

Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2010 – 2011

St Peter & St Paul Church, Seal

**Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council**

for the year ended 31 December 2010

Incumbent:

The Rev'd Anne Le Bas
The Vicarage
Church Road
Seal

Bank:

Lloyds TSB
83 High Street
Sevenoaks

Independent Examiner:

Anthony Llewellyn FCA
Langdale House, Oak Lane
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 1UF

BACKGROUND

At Seal Parish Church, with God's help, we seek:

- To enable a wide range of people to engage in worship that is varied, joyful, brings all life to God and permeates all life;
- To be open and welcoming, making it possible for people to join us at any time;
- To show that Christ makes a difference, by caring for ourselves and each other within and outside our Church.

CHURCH STATUS

The PCC of Seal Church is a charity that is authorised by Act of Parliament and is excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC MEMBERSHIP

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

EX OFFICIO

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Chair: | The Revd Anne Le Bas | Priest in Charge |
| Churchwardens: | Matthew Bell Ian Gough | |
| Reader: | Kevin Bright | |

ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE PCC

Until 2011

Malcolm Fox
Maggie Fox
Hilary Coffey
Christine Wightman

Until 2012

Victoria Wyatt
Chris Rampton
Sally Thompson
Trevor Watson

Until 2013

Mike Harvey
Sophia Michael
Marshall Kent
Jenny Elliott

MEMBERS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD

Georgina Taylor
Matthew Bell
Jill Myers

TREASURER

Mr Mike Harvey

SECRETARY (non-voting)

Mrs Jennifer Kent

CO-OPTED

Nicky Harvey

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE'S REPORT

Still Growing

2010-11 has been another year of growth at Seal, with new members of the congregation arriving (and staying) on a regular basis. There are 3 adults definitely preparing for confirmation this year, and possibly several more. All have started coming to church within the last year. They have come for all sorts of reasons, but they have stayed because they have found a warm welcome, and a place where they feel they can explore Christian faith for themselves. I attempted to begin an Enquirer's group earlier in the year, partly because it seems to me that it would be good if those who are exploring faith could encourage one another in this. I didn't get any take-up for this, however, so I am thinking again about ways in which we might draw people together into small groups to strengthen their faith. Previous experience has shown me the importance of people forging links with others on a deeper level than the simply social; discussing faith together helps to bring our faith alive. I do not have time to run a lot of groups myself, but I would be more than happy to resource groups run by others. One such group has begun this year, organised by Tanya Wright and Jennifer Kent, but there is plenty of room for others!

Opening doors

There were 16 baptisms and 7 weddings last year, and I seem to be facing a mini-boom in baptisms this spring, with 10 booked between March and June at the moment. Quite a few of those who marry here do so under the new "qualifying connection" rules, which gives them the right to marry in a church where they have a link rather than their own parish church. Requests for these "occasional offices" reflect the increasingly fruitful connections being built by the church in the local community, through the school, the Know Your Neighbours group, and other more ad hoc links, like the impromptu refreshments we offered to sledgers during December's snow! My experience is that there is a growing tendency for wedding and baptism contacts to stay in touch and get involved, especially through things like Messy Church.

Sad Farewells

We have lost quite a few of our "saints" over the last year. Stella Hale, Edna and Edgar Stent, Doris Burton, Pat Walkling, Mary Evans and Olive Smyth have all died. Each one contributed greatly to our church life, over very many years in some cases. We entrust each one to God with sadness, but also with profound thanksgiving.

Worship

Attendance at our main Sunday services has grown slightly over the year, and there is a healthy mix of ages. Evening services have declined somewhat, (as has Matins at 11.15 on the third Sunday of the month). The pattern of music at Evening services has fluctuated. We have tried to maintain two Evensong services with an organist, and one with recorded music; the Breathing Space Holy Communion service always uses recorded music of a meditative nature, and has no hymns. Over the last couple of months we have tried to hold a full choral Evensong on one Sunday per month, which the choir, and the congregation who come, enjoy. Although numbers are small in the evening and at Matins, as they are for the Wednesday 11 am Holy Communion service, they are still very much worth holding for the benefit of those who come (and who may not be able to come at other times). These smaller congregations often form quite intimate communities, and I intend to try to keep them going for as long as people want them. However it is important firstly that they do not take up a disproportionate amount of preparation time, and secondly that people are coming because they value them and not out of a sense of duty to others. If these smaller services do dwindle to a point where they are no longer justifiable, that is not a cause for gloom; where one thing dies it leaves space for something new to grow.

Ministry

Along with the existing and very valuable service of our two Readers, Rosemary Clary and Kevin Bright, our church life has been enriched this year by the arrival of Stephen Snelling, ordained as a self-supporting Deacon (and to be ordained as Priest in June), and Nicky Harvey who was licensed in Rochester Cathedral as a Pastoral Assistant last autumn. Nicky is, of course, very well known already here. Stephen and his wife Deborah have been getting to know the church over the last six months, and Stephen has gradually been getting more involved in the various tasks of ministry. I value the gifts he brings and having another ordained colleague to bounce ideas off. As well as Stephen and I meeting on a weekly basis, the whole "ministry team" meets together every month, and this has been a great assistance in sharing the load of ministry and widening our scope to develop the parish. I enjoy having this larger group which provides both support and challenge.

PCC

The PCC has met six times during the year, and has discussed a wide range of subjects. We have, inevitably, spent a lot of time talking about finance and the various issues to do with fabric and maintenance. Other subjects have included children's work, special events and services, and opportunities to work within the community, and some of the current issues facing the wider Anglican Communion.

Children's and Youth Work

This continues to develop. Nicky Harvey has been an important part of these developments, running a Sunday group for our older children twice a month and helping with occasional youth gatherings at the vicarage which I

lead. Our young people had another successful “sleep” over last summer , i.e. there was lots of fun, if not lots of sleep.

Numbers of younger children in church fluctuate from Sunday to Sunday and we have found it hard to plan Sunday School sessions for them. However, there is now a box of ready prepared material kept in church, and a rota of helpers who can pick this up either to work with children in the hall, or in church if there is a need.

Messy Church has attracted good numbers of families over the year, and been well worth the considerable effort put into it. Many thanks to the team of people who help out.

We have taken Seal Tiddlers under our wing during the last year or so as a church sponsored group, partly so that they can come under our church insurance. We CRB check their leaders, and you will find their report later in this document.

Linda Montgomery, who teaches at Seal School as well as attending the church, has taken over the role of Parish Children’s representative and is the designated point of contact in the event of any concerns about our work with children and vulnerable adults. Sally Bright is our disclosure officer, organising CRB checks on those who need them. All our children’s workers are CRB checked. They also fill in disclosure forms, after which references are taken up by me. I am very grateful to Linda and Sally for their help in these important matters.

Seal School

Our links with the school continue to develop. The foundation governors (appointed by the Diocese or the PCC), Lise Michaelides, Nicky Harvey, Barbara Martin and myself, meet three times a year, and help to monitor and develop collective worship, spirituality and RE in the school. A recent interim inspection by the Diocese was very encouraging in its affirmation of the way in which the church links were enriching the life of the school. I lead collective worship once a fortnight, as well as helping with collective worship planning, RE planning and resourcing which often involves taking part in lessons, staff training, and pastoral work, as well as duties linked to my role as vice-chair of governors.

Church Fabric

A detailed report of work undertaken on the church building can be found below, but I wanted to recognise the considerable work of our church wardens, Ian Gough and Matt Bell, along with our Treasurer Mike Harvey, in coordinating and managing the various work which has taken place this year, and the planning for the major work due to take place in the autumn to repair the beetle damage in the roof timbers. There will be a considerable amount of scaffolding in the church during this work, and an inevitable amount of disruption for six to eight weeks in October in December, but we will be able to hold services around the works. We are seeking grants to help pay for this work, which will cost about £35,000, but will also be looking to raise funds from the congregation and community.

Looking forward...

There is clearly much to celebrate in our church life. We are blessed with many willing people who take their part in the life of the church. There are, as ever, far more opportunities than time to meet them, and this means that those who take on responsibilities within the congregation are vital to our future. It is not only the recognised “jobs” which matter, but the day to day ways in which we care for each other and encourage and welcome newcomers and visitors. I am enormously grateful for all who take part in the life of the church and its work in the community. They are too many to mention by name, but everyone is valuable.

It is evident that one of the major challenges we face in the future, however, is that of money. The mainstay of our income is, and should be, the planned giving of the congregation, and while our congregation has increased, planned giving has not kept pace. We are currently organising a stewardship campaign to highlight this need, and part of this will be an afternoon away at Weald Church on May 7th to look at what we, as a church, feel should be our priorities. What do we value about the things we do, and what is it that those in our community value. If we can identify this, it will help us to focus our fundraising (and our efforts) in the right direction. Anyone who would like to come on this afternoon will be welcome, whether or not they are on the PCC. In the current financial crisis everyone is aware of rising costs and the impacts of cuts in services and jobs and we are not alone in feeling the pinch, but it seems to me that the key to addressing this problem lies not in our bank balances but in our spiritual lives, our sense that our faith matters to us, that the church matters to us, and the ministry the church has in the local community matters to us.

That is why we cannot address the problem simply by looking at the numbers on the accounts, but at ourselves and our own understanding of our discipleship and our connection to God and to each other in the body of Christ. If that is strong, and we have realised that what we do and the way we do it counts, the money will follow.

Anne Le Bas

DEANERY SYNOD

The Deanery Synod has met three times this year. There has not been much urgent business for the Synod over the last year, but we had an interesting presentation from Mary Boyle, the head teacher of the new Knole Academy, encouraging us to support the school in our prayers and in the interest we take in it.

The new Deanery Synod which will be elected this year will, however, have some important discussions about the ordination of women as bishops and about the Anglican Covenant, which will have a real impact on the shape of the church in the years to come.

Anne Le Bas

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

There are 148 people on the Electoral Roll 76 of whom live outside the parish. Seven people were taken off the roll through death, and four were added to it.

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT FOR YEAR TO APRIL 2011

Four tasks have been completed and four are on-going.

Completed

- i) Two areas of plaster one in the porch, and the other in the nave have been repaired.
- ii) Guttering to the south west corner of the south roof has been added.
- iii) A memorial bench was provided in the churchyard. This was requested and funded by relatives of a deceased parishioner.
- iv) A fractured downpipe at east end of the organ loft was replaced, and adjacent guttering increased in size in accordance with DAC guidelines.
- v) Lychgate retiled.

Ongoing

- i) The beetle infestation work is progressing after a slow start, all tenders have been received, PCC will decide on 10 March 2011 which one to accept and once funding has been secured it is intended the work will commence at the end of September 2011, and take approx. six weeks.
- ii) Benefaction boards. Work is ready to proceed once funding is in place.
- iii) Stained glass windows. Work is ready to proceed once funding is in place.
- iv) Phone mast, nothing further to report.

General

- i) The area of wooden flooring in the south west corner of the bell chamber in the tower has been covered with plywood, and the ladder has been replaced.
- ii) The roofs were visually inspected at the beginning of winter, the gullies appear clear and tiles in place. The turret and tower roofs are sound with minimum amounts of bird droppings, all gutters were running free.
- iii) The Diocese is undertaking the registration of land under the land registration act 2002. This work is on-going.
- iv) There were three working parties, one to place protective boards over the benefaction boards, one to remove rubbish from the bell chamber, and the other for a general clear up of the grounds. Regular visual checks of the grounds and building are carried out.
- v) The lightning conductor is due for test in 2013.

SEAL TIDDLERS

Seal Tiddlers continues to meet on Thursday mornings (from 9.30-11.30am) during school term times in the Church Hall. The group was led by Lizzie Hill until early 2011, and provides a range of activities, including games and craft activities, for children aged 0 -4 years together with their carers (mums, dads, childminders, grandparents etc.) The group has attracted an average attendance of about 12 children with their carers, and continued during the snowy weather in December when those living close by attended.

Lizzie Hill moved on early in 2011 and has handed the running of the group over to a team comprising Kelly Bridle, Helen Davies and Suzy King who have been assisting Lizzie during 2010.

Helen Davies

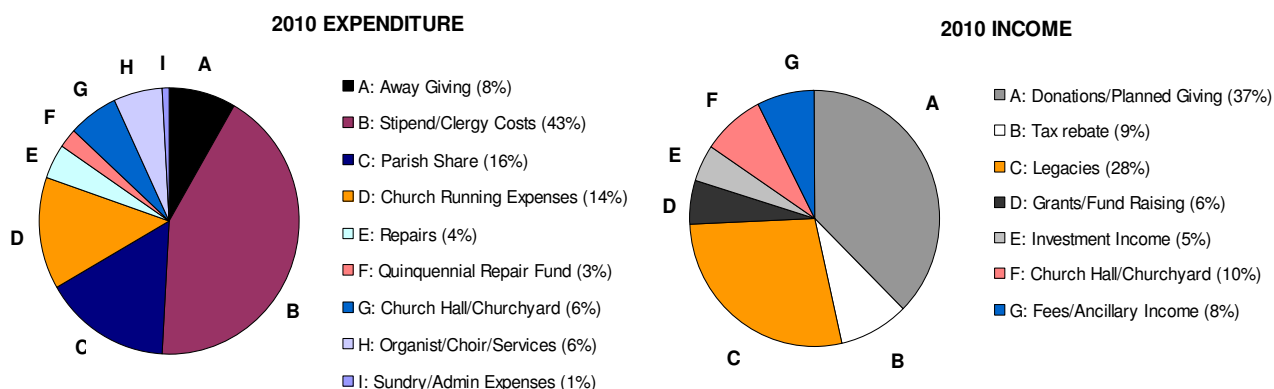
APCM REPORT FOR 2010/11: FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE PCC (TREASURER'S REPORT)

The Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2010 are provided separately. These have been examined and approved by the Independent Examiner, Anthony Llewellyn, and a copy of his Report is also attached thereto together with a statement of the Church's accounting and reserves policy and then various graphs summarising the numbers.

2010 was certainly a year of 'ups and downs' for Seal Church! At the beginning of the year a loss of £1,000 was predicted. However, total income was in fact **£2,325 below** budget whilst expenses were **£2,913 above** budget, resulting in an effective net loss of **£6,241**. In the event, the situation was rescued by a number of legacies totalling just over £26,000, resulting in an overall profit of **£19,772**, although we cannot escape the inevitable conclusion that the underlying position was much worse than expected. Planned giving and tax recovery were again more than £6,000 below budget and less than in 2009, which was partly offset by higher collections, sundry income, fund raising and investment income from the legacy monies. Most of the additional expenses incurred related to running costs (heating, lighting etc) exacerbated by paying a substantial oil invoice in December rather than January for tactical reasons.

In addition, we decided to transfer £5,000 to the Church Repair Fund reserve towards the major repair works we intend to undertake in 2011. The remaining net profit of £14,772 will be transferred to general reserves, which have been consistently run down over the past few years.

For a snapshot breakdown of both income and expenditure in 2011, please see the pie charts below.



Capital expenditure was incurred on various works – including repairing the organ loft guttering, repairing the lych-gate roof, investigatory work and professional fees relating to the beetle infestation and improvements to the floor and outside area of the Church Hall – totalling just over **£9,365**. These costs were partly offset by the very generous donation of the proceeds of sale of Margaret Mountfield's pictures by her husband, Peter, which totalled **£2,871** (plus gift aid) and a VAT rebate of **£1,620** – with the remainder met from Repair Fund reserves. Overall during 2010, total assets held (cash and invested funds) increased by just under £20,000 from last year and currently stand at a little over **£100,000**. It is well worth remembering, however, that over three-quarters of this money is invested to generate additional income for the Church (estimated at **£5,000** in 2011), without which we would be in greater trouble in the future on a year to year basis.

The **Friends of Seal Church** account is specifically reserved for major items of repair and maintenance rather than general expenses. During 2010, receipts from standing orders, tax rebates on gift aid and other donations totalled £1,738. In view of the legacies received by the Church, no grants were made in 2010 and the balance of funds at the year end amounted to £3,977.

Awaiting us this year are major repair works to the roof structure due to the beetle infestation (circa £35,000), repairs to the stained glass windows (£16,550) and the restoration and relocation of the benefaction boards in the tower (£2,680). We have applied for a grant from the Cory Ibstock Environmental Trust for just under £15,000 (their top limit) to do the stained glass and benefaction boards and have now heard that this has been successful. Otherwise, we will shortly commence applying for grant funding for the beetle works to go ahead in the second half of 2011.

For 2011, Ministry and Parish Share costs will inevitably be a little higher and we are budgeting for a modest (5-6%) increase in income from existing and new members of the congregation (including some new gift aid commitments) over last year, but we are still predicting a loss of **£5,500** in terms of underlying income and

expenditure (i.e. excluding legacies). We also remain heavily reliant on the income generated from the Church Hall letting to the West Kent Health Needs Education Service.

It is perhaps difficult for people to be concerned about Church finances when we received such a large amount in legacies in 2010. However, I cannot stress enough the need to increase our income significantly in the near future in order to cover what is a fundamental gap between income and expenditure. Over the previous seven years we have accumulated losses of over £12,000, so it is self-evident that the legacies won't actually last very long unless we increase our income. As a result we will be having a Stewardship Campaign again this year and I would ask you all to respond as best you can according to your means and, of course, your conscience. In particular, I would ask that newer members of the congregation, who perhaps have not yet joined our planned giving scheme, consider doing so and gift aiding their donations if they are taxpayers.

As always please remember that, aside from the tax rebate on Gift Aided donations and VAT for certain capital works, Seal Church receives no financial support whatsoever from the Government so that we have to pay for all annual costs and capital expenditure out of our own resources.