



Annual Reports

for 2018 APCM

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Ashford Town Parish - Team Rectors Report

As you will see by reading through the following reports - there is a lot that goes on in our parish. I am sure that many of us will know about some of what happens in our local areas but few of us will know the scale of work that the wider parish is engaged with.

Many of our reports thank individuals - I wholeheartedly endorse this. you are a small (getting larger!) army of people who give of your time to ensure that we can do all that we do - organizers, cleaners, youth workers, bell ringers, flower arrangers, cafe workers, welcomers, local wardens and leadership teams to mention but a few. I would like to take time to thank our Churchwardens, Jerry and Phil, who have done a tremendous amount of work and who have been an invaluable support, our staff team of Team Vicars and Curates who, as you know do so much more than take services, our lay team - especially Nathan and Phil and our faithful group of retired clergy who are invaluable in the life of the parish and increasingly the Deanery.

I am always uplifted by working together as a parish especially in our worship life. I am grateful to the church families of Great Chart and Ashford who hosted our parish celebration services of Pentecost and Advent. I was so very struck by Bishop Trevor's message at Advent - a challenge to us all- **Be the Christ you want to see in the world** - I think that this is something we can all stand behind; all strive to put into being regardless of the tradition of our church family. The important thing is that we are Christ like in what we do - be that prayer, disciple making, setting people free or whatever else we see as Christ's mission.

I thought that our day led by the Living Well was a good first step for some communities in acknowledging pain but also of the importance of being able to move forward, to be that Christ we want to see in the world, in our parish, in our community. I was very focused on Mary during our Easter reading - her veil of tears blinded her from seeing what Christ was doing in her presence. He called out to her because she, as we all do, has a role to play in furthering God's kingdom in her community.

Finally, some pointers to what this year may bring:

Our partnership with CAP goes from strength to strength, live in our parish are being transformed (not only our Clients!) because of this work. We are looking to expand this with Fresh Start an addiction programme once again shining the love of God into these broken lives.

Ignite is a new initiative supported by the Church Commissioners to bring a relationship with Jesus into the lives of those on the far margins of our society.

Chaplaincy at Ashford College to grow from the fine work that goes on already at Towers School.

Make Lunch, an exciting initiative to feed children during school holidays.

Further mission and evangelism courses following on from a wonderful Alpha course last year ...

I could go on!

As I said we are an active parish so thank you all for all that you are and do. These new projects will need volunteers to make them work - it is always amazing when we get involved in helping others because of our love for Jesus how much we ourselves grow and become transformed because of that love. So take a risk, give something a go - if it's not happening at your local church do still get involved - these are parish-wide initiatives and need the support and prayer of the whole parish.

Remember be the Christ you want to see in the world.

With love

John

Ashford Local Area Report

Having moved to Ashford on 15 June 2017, I began the new role on 22 June, immediately following the licensing at St. Mary's. Establishing the College as a fully functioning base has not been without challenges, which have taken months to resolve. The remaining time before the end of the academic year was devoted to drawing alongside Ashford School staff to establish a plan for my deployment as chaplain at the prep and senior schools as well as meeting staff of St Mary's CEP.

From the outset of exercising a pastoral ministry at Ashford School, there have been challenges following the suicide of a sixth form pupil in September. Following an inquest, a memorial service was held on 17 March. Pastoral encounters with pupils, staff and students have taken place. At the end of the Michaelmas term the mother a child in the prep school died just before Christmas. The opportunity to lead many school service, assemblies and weekly Christian gatherings has enabled the forging of fruitful relationships with staff and pupils by laying firm foundations.

The summer months enabled time to prepare for the new academic year, whilst getting to know the church family at St Mary's and formulating a plan that would enable me to support and maintain the liturgical tradition without significant development until Trinity 2018, as had been agreed. Nevertheless, a project to completely replace all the service books and digital equivalents has started, with a view to introduce new printed materials towards the end of Trinity season. A successful quiz night and murder mystery evening have been well received and are stimulating fresh thinking about fundraising through social activities. Christmas and summer fares will be reviewed.

Building on existing relationship with Ashford Borough Council has enabled a significant 100th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Cambrai in the town on 17 November, where pupils of the Ashford School Combined Cadet Force participated in a special service. The Holocaust Memorial on 26 January saw a similar partnership of St Mary's, Ashford School and the Borough Council. Plans are being pursued to help pupils benefit from the Revelation performances that support the curriculum. An exhibition of fine art by Ashford School was hosted by St Mary's.

Participation in the Parish Alpha course resulted in deepening faith for those who attended and one person is working towards Confirmation later this year. Two members were confirmed on 8 March at the Parish service in Kingsnorth. St Mary's continues to benefit from an increase in weekly attendance. With so many well-attended school services during Advent and Christmas, there are significant opportunities to attract people through a renewal of our outward facing communications.

The Holy week and Easter services were well attended. A variety of services helped to meet the spiritual needs of young and mature individuals. A prayerful review of service provision as well as other matters, will take place during Trinity season by way of development but also with sustainability in mind. The presence and involvement of retired clergy with Permission to Officiate (PTO) Reverends Tony Boyd-Williams and Paul Miller, and support from Reverend Peter Newell has certainly helped to sustain the fifty per cent time allocation between St Mary's and Ashford School.

The ten months since beginning stipendiary ministry have been a very challenging yet inspiring and enriching experience in so many ways. I would like to sincerely thank our Local Warden, Sue Sawyer, the Standing Committee and the LLT as well as the St Mary's church family for the warmth of welcome that we received and for the way in which we have been able to work together over these first months to establish a positive and productive initial phase of a new ministry. It is hoped that the second year will see the realisation of new developments in pursuit of the stated vision: 'A sacred space and a shared space proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus in the heart of town.'

Revd Richard Bellamy

Priest to Ashford Town Centre, and Chaplain to Ashford School

Great Chart Local Area Report

2017 began and ended with the Winter Night Shelter at St Francis, and was the first full year that St Francis was part of our Local Leadership team.

In January Canon Steve and The Rev Vicky Coneys led our LLT away day in Tenterden which helped us think through being local but also part of the Ashford Team. And within this our distinctive of being 3 at Great Chart, Singleton and St Francis as well as one. So we have continued to meet both as an LLT of 7 as well as congregational leadership teams for both Great Chart and Singleton again of about 7 for each.

We held a working Party at St Francis both inside and out in the Spring, and about 40 turned up to begin to empty the Vestry as well as cut back vegetation in the grounds and lay out some vegetable patches for our 'incredible edible' project.

In May we were all part of the Novena prayer both in the different churches across the Team as well as basing ourselves at St Francis for Prayer and work from 7am-7pm for each of the 9 days. We emptied and decorated the Vestry to become a 'base' and a comfortable small meeting room we have used a lot over the year, and vegetables were planted and have been harvested and enjoyed!

It was good to host the Town Team Pentecost Service at Great Chart on a beautiful day with Archdeacon Jo preaching. This reminded us again what a large space St Mary's Great Chart is and a great venue for bigger services and events, as we marked a new memorial to the RAF WW2 Base at Chilmington Green and noting other WW1 anniversaries.

In June we held a picnic in the grounds of St Francis as part of the 'Great Get Together' initiative in memory of Jo Cox MP, and we plan to do this again in 2018.

Cathie Aldis was ordained Priest in Canterbury Cathedral on 1st July and many from our area and across the Team came to the service and to celebrate with Cathie.

We welcomed the Rev Andrew Mumford who is Minister in Training at South Ashford Baptist Church for a placement with us for a week and it's been good to increase our work across the denominations as well as in our Ashford Town Anglican Team Ministry.

We held a BBQ and Band event in the Rectory Garden in July which despite the rain was well supported and enjoyed by all ages and we are planning a similar event this coming summer.

In September we held our first joint service for all 3 congregations at St Francis. We used a theme from the Novena 'passing the mantle' as others from across our LLT area took up responsibility for work there alongside those who have faithfully carried this for many years. We enjoyed some of the vegetables from the grounds and experienced the prayer and blessing that has occurred increasingly over the year especially in the Novena. We launched a new fortnightly Tuesday lunchtime Communion which has proved very popular with new and existing St Francis members with an opportunity for people to stay on for coffee or a bring share lunch.

In October we began to host the new Team Informal Services which have been established every 2nd Sunday evening and it's good to see this happening in St Francis. A November Bonfire night social and carols around the tree with brass band in December – again with a bonfire – have been well attended and supported by people from all 3 congregations and the wider community.

Lots has been this year about St Francis, but Singleton and Great Chart have had their encouragements and challenges too. Singleton attendance continues to grow especially with families and children, with the constant need for more leaders and helpers with further DBS checking work and safeguarding training needed. In 2018 we are beginning a new pre-school Sunday morning group and once again needing to use Askes Court lounge in Singleton for the teenagers. The Grapevine Community Café continues to thrive with real community engagement with groups and activities being part of the Monday and Thursday morning opening times.

Great Chart continues to work towards community engagement with their re-ordering project making the building more accessible and usable especially with occasional offices, festivals and our educational and heritage opportunities particularly with WW1 & 2 connections. We look forward to 2018 with confidence and grateful for the support of the wider Team in Ashford as we work both together and locally with our own distinctive ministries and opportunities.

Timothy Wilson
Team Vicar

Kennington Local Area Report

Kennington has continued to meet at a local AGM. This year the AGM will have taken place in two parts. The business part of the meeting, with reports from different groups (too long to attach here) can be obtained by contacting St Mary's Church office. The second part of the AGM is actually a vision day and will take place on the 22nd April from 10am to 3pm at Kennington Academy, led by Steve Coneys from the diocese. We are hoping and praying for a substantial turnout as we will be asking ourselves where we are now and where we are going, a most important question as we begin this Pentecost our third year as one Parish.

A number of major areas characterised our Church life last year. The first concerned the Local Leadership Team, appointed officially last year at the AGM. The LLT met seven times in 2017 with a view to running the local life of St Mary's Kennington. The members agreed to serve for a year on the LLT, but they have all agreed to continue on until the 22nd of April, given the importance of that day for the future of our Church. I thank all of them for their time, commitment and energy. I especially thank Lorraine Andrews, Phil Sibbald and Michael Piggott, local wardens and deputy warden respectively, who have stepped down from their roles. Lorraine has selflessly served the church in her capacity as Church warden and then local warden for three years. I couldn't begin to count how many hours of those years were spent on Church and Church-related issues, but I expect I am speaking for all of you in expressing our gratitude for every one of them. I also thank Phil and Michael for the time they have given over the past year in so much behind-the-scenes service. Our sound and video system is a work in progress thanks to Michael, rather than a lost cause. We have all benefitted from Jacob's warm welcome and friendly smile at the door, on the path, wherever. He has also been a very special help in liaising with Kennington Academy. I would also like to thank Hazel Paddy who has agreed to act as secretary of the LLT. I thank Shirley in particular for the extra time she has spent over the year extracting figures for Kennington in particular which have been extremely helpful in understanding finances from our end. Our wedding vergers, Anita Sorrell and Jenny Flaherty and funeral verger, Margaret Moir and baptism team, Michael Thompsett and Pat Flawn have made it a joy to run occasional offices here in Kennington: heartfelt thanks to them. A number of people joined Michael Thompsett and Margaret Moir on the serving team: Brian Drury, Jenny Flaherty, Nigel Adams and Phil at SMK and Mike Paddy and Christine Small at SMCC. Thank you all for this commitment to public worship. Many thanks to the sacristins and cleaners who do so much behind the scenes for things to run smoothly and to the flower team that brings beauty and fragrance to our worship. I would particularly like to thank Colin Cunnane who has agreed to act as local warden from today until the 5th May. There is an emergency meeting of FC tomorrow to determine how to break down the local warden's job into manageable group tasks.

Kennington has participated regularly in all of the Ashford Town Parish meetings and events without fail. We are hoping for a more representative attendance at PCC meetings, as the PCC is the legal body responsible for the life of the *whole* Parish and the best possible way of keeping abreast of everything that is going on in the parish. The dates and times are published regularly on the website and in the Kennington weekly sheet.

Kennington has taken part in many parish-wide and CTA projects. A few members of St Mary's Ashford have joined hands with members of other Churches to help with the winter night shelter. Several of you have committed financially to CAP, a very active charity Ashford supports and one member of St Mary's will attend further CAP training. We were less involved in the Town-wide Alpha course, but that is because Alpha had already run its course, so to speak, in Kennington in years gone by. Richard King reportedly ran an Alpha course every year of his ministry in Kennington, with the added benefit of creating new home groups and reinvigorating old ones.

We are currently involved with at least three of the schools in Kennington, Downs View, Kennington Academy and the Towers. Obviously, our closest links are with Kennington Academy. Anyone interested in volunteering for chaplaincy work at the Towers School or being a governor at one of the other schools or in helping children read, is welcome to contact me.

Thanks to Phil Sibbald, who is our TDO, Parish wide communication has improved through the website and the use of social media. However, our attempt at a church magazine published by Service Publications, publishers of the Willesborough *Pilgrim*, has not materialised, nor will it as Service Publications is terminating its offer to Ashford Churches. A Parish communications working group is in the process of being formed. If your preferred means of communication has not been championed enough for your liking, why not bring your expertise to this group?

Rev Eve Lanchantin-Piggott

Kingsnorth Local Area Report

As I look back on this last year, I am reminded of the huge hinterland of families living in and around Kingsnorth. Over 40 baptisms have been conducted, more than any other local area in Ashford Town Parish. The Cafe Church Team have decided to put the children at the centre of what they do. Currently the LLT (Local Leadership Team) is considering their proposal for our Third Sunday service that would be targeted at our baptism families and school families. Our Crib Service at K+ this Christmas was attended by around 120 adults and children who have little or no connection with the church. Otherwise our services at S+ and K+ continue, with an Informal Evening of Worship also at St Francis S Ashford on 2nd Sunday evenings. We are all grateful to Caryl Jones who retired as Music Coordinator in December. She will continue to play on 4th Sundays. Although the choir have been fantastic in keeping going with reduced numbers, please pray for a person with a heart for worship that could oversee our music.

As we seek to reach out more into our community, our magazine was revamped with a new name - 'Contact' - as we make our church magazine more community-minded. Thanks are due to Sheena Nelson who took over editing the magazine from Rod Legear last autumn. Rod and Jean provided a sterling service for some 6 years and we thanked them, Margaret Knowles and all our deliverers at a tea in January. In February 250 complementary magazines were delivered to the Bridgefield estate but no new subscriptions have been forthcoming. As many young people live on that estate, it is likely that websites, the internet and above all, Social Media, will be the main forms of communication in the future. We also held our first Service of Light last May that included those from our community who had lost loved ones. Another such Service will be held in the autumn. This 12 month saw the passing of Frank Haynes and Brian Godden, among others, and Dr Hilary Moorby will shortly be laid to rest in our churchyard.

Thanks to Sally Rickard for organising a 'pre-loved' clothing sale that raised money for the church's work and mission in the autumn. Some £500 was raised. We need to raise more money for this purpose when we are so blessed with designated funds and the Friends of the Churches to help with the fabric of our building. While we need to be good stewards of our fabric, let's remember why we are here as Church and what for - not to become an open-air museum! Thank you to all who increased their giving as a result of the Parish Stewardship Campaign last year.

Dan and Michelle Gilbert came to visit us in February and the LLT have decided that we should support their ministry abroad as a church. Some Deanery funding also became available. Please do pray for this couple, Rod and Ruthie's son and daughter-in-law, as they have had to delay their move to Kyrgyzstan until the summer as they seek further finances. We hope to support them further by prayer, engagement and possible mission trips in the future. Look out for prayer letters and other communications from them.

I wish to record my heartfelt thanks to all members of the LLT, most of whom have served since before the new Parish was created and were therefore on the former K+ and S+ PCC. Although there is a town-wide PCC, there is still much business to be done in our area by those who know it best. We continue with a Maintenance Sub-Committee which has been hosted for many years by the Humphries and chaired by Ruth. Ruth has decided to step down this year so thank you Ruth. Others who will be retiring this year are Jeff Harmer and Nicky Myers, who both find that work and training commitments make it difficult to attend. It is important for those who come onto the LLT commit to come to as many meetings as possible so that issues are as widely discussed and decisions are democratic. Julian Sheehan will be stepping back as PCC representative this year and we could do with another person - please speak to Rev'd Caroline. Thanks to Julian and Susan as Local Wardens for all they do in this role.

Elaine Cordingley and Sarah Ansell participated in the Parish Healing Hub Day at St Mary's Kennington in February which considered the hurts and hopes that becoming one Parish entails. Despite the misgivings of some, our becoming part of Ashford Town Parish does not rob us of our own identity. It not only helps financially but puts us in a better position for mission initiatives. The recent Ashford Town Herald highlights many opportunities to serve. Thanks to around a dozen folk from K+ and S+ who have taken part in the Winter Night Shelter project this year and those who helped with the Parish Alpha Course in the autumn. At Kingsnorth Church we will host the Parish Healing Services, another of which is at the end of April.

Rev Caroline Mansley

South East Area Report

Thank you all so very much for all that you have done and continue to do - driven by our faith and your love of God and neighbour. This has truly been a wonderful year with many new initiatives started and existing practice enhanced. Dawn will speak further about the work at Christ Church separately but I must mention the wonderful 150 anniversary service there and the Deanery confirmation - both very uplifting. Dawn's responsibility as Curate-in-Charge is beginning to show ripe fruit - thank you Dawn and Christ Church for your work taking God's love outside the walls of the building into a community so open to know more of this love.

Willesborough and Sevington you continue to be a **blessing** to me Sophie and Jacob - for ten years I have been your priest, my title may have changed a bit over that time but my love for you remains steadfast. I value so much the support and encouragement that you are to me, allowing me to exercise my new role knowing that your prayers are with me.

We are growing in our role as being a **blessing** for our community. Food bank is getting more and more necessary. Our CAP Debt centre coaches and befrienders are ever more busy. Our community cafe offers a safe and friendly space to a growing number in our community and the new inSpire Link Lunches offer further new work fighting the fear of isolation that is so prevalent in society today building on the good and expanding work of SMAG in this area. We continue to reach into our wider community with the tremendous work done with our young people and families (Sunday School, Messy Church, Mother and Toddlers, after school and teenager groups); work done litter picking, visiting the sick and needy, our full and exciting social life (I'm always amazed at by the numbers of new people we see at these especially the Christmas Fair).

Our church is a **blessing** for visitors - it is so lovingly cared for and kept clean with beautiful flowers and a friendly greeting. Our worship life is enhanced by the number of people who minister to and with us - here I would especially thank Peter, Dawn and Judy; Alison, Anne, Paul and Charlotte; John, Jill and Paula (who has been on placement with us) as well as the many who read, pray, serve, ring bells, play instruments and sing for us especially Janet and our amazing choir. I would be lost without the constant support and organization of Libby - I am sure you know that much of what does happen would not happen as well as it does without her hard work.

A church family will have times of great sadness as well as joy. This last year has seen us mourn the death of a number of family members including: Pam Haynes, Jan Lonie, Michael Marshal, Jean Seager, Olive Coleman, Sandra Wootley and Sandra Sullivan - may they rest in peace and rise in glory.

So thank you all who do so much for our common life - as you are a **blessing** to others may you continue to **know God's blessing in your own lives** . As we move into a new year if something I have mentioned here excites you or you want to know more or explore further do get in touch - it is always extraordinary how much our levels of faith increase when we have an opportunity to put that faith into action!

with much love

John

Christ Church (Part of South East Area)

In the past year Christ Church has become more involved in green issues and registered with A-Rocha as an Eco-Church. As part of this the thread of being environmentally friendly has been reflected in our services including a green service which the Ark and Castle Youth Group planned and led; in our prayer life with a month being dedicated to using specially written green liturgy for Morning Prayer; in our teaching with sermons covering the theme of care of creation; and in action by highlighting areas where we could make changes to reduce waste. Despite a very cold church following the loss of heating in November, Victoria Road Primary School warmed our hearts with their nativity play and Christmas carol service and we look forward to building on the excellent relationship we have with the school in the coming year. The life of the church family has also been enriched by welcoming our Greek Orthodox sisters and brothers to use the church building on alternate Sundays following our regular services. It was a wonderful experience for those who were able to be present at the inaugural service in February led by Archbishop Gregorios Theocharous. The social calendar for Christ Church is starting to get busier as we seek to be more involved with the local community. The recent Community Fun Day held on Easter bank holiday Saturday was a great success with a constant flow of people – young and old – coming to enjoy a BBQ and free entertainment. It was a great opportunity to meet people and make new friends as well as show that the church knows how to have fun!

Missioner Report

I started in my role as Team Missioner in September 2017. The first statement to make is that when I arrived there were already a number mission activities going on across Parish, working with various groups of people. I have got involved with a number of these as well as exploring what else we can do across the Parish.

I have split my role into several parts; for me the most important part is to engage with the members of our church and to engage them in mission opportunities. Mission simply being about sharing the love of God with those in our town in a variety of ways.

Each Local Area report will talk about some of the local mission opportunities but I wanted to reflect on some of the Parish wide initiatives

Alpha

Alpha ran throughout the Autumn on Wednesday evenings at Willesborough Church. It was great to have participants and group leaders from all the local areas. In the middle of the course we held a confirmation at which 5 of the attendees were confirmed by Bishop Trevor

Winter Night Shelter

This year the Anglican's provided a venue for one night of the WNS, and volunteers from across the Parish helped at St Francis on Monday's and at other venues across the town. This is a great example of ecumenical working and putting faith into Action.

Christians Against Poverty

The CAP Debt Centre team grew in Ashford this year as Martin Lees was trained to be a Debt Coach and he and Jerry now visit up to 5 new clients a month with befrienders from across the Town. We celebrated our first clients going debt free this year, which was a cause for much joy!

Looking ahead into 2018 will see a number of new projects launched across the Town including

- A **Chaplaincy in Ashford College**. One lunchtime a week it is hoped a number of volunteer chaplains will come and support the staff and students of Ashford College with matters of life and faith
- We will launch **CAP- Fresh Start**. A project to support those struggling with addiction to a variety of issues. Rev Dawn Stamper will be leading this project
- This Summer Holiday at St Francis Church the project **Make Lunch** will come to life. A project to give hot meals to children who would usually receive Free School Meals.
- **Ignite**, a diocesan initiative to reach those on the margins of society is coming to Ashford. With Diocesan support we will plant 2 congregations in Ashford led by new paid members of staff along with volunteer support

Ashford is a growing town and new housing estates will give us more fertile ground for mission, but in all this we mustn't forget those who already live in the communities we serve. For this reason I hope to see many more Local and Parish-wide mission initiatives spring up over the course of this year, and I available to anyone and everyone in our Parish who wants to have a conversation starting something new
We have plenty to give thanks to God for and plenty of mission opportunities still to take.

Nathan Wilson
Team Missioner

Safeguarding Report

I was appointed as the Safeguarding Officer for the parish on 11 January 2018. Since then I have made contact with all local safeguarding officers and found that they all have completed the necessary training. Each church has been provided with the current poster so they should all be on display.

Our parish takes safeguarding seriously so I hope that all people dealing with children or vulnerable adults will have completed training at the appropriate level, but as yet I have not had the chance to check on this.

There has only been one small concern that has been brought to my notice and it has been referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors.

The Local Safeguarding Officers are:

Lynne Miller	St Mary the Virgin, Ashford
June Wenborn	Christ Church
Pam Davies	St Mary's, Great Chart and Singleton
Leigh Munday	St Mary's, Great Chart and Singleton
Lucy Brown	St Mary's, Kennington
Anita Sorrell	St Mary's, Kennington
Julian Sheehan	St Michael and All Angels, Kingsnorth
Libby Hayer	St Mary the Virgin, Willesborough

Anita Sorrell
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Treasurer's Report

Overview

This report and the associated Statutory Accounts cover the first full year of the Ashford Town (Super)Parish. It is gratifying to see a small surplus on our day to day activities as this recognises the enormous amount of diligence in controlling expenditure which has been evident to me throughout the year. This surplus – a mere £370 – was, however, wiped out by a necessary correction to a previously undetected mis-statement in the 2016 accounts, but restored to an overall surplus of £4506 in the General Fund by Stock Market (Paper) Gains of some £13,000. We were able to pay the Parish Share in full by mid-December and thus achieved a further £45,000 write-off by the Diocese of historic arrears: if we can achieve full payment in 2018, then the historic arrears slate will be wiped clean.

INCOME	£,000	% of total	TOTAL INCOME
Planned Giving, Service Collections and Gift Aid	£319	56.9%	
Hall Lettings, Fund Raising Events, Community Cafes	£109	19.5%	
Investment Income – Dividends & Interest	£9	1.6%	
Wedding & Funeral Fees, Minibus, Magazine Sales	£46	8.2%	
Grants & Other income	£77	13.8	£560

Included in our income, but from non-sustainable sources were Legacies and one-off donations of £22,000 (some Restricted), Grants from other charities of £61,000 (some Restricted) and £16,700 of Diocesan refunds relating to Ministers' fees and earlier years overpaid Parish Share. These total almost £100,000 much of which we cannot expect to be repeated in 2018.

EXPENDITURE	£,000	% of total	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
Parish Share	£353	63.0%	
Clergy Expenses & Staff Costs	£27	4.8%	
Church Maintenance	£9	1.6%	
Church Energy	£24	4.3%	
Other Church Running Costs	£102	18.2%	
Running Costs of Halls & Cafes	£39	7.0%	
Governance – Professional Fees	£6	1.1%	£560

Spending a mere 1.9% of our income on Church Maintenance does not mean that we have neglected our buildings; indeed, we spent a further £93,000 on maintenance and refurbishment but we sourced these costs from the extensive Restricted Funds we hold.

Reserves

During the year we were able to call into our control several Endowment Funds which had fallen in value to less than £10,000: these are automatically transferred to Restricted Reserves and by the end of the year we had reduced endowments to £11,527 and Restricted Funds to £346,111. These funds are almost entirely restricted to care and maintenance of the fabric of our buildings and are spread across all of the churches:

Gt Chart £15,231 Kingsnorth £100,325
Kennington £74,823 Ashford St Mary £62,035
Willesborough £93,776 (of which Christ Church £90,938)

Our General Reserve at 31st December totalled £160,329 which may sound like a large pot of money but is in fact less than half a year's Parish Share.

Mission Giving

As a church we fulfil part of our mission through tithing: in 2017 we planned to give to other charities and worthy causes 5% of our Voluntary Income (Planned Giving, Service Collections and Gift Aid recovered). This will rise by 1% each year until we reach a full 10% tithe. Here is the list of charities we supported in 2017:

Mission Giving	Gt Chart	Kingsn'th	Ashford	K'ton	S. East	Central	Source / Purpose
Cameroons			8460				Water Project
Mission to Seamen					123		Service Collection
USPG				320			Harvest Supper
Christian Aid					249	250	Collection
Embrace Middle East	241						Christmas Collections
Church Army						1000	(Graham Nunn)
Children's Society	269		247	76	157		Christingle Services
CAP						8850	
CAP Christmas Hampers						429	
Madagascar					70		Confirmation Service collection
CAP/Winter Night Shelter				392			Christmas Collections
Porchlight		559					ARK Drama Fund Raising
Porchlight		360					Christmas Collections
Shelter						500	
Pilgrim's Hospice				250			Service of Light
Historic Churches Preservation Trust					25		
Friends of Kent Churches					25		
Royal British Legion	257	345	19		249		Remembrance Services
Ride & Stride - Friends of Kent Churches	367	149	176	156	148		50% of total raised
TOTAL FOR YEAR	1134	1413	441	1194	1046	11029	Overall Total 16257

The PCC has seen and approved the annual accounts including the sub-analysis for each church group which identifies individual income, expenditure and funds held at the year end.

Statistics

Pledged Giving	Gt Chart	Kingsnorth	Ashford	Kennington	South East	Total
Total Gift Aided Income	£53,941	£31,609	£34,185	£43,739	£41,874	£205,348
Number of Givers	49	46	52	63	65	275
Average giving per person per week	£21.17	£13.21	£12.64	£13.35	£12.39	£14.36
Other Planned Giving	£4,898	£1,311	£2,915	£9,811	£22,351	£41,286
Number of Givers	17	4	7	27	41	96
Average giving per person per week	£5.54	£6.30	£8.01	£6.99	£10.48	£8.27
Total Pledged Giving	£58,839	£32,920	£37,100	£53,550	£64,225	£246,634
Total number of Givers	66	50	59	90	106	371
Total Pledged Giving per person per week	£17.14	£12.66	£12.09	£11.44	£11.65	£12.78

Standing Orders

Our most sustainable source of income derives from those dedicated souls who give on a regular basis: 178 people give by Standing Order direct from bank to bank which is the most efficient and effective method for all concerned. Almost 200 more give via the envelope scheme which comes with a cost both in material terms and in time and effort to count, record and carry cash to the bank every week. We would dearly love to persuade as many as possible of these envelope givers to transfer to Standing Order and to this end we are proposing to provide small 'donor' cards for those who feel guilty at passing the plate at services without appearing to contribute something. The donor cards which can be re-used week after week carry a simple message to the effect that the donor's (unseen) gift has already been made electronically. I do know of a church within our Deanery where *everyone* gives by Standing Order – so it can be done!

Looking Forward

As we grow in strength and confidence we might begin to think in terms of holding reserve funds sufficient to meet six months' total running costs, which would mean building surpluses over the next few years of £140,000 to bring our reserves to £300,000: quite a challenge! Whether that be our aim or simply to break even year on year, we need to increase our income from sustainable sources and that's mainly from you (and me) – the church family. We need to try and push that 56.9% (in Table 1 above) to 75% or even 80% and that means growing our numbers as well as existing family members digging deeper into our pockets. There will be more on this subject as the year progresses.

Our Parish Share increase this year is 4% and we surely have a moral responsibility – each and every one of us – to review our giving in order to try and keep pace with at least that increase. It's not asking a great deal; for those on low incomes giving £5 or less a week it's an increase of just 20p. For those who manage to give £10 per week it's still only another 40p and for those who are privileged to be in the £100 per month bracket it's a mere £4 – a month!! Less than two cups of coffee..... The real question is does your church deserve more from you? Whatever you give enables its mission and ministry to grow, so how much more powerful could that mission and ministry become with just a little more generosity?

Shirley Leslie
Hon Treasurer

Team Development Officer's Report

On the commencement of my role as Team Development Officer on 1st March 2017, I spent the first few months looking at what was going on in the realms of communication and administration before making any changes. It has been a good first year and I am now looking forward to year two and developing things further.

Staff Changes:

We said good bye to the following Local Area Administrators and thank them for their service to the Local Areas for many years:

- Una Stevens (Kingsnorth Local Area)
- Michelle Saunders (Kennington Local Area)
- Lynn Gosden (Hall Hire Administrator)

We thankfully were able to replace them with the following new team members

- Helen West (Kingsnorth Local Area)
- Sue Sawyer (Kennington Local Area)
- George Wheeler (Hall Hire Administrator)

Website / Social Media

The parish website of www.ashfordchurches.co.uk was set up and now weekly updates on information around the parish are issued electronically.

The twitter feed @ashfordteamcofe was also created.

We decided against a facebook page as all the local areas have Facebook pages, a parish wide one duplicating information would not be relevant.

Major Service / Events

For Christmas 2017 and Easter 2018 a flier detailing all the events and services across the parish both electronically and print versions were available in all the local churches. For one off services, ie Pentecost, posters will be issued electronically and printed for notice boards. So please always look at your church notice boards. The information is out there.

Service Registers

One role I took from all the Local Churches (to their relief I might add) was the submission of the service statistics for mission to the Diocese. An analysis report of amount of services and attendance can be found in the separate "Service Statistics 2017". For those of you who are into data and analysis, and would like to see more detail on specific areas please contact me and I am happy to supply the information.

Year 2

A few items were looked at in Year 1 that I would like to take a further look at to bring us more in line as one parish team. For example, Unified Occasional Office Forms, A centralised Telephone number, more structured centralised buying.

Thank You

I would like to thank the Senior Staff Team for their continued support. I would also like to thank for the following people by name. They make up my team and of without them none of the parish admin would take place. Emma Bishop (Great Chart), Libby Varley (Willesborough), Helen West (Kingsnorth), Sue Sawyer (Kennington) and George Wheeler (Hall Hire Administration) – Thank you Team. Your work is greatly appreciated.

Phil Sibbald
Team Development Officer

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within the parish.....**



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Church Notice boards