remedial work has been undertaken on the churchyard and rector’s field and on Trinity Hall itself. It will be very heartening to once again be able to enjoy the great benefits which they confer as the lockdown restrictions are eased in the months ahead.  The building work to remedy leaks in the church roof and the belltower was also completed in the period. All the scaffolding which was required for the work has now been removed, after we used the opportunity to have the east window cleaned.

The said matins and communion services have also been complemented over the last few months by the chiming of the church bells before the services. The congregation is greatly indebted to Ollie from Sharpthorne who has been honing his skills and giving much pleasure in the process.

A long vision report was drawn up by the Rector to aid as a discussion at our Church Away morning in September. This will be important for the whole church as we look to the future of our worshipping body and life in the community.

**Achievements and performance**

There are now 86 on the Church Electoral Roll, of whom 20% live in the parish of Holy Trinity and a further 20% live in the Joint Benefice. The remaining number live outside these boundaries.

About a third of church community is drawn from a catchment to the west and north of the joint benefice.   Music remains a strong link, evidenced (until March and the cessation of services) by the Choral Evensong choir, many travelling a distance for that service, special occasions and rehearsals. Holy Trinity’s morning attendance before the lockdown ranged from the low 20s to the high 30s with an average of 29.   It is a heartening feature that even with limited services and no singing congregations have been relatively healthy and on some Sundays the numbers have exceeded comparable pre-lockdown average figures.  Complacency must however be avoided and the resumption of in-person services in the months ahead will require sensitivity and understanding of any of those who may still feel unsure about mixing in public, alongside a proactive approach to re-engagement.

   The Service Booklets, initiated before the lockdown for those new to the services provide a ready guide to participation.

 **Health and Safety**

A safety rope was fitted on the tower stairway to provide a more secure passage for access and egress for the bell ringers and, for the last few months, Ollie from Sharpethorne.   Although less of an issue during the last year, the need to take account of the presence of small children in church when assessing health and safety issues has been recognised and needs to be reviewed before the church returns to normal use.

**Benefit to the community**

The church sees as one of its main responsibilities outreach into the community, not onlythe parish it serves but the surrounding area. It does this by hosting such events as the Vintage Fete and the flower show and making the church hall available for local activities, including wood turners and Morris dancers. The Trinity Café, held fortnightly in the hall, provides an opportunity for local families to socialise and from the donations it receives provides support to local charities.

**Safeguarding** is a standing item on the PCC agenda in recognition of the importance of this subject.  Safeguarding policies are on display in the entrance to the Church.

   The **Church grounds** are extensive and include the original graveyard, a large site for graveyard extension a tennis lawn and car parks. As noted above, remedial work has been carried out during the lockdown and as restrictions are eased the plans for Trinity Hall and the churchyard  can again re-established.

**Helpers and Volunteers** will again be needed as church life returns to normality, including for the meet and greet roles and for serving refreshments after the service.

**Reserves and Expenditure Policy**

 It is the PCC’s intention to maintain sufficient reserves to ensure the long-term survival of the church, bearing in mind the ageing congregation and the difficulty of generating sufficient revenue to meet the running costs and Parish Share, together with the ongoing effects on revenue of

church closures due to the pandemic. The effects of lockdown in 20/21 have inevitably involved an extra drain on reserves. Nevertheless, having paid the Parish Share in full, the PCC felt they should assist the diocese in meeting its own shortfall and have paid an additional sum in the new year. This can only add to the likely continuing shortfall in revenue, which, combined with necessary expenditure on improvements to safety and access means that a cautious approach to future reserves management is fully justified.

**Quinquennial**

   Implementation of the five-yearly report on the state of the Church fabric – the quinquennial review – is being implemented incrementally. Matters arising will be considered by the PCC on a continuing basis to ensure full implementation of those requiring attention.

 March 2021