

Appendix to the Report of the Parochial Church Council of St Chad's Church, Ladybarn, year ending 31 December 2013

Baptism Team

We have celebrated seven baptisms in the last year, ages ranging from 4 months to 15 years. We continue to give each child a baptism card and candle. We also send each child a birthday card until they reach the age of four. We sent 20 cards this year.

Book Group

We meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 8 pm in the church hall. We have about twelve fairly regular members, who meet each month to discuss our monthly book. The books we read cover a wide range of styles and subjects, from a classic to top of the best sellers list.

Our aim is provide a friendly atmosphere where everyone is able to express their views on our monthly book. Our discussions are always lively and interesting with many different opinions of the same book expressed. Everyone is welcome; if you like reading you will enjoy our book club.

The Children's Society

We currently have sixteen box holders here at St Chad's. This year we have sent £131.11 collected from the boxes.

£210.00 was sent in December, the proceeds from our community carol singing, collection at the carol service and the Christmas card board.

Children's Society boxes are available from Jenny Black.

Choir

The choir continues at a strength of 4 and I thank them all for their continued commitment. Apart from Christmas we have not attempted any special music in the past year, but the possibilities of resuming this will be explored soon. The Christmas Carol Service saw an 'extended' choir of 12, and although a reduction on last year's choir, nevertheless good musical results were achieved. The service was recorded and CDs for sale were made, the proceeds going towards the organ restoration fund. Thanks to Harry Evans, Muriel Hargreaves and Peter Matthews for the work they did on this. This CD should be in the collection of anybody who appreciates good music.

Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week is said to be "The biggest single act of Christian witness in Britain, and possibly in Europe" raising about £12 million each year. The very fluid population in our area makes house-to-house collecting a challenge but a band of faithful collectors

still manages to contact most houses in the more settled southern part of the parish. We help with the street collections in Fallowfield and Withington on the Saturday of Christian Aid Week and the possibility of doing something similar around the Mauldeth Road shops is being considered. Better weather meant that the sponsored walk/jog/run was held as planned and a Strawberry Tea in support of Christian Aid also brought together members from other churches in the area.

Commemoration of World War 1

2014 is the 100th anniversary of the First World War and we have been considering how to commemorate the event around the War Memorial Chapel in the church. The memorial was cleaned and repaired a couple of years ago, and as the best way of meaning the words- `We Will Remember Them` -we have been collecting material for a book on those listed on the memorial, giving family details as well as military history. There are 102 names on the memorial and we have traced information for most of them, but there are a few who require further work.

We had hoped to launch the book with a small exhibition in the church with photographs, medals and mementos of the men on the memorial, but as we were only able to trace a few families still living in the area, we decided to widen the scope of the exhibition and ask for family souvenirs for the current congregation. We have had a number of interesting offers, and have taken professional advice over the organisation of the exhibition.

Applications have been submitted for grants towards the cost of the book and the fittings for the exhibition. We have been working with the Withington Civic Society who are planning to commemorate the anniversary with their own event, but who are anxious to help with advertising and promotion of other local groups. We are also in contact with Daisy Horsly, Education Officer for English Heritage, who is organising Primary School education over the war, to see if we can be involved in school visits to the church.

Friday Group

The Friday group meets on Fridays from around 9.30am until around 12.30pm. We are a group of up to 12 people – new members always welcome – who take responsibility, amongst other tasks for floral decoration, church cleaning, repair and maintenance of the Church and Hall, and care of the gardens around the Church. The group is self-financing for bills of up to £50, using monies from the tea and coffee donations.

Over the last year the Church has looked good florally, been kept clean and tidy, the gardens have been maintained and thousands of leaves recycled.

- Key achievements include
- anti-slip paint applied to relevant outside steps
- artificial grass to the west lawn (grant supported)
- kitchen door handle replaced (push and pull only now)

- decoration of Hall in preparation for festivals
- additional signage as necessary
- health and safety checks on (now replaced) old furniture
- removal of reachable efflorescence
- grass on paths salted
- relay brickwork and refix handrail at front entrance to Hall
- repair of light fittings and replacement of bulbs
- many other day-to-day maintenance tasks

Aims for 2014 include

- new draught excluders and adjusted return spring on south door
- white edging to steps in Church
- professional removal of plane tree at east gate, replanting of an area as decided and fence damage addressed
- continue to collaborate with Health and Safety Subcommittee and other relevant groups
- overarching role to continue to maintain the Church, the Hall and surrounding areas to a high standard.

Anyone who feels they can help with these tasks please come along on Friday mornings – there are refreshments from 11.30am!

Green Group

Over the past 12 months the Green Group have met 5 times for formal meetings, whilst continuing to gather most Wednesday afternoons to manage the Community Wildlife Garden.

The group have also hosted two afternoon tea events, together with tours of the garden (the first as a follow up to a slide show and talk given at St Nicholas Church to their Women's Guild, the other which took the form of a Honey Tea and which was a celebration of our status as a Jubilee Bee World, beginning with a short, thoughtful service of thanksgiving in the Garden). We have also registered with an organisation called River of Flowers, which promotes and supports the replanting of wild flowers throughout the UK.

A talk by a project officer from Red Rose Forest was organised during October, with around 22 people attending and the group have opened and supervised the garden during Burnage and Levenshulme Open Gardens Day (around 100 visitors) and the National Heritage Weekend (around 45 visitors). All events were felt to be very successful. A future event during February 2014 will be a visit to a Recycling Plant in Wythenshawe, which will be open to anyone who wishes to attend.

The Woodland Trust have donated 90 hedgerow and coppice saplings for the Garden which will be used to increase the diversity of the hedge which separates it from the Rectory Garden. An event to plant these saplings during spring is being planned.

During the latter part of 2013 the Green Group, in conjunction with the Friday Group, sourced and purchased a large quantity of red poppy seeds and these will be sowed around both the Community Garden and the Church Grounds, in the hope that we will have a strong show of red poppies around the time of the commemoration of the start of World War 1. Small packets of these seeds were given to everyone who attended our Remembrance Day service, so that everyone can try to grow some red poppies this year.

The Group have been asked to consider giving a slide show and talk to the Oasis Group at Holy Trinity, Platt Lane, at some point later in the year.

We continue to be self-funding, both in respect of events and in the upkeep of the garden. We are currently awaiting a decision on a grant application from the We Love Manchester fund for the purchase of permanent notices for the various areas in the Community Garden and A Boards for publicising when the garden is open, together with printing costs for leaflets and notices.

Hall Letting Committee

Report to the PCC, 4 February 2014

1. **Current and prospective lettings** are healthy. In addition to regular use by After-school Club and Weight Watchers there is significant and growing interest in using the Hall for community meetings, birthday parties and the like, resulting in actual bookings. Feedback from casual users is good.
2. **Booking procedures** There is a calendar and an online booking form on the church website. The PCC has agreed that the online calendar is definitive; the print-out on the Hall notice board is for information only. It needs to be more widely understood by the congregation that a booked activity in the Hall should not normally be interrupted.
3. **Review of Charges** The subcommittee recommends that current charges for casual lettings – £20 for the first hour and £10 for succeeding hours – remain unaltered for a further year and that the sub-committee continue to have discretion to vary these in individual cases. The rental charge for the After-school Club is due for re-negotiation in May 2014; the subcommittee recommends that the (new) PCC consider a figure around which negotiations might revolve.
4. **Cleaning** A local cleaning contractor has informally offered to do one hour of cleaning each Monday morning plus an extra hour every four weeks for £10 an hour. The sub-committee recommends that this be followed up.
5. **Birthday party policy** The sub-committee has declined bookings for birthday parties where a bouncy castle was one of the activities.
6. **Use of church for secular purposes** Some enquiries about hiring the Hall have had to be declined because either the Hall was in use or was too small for the activity. The sub-committee requests that it be given discretion to offer the church for occasional and carefully vetted lettings. Other churches doing this appear to charge up to 50% more for the church compared with their hall.
7. **Warning/Advice notices** (mostly about furniture stacking and such like) will be drafted

Health and Safety Committee

See separate report

Ladies Group

The group continues to maintain a loyal membership of 43 ladies. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month after the 7.30pm service.

In September at our buffet supper we collect £3 membership and then £1 subscriptions at other meetings.

The speakers in the past year have included *Finding Mother – About Adoption*, *Rubbish, Waste and Recycling*. We also enjoyed meals out, theatre visits, fashion

shows and Christmas celebrations. Forthcoming dates include

- April: Walking with a Purpose
- June: Fashion show
- July: Visit to the "Chocolate House"

We encourage everyone to come and join us.

The ladies support all church activities, making regular contributions to Church funds and the Wood Street Mission.

Needlecraft Group

The Needlecraft Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month. We have fourteen members including one who embroiders at home.

- This year some members have continued making kneelers whilst the majority are working on a tapestry for the baptistry. This first one is now nearly finished.
- In 2014 we plan to complete a second tapestry and work on special kneelers commemorating the First World War.
- The group is completely self-financing relying on subs at meetings and occasional fund- raising events and the generosity of members in purchasing kneelers.
- We are also willing to complete kneelers for anyone who wishes to commemorate a special event or to dedicate one in memory of a loved one.
- Our meetings are chatty and friendly and would welcome anyone willing to join.

Organ Restoration Group

The restoration of our grade 2* 'listed' Harrison & Harrison organ has been costed at £125,000 assuming a start-on-site in 2015. However, before work can commence we need to get most of this covered in grant-aid promises from various sources.

In late 2012 we applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a grant of £100,000, the maximum possible under their 'Our Heritage' scheme. In May 2013 we were turned down for this partly because we could not show how we were going to raise the remaining costs. We were however, encouraged to apply again when this could be more clearly demonstrated, an encouragement repeated at a recent meeting with HLF.

In the past few months we have made grant applications to 6 bodies. Decisions from these bodies are expected between April and July. Our aim is to secure as many promises as possible from non-HLF sources so that the amount requested from HLF can be reduced increasing our chances of success. However, success with the other bodies is uncertain and even those that decide to help us may offer us less than the amounts requested. So we continue to apply to any further sources that seem promising.

An initial, informal, response from one body has indicated a willingness to grant-aid us, but will not promise anything formally until we have secured an initial 30% from other sources. The Organ Group is working to overcome this hurdle.

An application for a Faculty for the restoration work was submitted in December. Work should start soon on creating a safer access to the organ bench through the rear choir stalls following the grant of the Faculty for this work.

Material on the church website outlines the restoration scheme together with some easy-to-understand 'Questions & Answers'. The website and the church magazine will be updated as the scheme progresses. Please feel free to talk to any member of the Organ Group if you have any queries.

In the meantime, we hope that the organ will continue to remain playable, although the problems identified in our expert's report remain and it continues to deteriorate gradually. Restoration of our magnificent organ, a great asset to this church, should be regarded as a positive affirmation of our belief in the future of St Chad's as a place of worship.

Traidcraft

St Chad's continues to have a key role in Traidcraft in this locality. As well as our own Sunday morning stall, we supply Traidcraft goods on a regular basis to Holy Innocents and St Agnes and occasionally to other churches. Cards and gifts ordered by church members from the Christmas catalogue spread the word about fairly traded goods to friends and relatives. In March a Taize-style evening service with appropriate readings, prayers and meditations marked Fair Trade Fortnight in which we were joined by visitors from several local churches. In the near future we plan to include in our church website a facility for on-line ordering from the Traidcraft catalogue specifically geared to what sells at St Chad's.