

The Parish Church of Saint Cuthburga, Wimborne Minster.



**Reports presented at the Annual Parochial Church
Council Meeting 30th March, 2023.**



APCM Reports for the year 2022

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Report compiled March 2023

Rector's Report, Revd Canon Andrew JW Rowland

This past year has been one of recovery after the COVID-19 Pandemic receded. We managed a full programme which I outline below.

Epiphany was marked by the appointment of Rt Revd Stephen Lake as our new Diocesan Bishop. I had the honour to represent the parish at his welcome, during Cathedral Evensong on January 13th.

I continued to serve as Rural Dean of Wimborne, in addition to my role as Rector of the United Benefice of Wimborne Minster, The Wimborne Villages and Kingston Lacy and Shapwick. I pay tribute to the clergy team who harmoniously serve the needs of our churches and offer my grateful thanks for their ministry. Particular thanks to Revd Heather Waldsax and Revd Nick Wells who regularly lead worship at The Minster, together with Elise and Michael Harding and Canon Nigel Lloyd. Add to this the LWL's and LPA's and we are a formidable body – Team Wimborne.

During the first part of the year, I assisted the Deanery in the training of some twenty new Lay Pastoral Assistants, including two for our benefice. Bishop Karen of Sherborne came to commission them all in the summer.

In January we welcomed the local Jewish community and well-wishers for the annual Holocaust Memorial Service at which Bishop of Sherborne, The Lord Lieutenant, The High Sheriff and Town Mayor, together with other local dignitaries were present.

On 6th February we welcomed the Deputy Lord Lieutenant and others on the occasion of marking the 70th year of the Accession of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. I was then summoned by Her Majesty with The College of Canons to elect Stephen Lake as Bishop. Apparently, if I had opposed, or absented myself without due cause, I would have been guilty of contumacy and perhaps not made the next day being the first of March, which was marked by a successful and enjoyable indoor running of the Pancake Race (due to inclement weather) with many local teams entering, ably organised and overseen once again by Anthony Oliver.

On Ash Wednesday, suitably shriven, we began the season of Lent – together with a resumption of Lent Lunches at The Methodist Church, hosted by the various local churches. Thanks to the Christian Aid Team.

Amidst the ongoing great organ works, our project consultant, Dr William McVicker delivered a very interesting Cuthburga Lecture.

A National Day of Reflection was observed on 23rd March, remembering those lost in the recent pandemic. The Pandemic has led to some necessary adaptations of church life. Amongst them is the provision of the ability to film, project on video screens and upload to the internet our key worship services.

It was a joy to remotely bless Len & Di Pearce on the occasion of their 71st Wedding Anniversary. This took place on Mothering Sunday at which Revd Ruth Wells was our guest preacher. Thank you to the AV Team – their work leaves its mark on the internet!

Then the Minster was prepared for Experience Easter. What a joy to welcome back the EE Team and the Schools! Passiontide, Palm Sunday, Holy Week and the Great Triduum followed, led by retired Archdeacon Paul Taylor, who fully used our screens for his 'Three Hours' reflections. He was very much appreciated and has been a great friend to many. After the Three Hours many walked up to Kingston Lacy, for our Bun Walk and further fun and worship by St Stephen's Church – Revd Suzie to the fore.

The outgoing mayor's Civic Service (Cllr Kelly Webb) was hosted on 8th May. Many dignitaries attended, together with Town Crier (Chris Brown), 'Chain Gang' and a volley from the Town Militia.

In May and October, the Benefice continues to offer Preparation for Holy Matrimony by means of Zoom, with all clergy participating – which leads to hundreds of years of experience being intensively imparted to many not quite overwhelmed couples! Bless them – we pray.

The long weekend at the beginning of June saw Minster and nation join in the 'HMQ70' celebrations. Christine Oliver and team organised a wonderful Arts & Crafts celebration in the Minster. It being Pentecost, special prayers were said, and a 'Big Lunch' held on Green and Square. The weather was kind and our brilliant bellringers managed a peal to complete our celebrations. 'God Save The Queen' was sung with great gusto and heartfelt thanksgiving for her long reign over us - a prayer answered. The Folk Festival was held the following week (Trinity).

The 14th June was commemorated as the 40th Anniversary of The Falklands War - we hosted the Royal British Legion, uniformed organisations and town. The 19th June was the enthronement of the Bishop and so the long process was finally complete! Please pray for our Bishop as he serves and leads our diocese of Salisbury which now encompasses the Channel Islands.

On the 8th July we hosted a School Leavers Service/Day with input from Rise Theatre Company. Many local schools were in attendance. Great fun.

Zahra and I worked the Great Dorset Steam Fair and I was able, as GDSF Chaplain to welcome our brand new bishop on 28th August. Bishop and Priest co-led the Director's service, assisted by Archdeacon Antony. We also participated in the WW1 Memorial Service with the re-enactment Padre, who naturally felt some pressure. (Yes, someone did ask me if he was a real Bishop – or just dressing up!).

The sun shone and I led thousands in an Act of Remembrance for friends lost in the pandemic. All steam whistles blew in unison. It was awe-inspiring.

At the beginning of September, the delayed Flower Festival was held. Thus, we finally marked the occasion of the 900th Anniversary of the Norman Foundation of the church and with no less than our new Bishop Stephen presiding and preaching at the Parish Eucharist. He blessed and dedicated the Minster Organ, which was almost complete, except for trumpets and finishing touches. There will be reports of flowers (and organs) elsewhere, but I do want to record my thanks to Christine Oliver and team. What a triumph! Thank you! I gleefully kidded enquirers about how we got the Austin seven down the stairs and inside – we revved it up and took a fast run up, and leaped the steps?). At Evensong we welcomed back former Rector, Ven. Barney Hopkinson, as officiant. A fitting celebration to conclude a very special festival week.

The Minster was opened for prayers for Her Majesty the Queen's health. With great sorrow these soon became prayers of thanksgiving and the public signing of several Books of Condolence following Her Majesty's death, announced by Buckingham Palace on Thursday 8th September. We joined with the nation and world in grieving the loss of our Sovereign and Supreme Governor. May she rest in peace, truly she was the 'World's Queen'.

On Sunday 11th September I joined with the Town Mayor (Carol Butter) on The Minster Green for the Proclamation of King Charles III. Long live the King!

The Bells were rung fully muffled for the death of Queen Elizabeth – the first time that this has been done on the Minster bells. The State Funeral was shown live on our video screens on Bank Holiday, Monday 19th.

Saturday 10th of September we welcomed Dorset Historic Churches Trust, of which I am a trustee, for the annual Ride+Stride event. We mustered our own team of resolute cyclists and completed some twenty miles, and visited numerous local churches – one of us on a borrowed bike.

Martyn Whittock delivered the Friends' Cuthburga Lecture on Saturday 24th September, which was very well received.

Sunday 2nd October was celebrated as both Governor's Sunday and Harvest Festival. Revd Ruth Wells preached. That evening I preached at St Catherine's RC Church on the Feast of Saint Lioba one of the many Wimborne Saints of blessed memory.

9th October Revd Nick Wells & I officiated at an Animal Blessing Service – Dogs and Parrots being the main clients – no cats in sight! No-one bitten.

We joined with the Wimborne URC for their 350th Anniversary Service on 23rd October. Congratulations to them as they now plan to transform their chapel into a Christian Community Centre.

As Advent began, we led church and town in three traditional Services of Remembrance together with The Royal British Legion. We will remember them! Aspects of Spirituality, arranged by Anne King were musical and very much appreciated by those who gathered – many from some distance. Main speakers were our very own Peter Cook and Colin Davey.

There were welcome additions to the staff team, with Claire Lehman and Martin Smith joining us as Families Outreach Worker and Assistant Verger. Muddy & Messy Church sessions began – fresh expressions of church, together with a popular 'donkey hunt' as Christmas approached. Jane MacCaig and Jackie Morgan ably kept us organised and administered!

With much assistance from colleagues all the external Carol Concerts and Services resumed, together with our own full programme. It was good to see the Minster full of life once again. On New Year's Eve I was hanging off the Pub balcony with Town Crier and Mayor, blessing the revellers and praying in 2023 – the Minster bells ringing out aloud.

Interspersed with all the above were many Occasional Offices, Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals – Also a return to some Home Communions & visits and same at local Care Homes. (These had been curtailed during the pandemic and still are to some degree).

We welcomed visiting choirs, including that of Surbiton and Colehill. We very much were blessed by our own Minster Choir, ably led by Colin Davey, rejoicing in the increasing numbers of young choristers. What a blessing to have a great choir and to be able to call on Minster Voices too. ADMG.

The Rector's life is full of 'business' meetings: PCC, Standing Committee, Friends of WM, Minster Governors, School Governors, and various trusts; WMMHT, DHCT, BHH&H. Diocesan Synods, Rural Deans, Deanery Synod, Deanery Standing, Clergy Chapter, Sarum Canons, Archdeacon's ADMPC, consultations with LPA's, Clergy, Staff, Minister's Fraternal.

Life is framed within the discipline of the Daily Office - of Morning and Evening Prayer, mainly shared with others, on Zoom, and of course the preparation and offering of public worship and teaching. I suppose most people think that is mainly what vicars do – I hope this report paints a broader picture of Anglican ministry at WM. Finally, I give thanks to my dear wife Zahra and to all with whom I share in the care of souls here, and commend to you all that follows in the specific reports below. My thanks also to Church Wardens: Peter & Bruce, their assistant's Andrew & Richard, our PCC and PCC Secretary Beatrice.

May the good Lord Bless you all.

Churchwardens' Report, Peter Cook & Bruce Jensen

As 2022 dawned we were hoping for the work on the organ to begin in earnest. However due to delivery problems and other supplier issues the start of work was delayed and our hope for the organ to be in operation for Easter soon faded. Work on this project continued throughout most of the year with the final completion in October. We have been very fortunate with our chosen contractor, Mander Organs (formerly F H Browne & Sons), who have been very thorough and whose craftsmanship has been excellent. We now have a fully working organ with some improvements and a really splendid case. Gone is the horrid hardboard in Trinity and the Chancel and Nave cases have been stained and designed to match the Jacobean Choir Stalls. It is a splendid instrument and starting to gain a good reputation locally. We have already had several visits by groups of organists and for early 2023 we are hosting a PipeUp session.

The Wimborne Minster Musical Heritage Trust hosted a series of "Woofyt" courses for local schools and an evening session for "grown-ups" which proved such a success it is being repeated in 2023.

The God's Acre team have managed to continue to meet and keep the area looking beautiful for those people who have been using it for an outside meeting place.

A big thank you also goes to the rest of the "Minster Team" Andrew Patrick and Richard Knott for keeping things going and supporting both the Rector and the wardens.

Colin Davey has continued to do a sterling job with the music and coped admirably with the extended absence of the pipe organ. We purchased a digital alternative, rather than hiring one and this proved a good move given the extended time frame. This has now been moved into Church House to allow for practice by those learning the organ. The standard of the Minster's Choral Music has risen during the year and we now boast 16 young choristers. We are grateful to Colin for his hard work and enthusiasm and his family for their support and being an active part of the Minster Family.

Claire Lehmann joined the staff during the year as our Families and Outreach worker. Her enthusiasm and energy are a delight to behold and the "Find the Lambs" game for children (and some adults) brought a lot of families into the Minster and who felt that we were very welcoming. The Forest Garden has become a new attraction for various family-based events. Claire also arranged a clothing exchange, providing much-needed coats, children's clothing, and wellies for local families hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

Jackie Morgan, our finance and admin manager has now settled in and worked tirelessly through the year to organise the various systems, insurance and

annual services – e.g. fire extinguishers, glass doors, etc which are now all overseen by her. Our Parish Secretary, Jane, has continued to provide unstinted support for the Parish, producing the weekly sheets and much other work behind the scenes to support the Rector and Churchwardens.

Holy Week and Easter in 2022, was highly successful. The sung Compline by candlelight was atmospheric and very moving and several people came on all three nights. Easter Day was busy, but a joy and the weather was kind, allowing for a dawn eucharist and a lively walk to Pamphill after the Good Friday Service.

Throughout the year, Bruce, Gordon Edgar, Sarah Morris, and Beatrice Dopita have spent time on ensuring we provide a good service to those who watch online. Help from anyone interested in joining the “Tech Team” would be warmly welcomed.

The Revd Heather has provided some thoughtful and inspiring variations to the regular rubric for special occasions and festivals. Revd Nick Wells has continued to grow in stature as our Curate and his contributions to worship are much appreciated. He will be greatly missed when he finally leaves us to take up his first full-time post as Vicar or Rector. He will be looking after the Minster whilst Canon Andrew is away on Sabbatical in 2023

Our Rector, Canon Andrew, has continued to provide us with positive leadership and *Team Wimborne* has been able to move forward on a number of fronts in spite of various restrictions. Plans are now being developed to provide toilets, disabled access to the North entrance and an enlarged vestry area.

We celebrated the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, 2-5 June in the Minster with displays showing local arts, crafts, flowers and music, organised by Christine Oliver. This culminated in a street-party style lunch on the Minster Green on the afternoon of Sunday the 5th.

A very successful Flower Festival took place in September (delayed from 2020) which was enjoyed by a lot of people many of whom were new to the Minster. Thanks are due to Sharon Austin and members of the organising team for their hard work and the many sponsors for their support. Notable was the installing of a car as part of one of the displays. Thanks are also due to everyone who sat on the door, stewarded, served tea, or provided incidental music during the days of the event.

We are making progress on carrying out the work outlined in our architect’s 2020 Quinquennial Report, despite having lost our go-to builders, Griffins. Ellis & Co sent a team of workers Oct 10-14, to carry out urgent repairs. They cleared gutters, repaired cracks in the lead (fixing a long-term leak in the S. aisle and another near the organ) and did masonry repairs, including filling a hole in the wall of the Chained Library. More work remains to be done,

including the damp west wall of the Children's Corner, where the iron pins holding the monument are liable to rust.

Anthony Oliver and the sides-people have expertly managed the communal worship and Verger John, who was joined by our new Deputy Verger, Martin have been immensely helpful in all situations giving us advice on various aspects of the Minster, as both of us are still continue to learn something almost every week. They have all helped both of us in checking the inventory which is a requirement of churchwardens at this time of year.

Inevitably, we have probably left someone out and so profuse apologies to them, whoever they are. Everyone who has given help and advice to the Churchwardens is much appreciated and valued.

Looking forward into 2023 we are hoping to further develop the plans for re-organising parts of the Minster. We are also in the process of organising the Monday Lunch-time recital series which will feature the new organ together with other music and we will continue to mount the Michael James Trust Music Box week. Laudemus will visit on 19th August 2023.

Another busy and eventful year for your churchwardens, with more to come.

Treasurer's Report, Richard Knott

Financially, 2022 was far better than some of us feared. Predicting future expenditure when in the middle of a Covid world necessarily involves a certain amount of finger in the wind mathematics. However, our expenditure turned out to be almost exactly as expected and, as our income was significantly higher than budgeted, we were able to keep a healthy surplus for future needs. We will certainly need it. The picture is not entirely rosy as our investments fell by about £10k over the year but, in cash terms, we were happy.

Our income was higher than expected for two reasons: we received two bequests, which are never budgeted; and our bookings improved much quicker than we had thought (both Church House and weddings/funerals). This meant that we could pay our Parish Share in full when many churches couldn't. The number of visitor donations continues to climb after the pandemic, which may partly be explained by the notices which greet visitors, explaining our financial situation. This year, we have also been helped by a very successful flower festival. As well as generating funds for a local respite home, it also raised £10k for the Minster itself.

As mentioned in the 2021 report, thanks to the generosity of two members of the congregation, we were able to employ a Families Outreach Worker and a Deputy Verger from the middle of the year. The appointments have been very successful (other reports will say more), but the appointment of a second

verger has meant that the Minster had opened every day since July. This is good news for us and for local businesses, many of whom rely on tourists. I wrote to every business in Wimborne asking them to contribute to the cost of the verger, explaining that, if they didn't, the long term position was not sustainable and we may have to re-close the Minster on certain days. Only four responded positively and their names have been included on a notice as you enter the Minster, but only two have signed up for 2023, so that particularly income stream may close.

Over fifty of our regular givers now do so through the Parish Giving Scheme. This is much easier for us as the scheme collects Gift Aid on our behalf. It is also easier for donors as changing the amount you give is very straightforward. I would like to have persuaded more to change to the PGS and this must continue to be an aim for next year. Dennis Child has agreed to be responsible for this side of our finances, for which I am very grateful.

The organ restoration is now finished and paid for. This is the second major project in recent years that we have completed successfully (the first being the lighting/AV), which bodes well for future projects. We are now well into the planning for a major re-ordering of the Minster which will include greatly increased storage space and the long-awaited toilets. Architects have drawn up preliminary plans and we will soon be setting out a budget for this significant work. Along with this, we hope to turn Trinity Chapel and the present choir vestry into display areas for our various treasures. Highlights will include a restored chime barrel which we hope visitors can operate, as well as some ancient books and silver. These displays should encourage visitors to be more generous, but will also allow us to explain much of what we do at the Minster. Raising the money for this will not be straightforward, but I am optimistic that it can be done.

The long-term financial future remains precarious. The 7.5% subsidy on our Parish Share will remain until the diocese builds us a new rectory, but that day is now on the horizon. It will mean that our Share increases, but the sale of our present rectory will give us some of the funds needed for the ambitious projects already mentioned.

We are a long way from guaranteeing our financial future, but there are some exciting plans in the pipeline, and I remain optimistic that we can overcome any obstacles.

Curate's Report, Revd Nick Wells

As well as writing my curate's report, I'm currently completing my final annual report and theological reflections before, hopefully, being 'signed off' by Bishop Stephen around Easter Time! This doesn't mean I'm off straight away, but it

does mean I'm now looking towards finding my 'first post'. Serving my Curacy at Wimborne Minster has been an enormous privilege and I've certainly enjoyed the last 12 months as things have finally opened up and I've been able to experience more of what the Minster has to offer.

The Festive season, just gone, was the busiest I have known since arriving in 2020, It was amazing to be able to minister to many people from such a variety of ages and backgrounds and to hear the Minster full of voices singing God's praises. It's also been a real joy to see how Minster Praise has grown since going weekly. More families are engaging more often, thanks to the efforts put in by Claire our Family Outreach Worker and the Lay Worship Leaders, who do so much to keep the show on the road.

As well as engaging in a range of worship it's been a good year for building stronger community relationships, I'm now in regular contact with Wimborne First School having taken an assembly 'in person' and led there Christingle service in the Minster. I've been able to occasionally volunteer at the new community garden, have taken a number of assemblies at Queen Elizabeth School and continue to chair our local Christian Aid group. And I am currently meeting and working with the Folk Festival to see how we can better support each other, especially with initiative such as the Minster Green Charities Fair and Folk Festival service on the green.

So whether I'm here for another few months, or still around to write a 'curates report' this time next year, I pray that we will continue to know God's love in our lives and be inspired to build God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Aspects of Spirituality, Anne King

The series of Aspects of Spirituality talks in November 2022 was on the theme of Music, which seemed appropriate to coincide with the rebuilding of the organ and a reminder of the spiritual importance of music.

The talks followed the development of music from the early church through to the 21st century. The first talk was given by David Beeby, Head of Music at Poole Grammar School, and an organist, conductor and composer. He gave us an insight into the development of music in the early church and how musical notation evolved through the centuries.

Subsequent talks were given by Colin Davey and Peter Cook, who spoke about the Reformation and the transition of the United Kingdom from Roman Catholicism to the Church of England, the influences of continental and secular music, and of many outstanding church music composers over the centuries, using material from the Minster's chained library, and taking advantage not only of the rebuilt organ, but also of the audio-visual system which meant we could see the sheet music, and the organ keys as they were being played.

The final session brought us up to the current time, and reviewed the route to how music is used in worship now. This talk was followed by Compline, which was a perfect end to an excellent series of talks. Many thanks to David, Peter and Colin, and also to Bruce Jensen for his input on the audio-visual presentations.

Audio Visual Team, Bruce Jensen

The Minster continues to live-stream the weekly 9:30 service on YouTube and Zoom. In the past year the AV team (Gordon Edgar, Beatrice Dopita & myself) has expanded to include Sarah and Robert Morris. Over the past year we also streamed several funerals and other special services, such as some school carol services. Some organisations hiring the Minster for large concerts, such as Wimborne Choral Society, have had their concerts displayed live on the screens for the concertgoers seated on the sides or behind pillars. The AV equipment has more and more been in use for enhancing worship, especially in Minster Praise. As our knowledge grows, we are making improvements to make our slides and videos a professional and effective addition to our mission and church life.

Captain of the Bell Tower, David Warwick.

The Wimborne Minster band has enjoyed its return to full ringing and social activities in 2022 following the two years of Covid19 restrictions. Sunday Service ringing has been at the heart of it all, and we have rung twelve bells for almost all of the Parish Eucharists during the year followed by quarter peals for Evensong ringing.

Our younger ringers have progressed to call changes and Plain Hunting on 11 and are now ringing for some morning services. Many of the more established ringers have achieved firsts in the 34 successful quarters - a new record - which covered a wide variety of methods on five to twelve, including the first of Barford Surprise



Maximus and four of Bristol Surprise Maximus. Ben Avery (aged 13) rang his first quarter peal in February 2023, with Ben, Lila Hickman and Esther Davey all being elected members of The Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers.

We have welcomed regular visitors to the Tuesday practices, enabling us to expand the regular repertoire to Grandsire, Little Grandsire, Erin, Stedman, Cambridge, Yorkshire, Bristol and Barford.

Six peals were rung to mark special occasions - for Christmas & Easter, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the 900th Anniversary Flower Festival and the first-ever fully muffled peal on the day of The Queen's funeral.



Peal boards are being made to record for posterity those rung for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and funeral, and also for the 900th Anniversary of the Minster Church. An exhibition of photographs and memorabilia from the archives celebrating Ringing for Royal Events, meticulously prepared by Kathy and Alan Bentley, was enjoyed by the many visitors to the Minster during Jubilee weekend, and again at the Flower Festival, and a feature on it appeared in the Ringing World in December.



Wimborne won the Guild 8-bell Striking Competition at Broadchalke in May, and also took part in the National 12-bell where we put in a respectable performance of Stedman Cinques in the eliminator round at St. Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge in March, finishing in fifth place (out of six). In the South-West 12-bell competition at Taunton in October we also came fifth (out of six) - ringing Erin Cinques. Many Wimborne ringers have given regular assistance to

the newly revitalised Witchampton band which won the Novice Shield at the East Dorset Branch Striking Competition.

The tower was open for the Minster Fair in June, and again in Heritage Week in September, for talks and demonstrations of ringing, and the teddy bear plunge provided plenty of excitement and entertainment. Social events have included the customary Pancake Party, an evening of curling, Christmas drinks and mince pies, a New Year's Eve supper and a very successful outing to six Oxford City towers in January 2023.



Of the five challenges set for the band last year, we've made progress in improving our own standards and skills, in bringing on our new recruits and supporting the Witchampton band, achieved some success in competition ringing and showed improvement in the Sunday ringing.

Chained Library, Judith Monds

There are still a few Covid cases around, sadly. Thankfully during the late Queen's Jubilee weekend, we saw a huge number of visitors most of whom waited patiently to be allowed up the spiral staircase. It was a very hot and humid weekend too, but no one fainted although quite a few did look very pink. Here I have to say a huge thank you to Bruce Jensen and the Vergers, John Hughes and Martin Smith, who provided a dehumidifier and a new Fan which has changed our lives for the better by miles. Thank you all.

Having survived that weekend, we then had an Historic Group visit. That went well for us mostly but one or two were unhappy that it took so long to get upstairs. There were 60 of them altogether so that was not a surprise. We are already thinking of ways to run large groups more efficiently and have acquired (thanks to Mike and Jayne Twomey) two hand bells. This will save the Librarians downstairs running upstairs to tell them that others are waiting, and we are going to try this new system out shortly. The main trouble is people get so interested in everything they keep asking questions & lose all trace of time.

The next big event was the much postponed, Flower Festival. This too was well attended in the library. Sadly, we have lost our mathematician, Gary, so I have not got the final figures as yet but I think it is probably between four to six thousand visitors this year.

Next week we have two people from Dorchester Museum coming to assess whether we can safely house an early Manorial Book for part of our new Season. We helped the Museum purchase the book which mentions several Wimborne families.

Our cleaning Team will be working hard to have everything ready for April 1st when we open again for the public.

Children's Society, Anne King

The Children's Society is a Christian organisation formed in the 19th Century to provide support for destitute children. Its orphanages were later closed as other organisations took over, and the Children's Society now focuses on offering a listening ear and practical help to young people to cope with 21st Century life.

At this time, the Society's work is more important than ever with children suffering increasing difficulties due to the pandemic and its aftermath, the cost of living rises and many other threats to their wellbeing. The Society is currently running a campaign to raise awareness of children who are exploited by "county lines" and other gangs, and getting sucked into untenable situations. Please pray for the Society and its work.

In September, the Children's Society held a Focus Weekend in Wimborne. On the Saturday, there was a Coffee Morning and bric-a-brac sale. People brought in the boxes they had had at home to put money in throughout the year. On the Sunday, a Children's Society speaker talked about the work of the Society and showed a short video about helping a young, unaccompanied refugee. After the Service, a bring-and-share lunch was held in Church House.

We were sorry that Mary Millard no longer feels able to take responsibility for the boxes, and are very grateful for her work for the Society in Wimborne over the years. Lizzie Peters and Anne King will take over Mary's role for next year.

The Society had a stall at the Wimborne in Bloom charity fund-raising event held at the Allendale in November.

We have a new Community Relationship Manager for the South West, Jess Meale, who visited the local group twice. We also have a new Diocesan Ambassador for the Salisbury Diocese, Georgie Polius.

The Children's Society is happy to provide speakers to talk to local groups and organisations about the work of the Society, and there is information on The Children's Society website about the scope of its current work.

Choir Report - Colin Davey.

It has been an exciting year for the Minster Choir. The choir has grown in numbers after a successful recruitment drive and interested enquiries from the public. The appointment of Claire Lehmann has been extremely positive; she has helped with the recruitment effort and organised a singing day in the autumn term, at which a number of children attended with their families and had the opportunity to sing with some of our current choristers.

Choristers are now offered free music lessons and some of young people are receiving tuition in organ, bass guitar and voice. Some of these choristers provided music before the crib service at Christmas.

The choristers enjoy a regular programme of social events, again with the support of Claire. This year, these events have included pot painting, outdoor activities at Butcher's Coppice, a visit to the pantomime and a pancake party. The gentlemen also enjoy regular social outings.

The adult soprano line is now an established part of music in worship of the Minster. This group sings choral evensong once a month with the Gentlemen and led a midweek Eucharist. This group has also given us the capacity to have a full choir at the Midnight service on Christmas Eve, and it is hoped that their role and involvement will continue to develop. New robes have been ordered for the Sopranos. Over Christmas, this group sang carols in a couple of local Wimborne pubs.

Minster Voices continues to make a valued contribution to worship, singing when the Minster Choir is unavailable; many thanks particularly to Liz Watson who does an excellent job of organising them.

A number of plans are in place for the remainder of the year, including a celebration Evensong for members of the Minster Choir past and present.

The rebuilt organ has given us an instrument with much more scope for successful accompaniment and is a real asset to music at the Minster.

The choir owes continuing thanks to David Warwick and Sean Tucker for accompanying the choir at morning and evening services respectively; to Peter Gibson for continuing the gargantuan task of keeping the music organised, and to Rosalind and Heather for their help in looking after the choristers.

Choristers' Sunday School, Heather Davey

The Sunday School continues to meet on the occasions when the choristers sing at the 9.30am Eucharist. Members are split into two groups – one for the younger children and one for teenagers. Activities are planned around the lectionary readings, quite often focusing on the Gospel reading. Bible reading, games, crafts, baking, and discussion are used to explore the day's theme.

The young people are encouraged to engage and respond to the message in an open and supportive setting and sessions might be lively or reflective.

The Sunday School leaders often use the 'Roots' online resources (a subscription-based service), tailoring the activities to the needs of the groups. On occasion, other young people have joined the choristers (such as on Easter Sunday) and, into the future, this is wholly encouraged.

Diocesan Synod Report, Rector

The Diocese resumed face to face meetings in 2022, having met virtually in 2021. The major event was the joy of welcoming our new Diocesan Bishop, Stephen Lake. He has instituted, as requested by synod, a thorough review of

every area of the ministry and mission of the diocese. The diocese has adopted a new mission statement: Your kingdom come, here and now.

Measures are in process to address the deficit in the budget. Costs are rising faster than income - which itself has been affected by the general economic situation. Reorganisation and cost reduction measures include the sale of Church House, Salisbury and a move to the Diocesan Education Centre at Wilton.

Diocesan Synod members are elected from within the Deanery. presently our Deanery lay Chair, Gillian Clarke, continues as Lay Chair of the Diocese.

(Rector of Wimborne Minster, The Wimborne Villages and Kingston Lacy & Shapwick, Rural Dean of Wimborne)

Deanery Synod Report, Anne King

Some of the Deanery Synod meetings over the past year have been on Zoom and some face-to-face. The meetings on Zoom have given us the opportunity to discuss issues in plenary sessions, and in smaller, break-out groups, which has been helpful in getting other parish's perspectives on and ideas on the issues that face us. The face-to-face meetings have also been valuable in helping us get to know one another better and share experiences and challenges in our discipleship.

Focus has been, as always, on finances and looking for ways in which we can fund the church's work, especially encompassing new technology.

The Wimborne Deanery Action Plan has been developed and discussed under the headings of Vocation and Discipleship, Children and Young People, Resources and Giving (time and talents as well as money), Care for the Environment, Reaching out to New Communities, Music and Worship and South Sudan. Sheila Soper reported on her recent visit to South Sudan.

This year has also seen the new Bishop of Salisbury installed, and his visit to the Deanery.

At the last Deanery Synod meeting in March 2023, the need to ensure that finances were sufficient to enable us to pursue our mission was stressed. There was also a presentation by the new Diocesan Lay Ministry Development Officer, Karen Hutchinson, with LLPs, LWLs, (including De Ashton) LPAs and Churchwardens talking about their roles. Karen emphasised the need to get more people involved in lay ministry, and that the best way of recruiting them is to approach individuals with the right skills directly.

Fabric Committee Report, Peter Cook

The Fabric Committee has met regularly over the year and we are often joined by Jackie Morgan our Finance and Administration Manager.

We have duly considered a revision of the Health & Safety Policy and had discussions regarding the use of energy within the Minster with regard to heating and lighting. We also reviewed a report about the possible installation of a heat pump system in place of the gas boilers.

Quinquennial work has been completed on the gutters and downpipes and a number of leaks have been cured. Work has also been done on repointing parts of the Central Tower. Further work is needed and will be put in process as soon as possible. Funds are available for this work.

A new Noticeboard has been installed opposite the North Door of the Minster, a new bench has been provided by the family of Jim Sexton and an outside tap has been installed on the south vestry.

Following consultation, a firm is now providing oversight of unauthorised parking and since notices have gone up the car park has had noticeably more available spaces during the week and on Sunday.

The tree on the east corner of the Minster Green is being removed as it is dying and in danger of collapsing onto the pavement. Other trees on the south side are also dying (or soon will be) and these are being investigated with a view to felling them and replacing them with disease-resistant replacements.

A fire alarm has been installed in Church House together with a "Hive" system which allows us to control the temperature when the building is not in use and as a result we are saving money.

A consistent agenda item has been plans to re-order parts of the Minster. These have developed over time allowing us to consider a number of options and explore as many possibilities as we can. Plans are now beginning to crystallise into a phased project which we can then put to the DAC for advice prior to obtaining a faculty. Our thanks are due to Andrew Patrick for his extensive work on this project.

Forest Garden & Families Outreach Work - Claire Lehmann

Since starting in July 2022, I have established a family events programme that runs on a monthly basis .

Starting in the Forest Garden, Muddy Church is held normally on a Saturday morning and is attended by approximately 35 people. We cook in our mud kitchens, hunt for bugs and are building a bug hotel. Round the fire pit we read bible stories that relate to animals and nature.

Forest Garden Toddlers continue to run on Tuesday mornings during term time and is attended regularly by 7-10 families. On alternate Fridays, the Home Education Group is held in the Forest Garden which is attended by 4/5 families. At these groups we undertake a wide range of activities including den building, fire pit cooking, crafts and gardening. During the Wimborne Green Festival the Forest Garden was open for families to explore the area and take part in free nature based activities.

The Forest Garden has been greatly enhanced by clearing some of the ivy and brambles in a way that does not impact on the environment.

We recently held a Forest Garden Spring Clean which was attended by thirty-three adults and children. We focused on bulb planting and clearing leaf litter. Looking forward on Easter Sunday there will be an Easter themed breakfast in the Forest Garden.

The Forest Garden has been greatly enhanced by the addition of the fire pit and bell tent. Both of which have proved very popular with families.

Messy Church is held on one Saturday morning a month and is attended by approximately 40 people. This session is attended by individuals and families with themes that link to the Minster such as stained-glass windows.

Sensory Church is held once a month and targeted at Families with additional needs and focuses on well-known bible stories such as Jesus calms the storm and Noah's Ark. Sessions are regularly attended by thirty people.

In October, I organised a Choristers taster day which resulted in several children joining the Choristers. Prior to joining the Choristers, the Children had no previous experience of attending Church. The Choristers also take part in a monthly social event such as pottery painting, seeing a pantomime or making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.

At Pamphill School, I lead a weekly art club for children accessing pupil premium funding. Wimborne Tops have also visited the Wimborne Minster several times to listen to a seasonal Bible story and complete a craft activity.

I have also supported students from Innovate alternate education provision and Canford undertaking volunteering activities in the Minster. Duke of Edinburgh students have also completed their 'community service ' by assisting at Minster Praise and with Childrens events.

In December eighty children and their parents attended the Christmas holiday club where a daily simple lunch was provided. Many of the families attending, also attended the Nativity Service.

In partnership with the Wimborne bid, Christmas crafts were provided in The Minster on the day of the Christmas market. This was attended by over a hundred people. I also organised a Christmas craft afternoon which focused on

Reef making. Despite there being snow, this was attended by 20 people the vast majority of who had not previously engaged with us.

In the summer holidays I organised a 'sheep hunt' in the Minster that was completed by over 300 children, this was followed by a Donkey Hunt at Christmas.

I organised a clothes and toy swap where individuals were able to donate or 'swap' good quality used clothing, toys and footwear in the Minster. This proved very popular with families who have requested the swap be repeated during the Easter holidays. Working in partnership with Families outreach workers at other Wimborne Churches 'gift baskets' were prepared with items for local low-income families preparing for the birth of a baby. The coat and welly boot swap has continued throughout the Winter and has been used by families and adults in need.

When WOOFYT attended the Minster to provide sessions for local schools, I organised sessions for local families and the home education community which were well received.

I meet regularly with Family Outreach Workers from other local churches and the Diocesan Community Development Hub Advisor to co-ordinate support for local families.

I have also assisted with 2 by 2 toddler group and Oasis as needed.

I have launched a Wimborne Minster Facebook page that is 'followed' by 260 individuals and have established an email list of 100 individuals. Individuals on the email list receive a termly email inviting them to services targeted at families and family events.

Friends of Wimborne Minster Report, Peter Cook

The Friends of Wimborne Minster is a registered charitable incorporated organisation originally set up in 1945 to support the Minster with regard to its buildings and its mission.

The final grants were made for the rebuilding of the organ which at the time of writing is now complete.

£30,000 of the funds from the Preservation Trust which totalled £60,000 and were for the purpose of Quinquennial work have been transferred to the PCC as some of these works have started.

We are actively seeking new members, so if you are not a member, come and join us now. We are also seeking volunteers who may wish to become trustees of the charity at the AGM on 2nd July, at which the Archdeacon of Dorset, The Venerable Anthony Macrow-Wood will be present. The Secretary (Peter Cook)

will be happy to discuss membership or trustee duties of the Friends with anyone who is interested after Parish Eucharist or can be contacted via the Parish Office.

In 2022 we enjoyed two Cuthburga Lectures, given by William McVicker, our organ consultant and Martyn Whittock. Members of the events team provided tea for visits by a Surbiton Choir and Laudemus in July/August. We also once again enjoyed a November Tea Party with a talk and demonstration of the organ.

"God's Acre", Judy Burrows

We have really been battling the elements this year. In the summer we lost a few shrubs through the drought. We had a lot of exercise carrying cans of water to try to save some of them then joy of joys we got our much requested outside tap. We managed to replace the shrubs but the elements i.e. deluges of rain didn't improve their survival rates.

We have cleared a great deal of scrub from the beds and are continuing to do so. This will leave space for the young plants and bulbs.

There is now a bark chippings path through the Acre which will need maintenance but we think improves access to the planted area.

We have recently done some work on the God's Acre boards in the Minster which was looking rather sad. Some of Laurie Turner's photos have been used, particularly those of the various bugs. Molly has written out beautifully information on the surrounding trees. Please have a look.

We are coming into the best season now. Snowdrops crocuses and daffodils are already showing. There has been some interest in the tit boxes so look forward to a possible nesting. It is a full-time job keeping the bird feeders topped up but the jackdaws do enjoy it!!

We hope you enjoy wandering through the Acre or perhaps having a quiet contemplative moment.

Greenbelt Group, Rosemary Lunt

In past decades young people from the Minster would have had a summer extravaganza at the Greenbelt Festival. Gradually their parents' generation began to realise what they were missing - not just the brilliant music bands but also the inspiring talks that combined a passion for all the arts, social justice and issues of faith. We oldies dipped our toes in and found a source of inspiration at the Festival that we longed to continue during the rest of the year. Enter the Minster Greenbelt Group, first started by Margaret and Robert

Pearce, as an opportunity each month to listen to a cassette tape of one of the talks from the previous Festival and to continue the discussion. Fast forward to 2020 before the pandemic, when it had become an established, open group that welcomed people of differing views and convictions, but all seeking a way through the challenges of life and faith in the modern world. Throughout the pandemic we continued to meet regularly and consider particular issues via Zoom but when restrictions lifted, the energy to continue had been spent and by March 2022 we felt that the group had run its course. Talks from the Festival are still available and can be downloaded from the Greenbelt website.

Home Groups, (A combined report) Tricia Knott

There are five active groups amongst the Minster Congregation. Each has supplied news of their activities this year:

THE BARCLAY GROUP continues to meet as regularly as possible and is currently studying the `Pilgrim` series - a course for the Christian Journey - `Turning to Christ`, which is proving to be very helpful and thought provoking. There are 10 members of the Group; sadly we lost Terry Lane, a valued member, who died a short while ago, his knowledge and company has been greatly missed. The Group continue to support a young boy, Ehaishan, from Nepal and enjoy reading his regular letters telling us about his schooling etc. We meet too, in a social way, for a meal together, and value each others` friendship. *Anne Pollard*

THE PETER HOUSEGROUP met regularly in members` houses this last year, and have used course books on Kings, The Psalms and Luke. We have continued our practice of each of us preparing, in advance, one or two answers to questions for the session. This focuses our minds and helps our overall understanding of the topic for the week. We all appreciate and enjoy the fellowship, friendship and support within our group. *Liz Watson*

WELLSPRINGS GROUP has 10 members. Our studies over the past year have not been exactly easy! We dug deep into the book of Revelation. It was good to get our heads round the symbolism of this book. This was followed by doing the course `Living in Love and Faith` which has been produced by the Church of England to help us to understand issues of sexuality and identity. We are currently studying the book of Micah. In between major topics we have welcomed guest speakers from Minster charities, including MAF, Children's Society, Mother's Union. Some of our members have been through difficult times in recent months and have received strength and support from others. This is perhaps the prime advantage of belonging to a house group. *Alison Francis*

THE EMMAUS GROUP meets fortnightly on a Monday evening in each other's homes. We are currently following a study on "Homelessness" and recent studies have been "The Shack" which meant reading the novel and discussing issues such as suffering faced by the characters. We followed a Bible Society course on the books of the Bible, and a Study on modern day slavery particularly in this country. In January we enjoyed Communion together in Church Lounge and a Bring and Share meal, to which we invited some previous members of our group *Carol Jarvis and Anne King*.

THE REFRESH GROUP has nine members and we meet on alternate Wednesday afternoons. We have spent most of this year studying the book of Acts, some of which was quite unfamiliar and has given us new insights into the character and ministry of Paul. We took a break in the middle to study the excellent Alabare Charity's course about the homeless and hosted a talk from one of their representatives. As well as enjoying Bible study together we have supported and encouraged each other through prayer and in practical ways through some challenging times. *Tricia Knott*

If you are interested in joining or forming a Homegroup you should speak initially to a member of the clergy.

Lay Worship Leaders Team Report, Andrew Patrick

The Minster's team of Commissioned Lay Worship Leaders are De Ashton, Mike Dodds and Andrew Patrick. Minster Praise has continued to take place every Sunday at 11.15am throughout the year, and is "hosted" by an LWL two or three times a month, so we have continued to focus primarily on that, enjoying working closely with all the members of our Minster clergy team, with our Families Worker, Claire, and with our musicians.

Hosting Minster Praise involves studying the theme from the Lectionary readings, choosing worship songs, drawing up the Running Order, creating the PowerPoint presentation, and leading on the day. Each LWL also takes "Question Time" at least once a month, and that also requires in-depth Bible study in preparation. It's a wonderful privilege to study God's Word and then share that with other people.

In addition we sometimes assist in welcoming, refreshments, leading the singing, and "Creation Station" - an activity based on the day's theme. Some of us extend our LWL ministry into other activities, such as schools outreach. It continues to be challenging - but continues to be exciting!

Lay Pastoral Assistants, Anne Pollard

There are at present eleven LPA's, and we were pleased to welcome Tricia Knott, who joined us, after her training, during the year. Pastoral work continues in many ways, visiting, befriending, and being 'beside' others in times of need. Home Communion is taken to the Housebound on a regular basis, which is an important and sadly much needed ministry, as many older members of the congregation find it difficult to get to Church any more.

Three of our LPA's run the very successful, much needed and greatly appreciated 'OASIS' GROUP for the bereaved. The LPA's join the rest of the Deanery from time to time for refresher sessions, and it is good to meet the other LPA's of the Deanery - it is a ministry that is greatly needed.

Lunch and Chat, Anne Pollard

Lunch & Chat is getting back on course after a period, due to the Covid virus, of very low attendance. We have been very grateful to the members of the 'Oasis' Group who come regularly after their coffee morning, it is good to have them with us. We also have found a few passers-by are coming in, which has been a good outreach. It is good to welcome everyone each Friday for the Homemade Soup, Cake Lunch, and we are grateful to those who provide this. We were pleased to support Sheila Soper financially for her trip to South Sudan and now continue to support South Sudan Medical Link. Do join us if you are free. We are in Church House each Friday from 12 noon to 1.30pm, or come for a coffee any time after 11am.

MARS Trust, Anne King.

The Mars Trust is gradually growing the number of schools where it carries out workshops. The need to help young people develop relationship skills is more important than ever.

Across its workshops, MARS takes students through how to build good relationships with others from family and friends to romantic and work relationships.

To enable this valuable work to grow, MARS needs people to help facilitate the workshops, usually working with small groups of around 8 students, to help them work through the exercises the MARS presenter gives them. Those already involved find this a rewarding and useful way of helping young people.

MARS also needs prayers to support its work.

Minster Environment Group, (MEG) Alison Francis

MEG monitors Minster activities with the aim of improving and reducing the church's environmental impact. We recognise that the world is changing fast and it is important to support action to reduce global warming and maintain biodiversity. We care because it is God's creation, not ours, and as a church we are committed to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of our planet.

MEG Activities in 2022:

- Promoting implementation of the Minster Environment Policy
- Continuing to monitor temperatures and energy usage in the Minster and Church House.
- Investigating and then installing a HIVE heating controller in Church House enabling us to reduce the temperature of rooms while they are not being used.
- Involvement in the Wimborne Green Festival in October. Hosting the Fair on the Green and providing refreshments in the Minster
- Involvement in community organisations under Planet Wimborne
 - Wimborne Green Festival in October – a week of events with a focus on many aspects of sustainable living
 - Win on Waste
 - Donate IT
 - Repair Shop
 - Wimborne War on Waste
 - Wilding Wimborne
- Joining with the God's Acre team to hold a RSPB Bird Watch in God's Acre in January.

Minster Praise, Revd Nick Wells

Since going weekly Minster Praise has gone from strength to strength, since the start of advent we have seen an average of 30 people each week with ages ranging from 0 to those in their 80's. The service is aimed at all ages and is informal in style, we usually begin with refreshments before having a time of sung worship followed by our bible reading. To help us explore the theme and reading each week we break into three groups 'Question Time' is for those who would like to discuss the passage further, 'Creation Station' gives people of all ages the chance to use their creativity think about what we can learn and finally we have a 'Pocket of Peace' for those who simply want to take some time put to sit and reflect. We then come back together to share and pray before ending with more sung worship.

Minster Praise has been a great way to welcome baptism families and having Claire our Family Outreach worker involved has been a real blessing in terms of building relationships with those families that have started attending more regularly. As more people are getting involved we are excited to see what God has instore for Minster Praise so watch this space!

Minster Tour Guides, Gordon Edgar

The Guiding season in 2022 was differed from that of 2021. Although there were plenty of visitors there were fewer than in the previous year. However, it was my impression that the visitors we had in 2022, overall, had a much deeper interest in our history. A surprising number of visitors used Wimborne for a break in their journey along the south coast and had been attracted by the sight of the Minster. Visitors from abroad also featured, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Americas. We also had descendants of both the Beaufort and Courteney families.

We have welcomed a number of schools, Brownie and Beaver groups who have experienced tailored tours to meet the aspirations of the individual groups. We have given tours to organizations but, unfortunately, the number of booked coach tours was well down.

I am grateful to the Guides for all the time they give to the Minster, welcoming visitors and showing them treasures the Minster holds. In 2022 there were eight guides covering a total of 10 Guiding slots. Many Guides were generous and covered more than one slot. I thank all the Guides for the gifts of time and knowledge they give to the Minster.

The 2023 season beckons. From the first week of April to the last week of October there will be Guides in the Minster. Unfortunately, some individuals have indicated they will need to reduce the time they contribute to Guiding. However, I have been able to recruit two new Guides, but I would welcome more volunteers so that every Guiding slot could be covered.

Mothers' Union, Di Hiscock

We met in 2022 on the third Thursday afternoon of each month throughout the year in the Church House Lounge. We had a variety of speakers, a party and a Jubilee tea in the Rectory garden.

In September we restarted our monthly communion service and after coffee together we join the 11 o'clock service in the Minster on the first Wednesday of each month.

The Deanery MU leaders organised a Deanery Advent Carol Service at West Moors. After a Bring-and-share Christmas lunch in Church House a group of us

went and enjoyed the service and the opportunity to chat with members from other branches over tea and cake afterwards.

As members get older, we cannot physically support the diocesan projects but we do what we can in other ways, not least with prayer.

We provided a welcome pack for a family staying in the MU Holiday Home at Rockley Park. Sheila Soper, a trustee and Archdeaconry chairman, works with others to organise bookings etc.

The MU also supports the Women's Refuge in Salisbury, and we collected cleaning materials for them which we took to the Cathedral for the service for '16 Days Activism against Gender Violence'.

After many years without one we were very pleased to welcome Jenny Child as our branch treasurer!

Transformation Now is the Mothers' Union theme for 2023 and we pray for guidance and inspiration to continue its work here, in the diocese and worldwide.

Oasis, Sue Hatherley

Our aim is to offer support when bereavement leaves people feeling very low.

Our main meeting is a monthly Bring and Share lunch followed by a speaker, discussion or activity. Members say that sharing experiences over a meal or coffee is worthwhile.

Current membership is 35, but some members are quite peripheral, choosing whatever will suit their needs. On most Friday mornings people can gather informally in the Methodist Centre between 11.00 and 12.00, with a leader present;

Some go on to join Lunch and Chat in Church House. We also offer more individual support in small groups when needed, and members themselves organise Sunday lunches locally. Outside trips are popular, especially garden visits, trips to Hilfield Friary and theatre visits.

This year Jane Ashworth has joined our leadership team, and quickly proved an invaluable asset with our expanding membership.

We are also fortunate to have two volunteers, Vicki Knowles and Anne Bacon as general all round practical helpers.

Notable Events: Tree planting at Hilfield Friary; garden visit with cream teas at Brackenwood, Holt; Picnics with music in Wimborne Rectory garden; 'Curling for Fun' in Church House; creative Writing workshop with local writer Sarah Steele;

Talks by inspiring artist Jenny Hawkes and Wimborne's Malcolm Angel; and most recently a delicious lunch provided by a grateful member to celebrate her 90th Birthday!

Open the Book, Sheila Soper

'Open the Book' presents the Bible in primary schools in an accessible and enjoyable way, which helps schools meet their statutory collective worship obligations. We equip, encourage and enable volunteers from churches to deliver good quality assemblies."

So...let's *Open the Book* at our story this week.....

There is anticipation around Wimborne First School's assembly hall as the children look around as the story begins to unfold – adults & pupils dressed up in costume – the Year 4 pupils are always eager to volunteer to participate. They may be going to be Roman soldiers, disciples, crowd, or even take a short speaking part.

The Open the Book Team are in action each Wednesday in term time – one Wednesday rehearsing at St John's Church with our friends there, and the following week presenting our Bible story to the pupils at Wimborne First School. We observe the reaction of the pupils with interest – they engage with the story and are eager to share their thoughts with the teacher at the end.

We have a loyal team from St John's, St Michael's Colehill & Wimborne Minster who work so well together. The rehearsals often have hoots of laughter over some bloomer or other! We have welcomed some new members this year but as some have left, **we would warmly welcome new volunteers** to ensure we have enough "actors" when people go on holiday etc.

We have now completed eight years of the programme and are very pleased to have been asked to continue for another year. It has been a very successful project developing a strong relationship with Wimborne First School & also deepening the relationship between St John's, St Michael's and the Minster. Wimborne First School now join us in the Minster on several other occasions. It is great to be greeted in the town and other places by pupils who recognise us as 'OTB' people.

We have also been invited to return to Beaucroft School and will soon be performing there again. Their students just LOVE coming to dress up and help.

We will be presenting the Easter story again in both schools just before Easter.

Grateful thanks go to the volunteers who meet week by week. Also to those who have made costumes, made & painted scenery & to those who have prayed for us.

Parish Magazine, Rosalind Jensen & Andrew Kelley

As co-editors of the magazine, we thank everyone who has sent in interesting information and reports through the year, or supplied photos (particularly for the cover). Regular contributors range from the God's Acre team and Wilding Wimborne to book reviewers, the crossword writer, and the Chained Library experts. The Minster also subscribes to *Parish Pump*, a website which supplies articles and news items that we can adapt each month.

We are very grateful to all our advertisers, both those who pay for a year and those who advertise seasonally. If you use any of their services or go to their shops, please mention the magazine. Thanks to the advertising, the magazine is roughly breaking even (over the year). The printers, Shadow Design, in Ferndown, are doing an excellent job at a competitive price, currently producing 300 copies a month and preparing the issue for posting online.

In the coming year, we would like to have more regular content for children, and contributions from more different members of the Minster. We appreciate advance notice of events, so that the diary is as accurate as possible; the next deadline can be found in each issue. And finally, if you enjoy the magazine, pass it on to a friend or neighbour, so that it is read more widely!

Photography, Beatrice Dopita

This year the organ has been at the centre of my attention.



It was astonishing to see it taken apart, for restoration by Manders in 2022, and in January this year to see it back in action with Sam Hanson accompanying CW Bruce's Silent Film night.

The WOOFYT Course in February, showed children how an organ actually works and hopefully inspired a few to think about learning to play one.

The Minster hosted the Pipe-Up event, for the Diocese, in February 2023; a scheme, which encourages young organists. A short recital showcased the

talents of these young musicians. The photo shows the students, accompanied by their tutors, – beside our newly restored organ.



I have photographed the liturgical year at the Minster; the Choir have been my favourite subjects. I hope we might be able to use some of these pictures as we develop our plan to create a Heritage attraction at the Minster. Some examples are: Choristers lighting the Advent Candle and the Palm Sunday Procession through the town.



We returned to our usual Easter celebrations for the first time, post-pandemic and gathered in the churchyard before dawn ready to renew our baptismal vows.



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was marked, in style, with a picnic on the Minster Green. Our MP Michael Tomlinson, and the Mayor, led a procession through the town, in the evening, which ended in the lighting of the beacon and a display by Wimborne's Militia. A few months later, we held a service to honour our late Queen Elizabeth and the Minster kept a book of condolence for people to sign.

In the dark days of winter, we registered the church as a warm space for anyone who was cold. We share a responsibility to serve the people of the town in any way we can: through giving to the Food Bank, offering activities to young families, and lunches, open to all in Church House, for people who are lonely. The Civic Service, held in March 2023, is a reminder that our church is often at the centre of life in Wimborne.



Please let me know if you'd like me to photograph any aspect of life at the Minster.

Publicity Officer's Report, Anthony Oliver

It is very difficult to vary what is written in this report each year suffice it to say that Press Notices continue to be sent out to all the Media both before and after events. The resulting press coverage varies from publication to publication.

We continue to be well supported by the Monthly Wimborne Around Guides, The Dorset View and Viewpoint Magazines, the New Stour and Avon Magazine, the Wimborne Directory and the Daily Echo. The three-monthly Allendale News has kept the Public up to date with Minster Events in particularly with the re-building of the Minster Organ. The Radio Stations, particularly Radio Solent, Radio Wimborne and Forest FM cover many of our events and from time to time we have had coverage on both BBC South Today and Meridian ITV as witnessed recently following the Minster Pancake Race, special thanks here to Derek Butler and Gordon Edgar. We even had a surprise showing on BBC South Today when they were showing at the end of December their round up

of pictures sent in during the year and the Minsters Remembrance Service on the Minster Green featured in the November pictures. The Minster continues to feature in the Daily Telegraph and The Times thanks to our friend Russell Sach. What would we do if the Parish Magazine did not cover the various events which take place throughout the year, thank you to Rosalind Jensen for her support.

A final thank you goes to all those who help to keep The Minster in the Public Eye throughout the year, it is very much appreciated.

Safeguarding Report, Jane Davidson

"To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6 8

There have been no Safeguarding complaints in the past year.

The Minster Safeguarding Policy was approved by PCC in November 2022

In January 2023 the Archbishops' Council published its response to the publication of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) The recommendations can be found on the web by following this link:-

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/IICSA%20-%20Joint%20Response%20to%20Final%20Report%20Recommendations.pdf>

The Diocese Safeguarding Team continue to work towards implementing these recommendations and guiding the churches in carrying them out.

The Minster was inspected by Archdeacon Anthony on February 22nd 2023.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

DBS checks are now required every THREE YEARS NOT FIVE YEARS. This has increased the workload. There has recently been a number of difficulties completing these correctly, not least due to human error. Apologies to those who have experienced frustrations and difficulties.

Automatic notification will come from the Diocese when renewals are due. Checks are done online. We have endeavoured to put everyone on the "Update" service which should make renewals simpler. Jane Davidson, Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) is able to assist with these. Verification of original documentation needs to be completed by either Jane or other local verifiers.

As the Minster is constituted as a trust, under Charities Commission rules agreed with the national church our PCC members (trustees) are now required to have Enhanced Adult and Child DBS check.

Safeguarding Training.

Safeguarding training is to be renewed every three years. It is expected that all Minster Clergy, PCC members, staff and volunteers complete the required level of Safeguarding Training for their role. The Diocese provide a matrix for the level of training required:-

<https://d3hgrrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/62d6c0328cf55/content/pages/documents/dbs-and-training-matrix-2021-dbfsg.xlsx>

Training is online through the Salisbury Diocese website:-

<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org>

A copy of the certificate needs to be sent to Jane Davidson as the Micro-site does not yet hold this information automatically.

Jane has renewed the Train the Trainer Safeguarding module with the Diocese and it is hoped may be able to facilitate Basic and Foundation training face to face. Dates for this will be available after Easter and will be announced in the Newsletter.

Jane is usually available by telephone (07962718724), email janedavidson1959@gmail.com or appointment in the Church Lounge; for enquiries, DBS checks and support with online training. De Ashton acts as Deputy Parish Safeguarding Representative (DPSR) in Jane's absence.

Thank you to all the Wimborne Minster volunteers and congregation for their support in delivering the Safeguarding agenda. It is of great importance to ensure that our congregation and visitors are treated as Jesus would encourage us to do and historical mistakes are not repeated.

*"I believe that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults should be the highest priority of all parts of the Church, and that any failings in this area must be immediately reported. There are no excuses for shortcomings" - **Archbishop Justin Welby***

Saint Margaret & St Anthony's Chapel, Sue Robertson & Dinah Ingle Finch

The Chapel of St Margaret and St Anthony, adjacent to Wimborne Hospital, has been a place of worship since the Middle Ages, when it was a Leper Chapel attached to the local Almshouses.

St Margaret's, as it is known locally, is not officially part of the Wimborne Minster Benefice. It once formed part of the Kingston Lacy estate, before this was in National Trust ownership. It is now overseen by St Margaret's and Stones Charity and worship is led by Minster Clergy.

Weekly BCP Holy Communion Services were held on Fridays until Covid 19 enforced its closure for more than two years.

In May 2022 discussions started about reopening the Chapel. It was decided to resume a monthly service for a temporary trial period of 3 months, from July 2022. Holy Communion services from the Common Worship book would be held every third Thursday at 11am.

Spring Cleaning started in earnest, with extra help from Michelle polishing the brass, De laundering the altar linens, and Bruce helping with the windows and overseeing the heating system. The piano was repositioned, and chairs rearranged to meet social distancing requirements.

Our initial service on July 21st was very well supported and worship was heartily enjoyed by an enthusiastic congregation. In September our focus was to commemorate the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2nd, with special hymns and prayers. In October we held our Harvest Festival, and in November poppies and crosses decorated the window sills and altar for Remembrance. The heating system was fixed in time for our December service, when we enjoyed carols, mince pies and mulled wine. The chapel was decorated with a Crib scene, an Advent Ring, greenery, baubles, and our usual, impressive papier mâché figures of the Holy Family and Magi.

Jean was our chapel key holder for many years, and in December handed the role over to Pauline. We are grateful to them both for their marvellous help and thank them for their willingness in making the key so readily available whenever it is requested.

There are no facilities in the Chapel, but with a little organisation, refreshments are provided after the service when a welcome social time is shared. Newcomers are always welcome to join us in our worship within this special, beloved building.

Sadly, one of our regular congregation David Sims died last Autumn. He was a keen supporter of the Historic Churches Trust Cycle Ride and opened up the Chapel each September for this event. We continued this in his memory in 2022. A highlight on the day was the visit of the Minster Junior Choir. We loved hearing the young voices sing in our Chapel, and they seemed to love the biscuits on offer! In all, almost fifty cycling/walking visitors came to the Chapel, some of whom hadn't known of its existence and appreciated being invited inside.

The flower bed outside the Chapel was lovingly attended by Anne Hodkinson until her death early 2022. The Almshouse Community have now taken this border under their wing.

The Almshouse Community sometimes use the chapel as a room for social events, and the Franciscan Tertiary Group have resumed their meetings in the Chapel every 2nd Wednesday of the month.

It is wonderful to know that this historic place of worship has been brought alive again since lockdown, with visitors who love this special building.

Servers Report, Christine Feltham.

With most of the restrictions imposed by Covid behind us, except for the need for care and cleanliness, we have as you may have noticed, been able to resume the participation of Altar Servers during some Eucharistic services. However, this has had to be generally limited to major events and festivals due to the size of our team which now comprises only 1 Crucifer and 4 Acolytes plus myself. We are fortunate that with the number of clergy now participating we have not needed to provide an MC. In addition, thanks are due to Choirman Jonathan Hiscock, who has continued to act as Crucifer when choral duties have allowed. We also appreciate Chorister Fin, who has recently begun to serve as Crucifer in addition to his role in the Choir.

Looking back over the records to the time that I took over 22 years ago I find that the team then comprised 8 Crucifers, 4 MC's and 9 Acolytes! This of course made it possible to avoid the need for individuals to serve week on week, something that I have always been keen to avoid. In the past we have had a significant number of young people who have started as acolytes but that sadly that has declined as they have gone off to further education and the many other involvements. However, I am hopeful that in time congregation numbers will increase and volunteers come forward. Duties do not generally demand time outside participation in services and I am hopeful that new members will come forward. I am always willing to discuss and explain the role, and to offer training - so please do not hesitate to ask.

Sidespersons Report, Anthony Oliver

As we continued to get over the aftereffects of the Coronavirus Pandemic and Services were getting back to some form of normality Sidespersons continued to carry out their most important duty of welcoming those attending the different services and handing out the appropriate books.

The extra requirement of recording the names of those attending the services and the wearing of masks and sanitising were finally over and although some people were still keen on social distancing with the smaller number attending there is a lesser problem with seating.

The 2023 Annual Meeting will see the three yearly complete revision of the sidespersons list and whilst currently we do have a good compliment we can

always do with more as it saves those on the list from having to be on duty too often. The only requirement for sides-persons is they must be on the Church Electoral Roll so if you feel you would like to be part of the team which carries out this side of the Minsters Ministry please do get in touch.

We welcomed Christine Gibbs and Margaret Foster as new 8.00am sidespersons during the year and we say thank you to Norma Aitchison, Jackie Leever and Ros Wakeling who have or are standing down after many years of devoted service.

Thank you again to all those on the sides-persons team who faithfully carry out their duties Sunday by Sunday and at other times when required, it is an important side of the Minsters Ministry.

Social Media, Ian Grimbly

(Social Media and Online Media, Username @TheMinster1)

A brief update on our progress since the last APCM. As previously said, using social media we can measure our interactions with our "audience".

Over the last year we have seen an increase of Facebook Page "Likes" of 151 to 887, with a 168 increase for Page Followers to 967.

Page Likes are individuals who show interest in the receiving updates on the Minster. The figure for numbers "Following" our Page includes not just individuals but also organisations, schools & companies, which is why it is higher.

We are yet to explore using this as a source of donations to support the Minster's finances.

I've attached a graphic showing some information about the Minster's Facebook audience. As you can see, we have international as well as local people showing their interest.

One significant change that has occurred over the last year is the increase in the number of people who are posting content on the Page. Families Outreach Worker, Claire Lehman, uses her own Minster Families and The Minster's Pages to contact her families and interact with them. Martin has been adding content about the daily life and activities of the Minster. All of this is creating interest and many visitors have been invited to like/follow the Minster's Page as a result.

Our Twitter Feed has increased from 22 Followers to 295, but this is a different more activist media. One key benefit of the Twitter Feed is it's appearing on the Minster's website Homepage.

Our "A Church Near You" (ACNY) Page yields the following information: -

Views	weekly	monthly	Annual
2022	131	673	9,804
2023	185	676	11,350

Thus you can see that ACNY, the Church of England's social media website enjoys increasing attention.

In addition, the Minster's YouTube channel has generated a further 25 subscribers taking the total to 231 Subscribers.

Stewardship and Gift Aid Secretary, Dennis Child

This is my first report having volunteered to take over this important role to free up more time for our treasurer Richard. I have spent over forty years dealing with Church and Cathedral accounts and Stewardship. My wife Jenny and I have recently retired to Dorset from Yorkshire, and I would like to help The Minster in the best way that I can.

I have been able to review the various methods of the congregation's giving for which the Rector and PCC thank you all most sincerely. These funds allow us to not only maintain the Minster in such a wonderful way but to also continue to enhance the worship experience of all.

My next task is to improve the contributions from our visitors by increasing the number of contactless giving stations with improved signage. You may have already noticed that we now have a 'QR code' which will feature on leaflets and service sheets so that a simple mobile phone scanning of this leads donors to our website Giving Page where they can also apply Gift Aid.

I will also be enhancing our webpage in order that viewers can make donations and sign up to regular giving in an easy way. Finally, I will be writing to everyone shortly because we will need new gift aid declaration forms using the current wording from HMRC.

Two by Two Toddler Group, Ruth Edgar

The Two by Two group provide a weekly session in Church House where children (0-5) and carers can play and relax. We meet from 9.30am to 11.00am on a Thursday morning in term time.

Since the last report we have continued to grow and have gained a new cohort of children with their carers. There is a regular group of mothers with one or two children born since the onset of the pandemic and in recent weeks we have also had some Childminders with their charges.

Sadly, one of our coffee ladies has undergone major surgical treatment recently and will be recovering for a little while. As always, offers to help with coffee once a month are very welcome. It will require a DBS check and Safeguarding Training which can easily be done on-line.

At the beginning of the school year, we were delighted to welcome Claire, our Families Outreach Worker, to our group and she has been able to meet the mums regularly.

Finally, a big 'thank-you' must go to our coffee ladies, who attend whatever the weather. Thanks also to Parish Secretary Jane, for receiving enquiries for the group, and to the clergy, who provide termly services in church for us.

Wimborne Minster Musical Heritage Trust, Peter Cook (Secretary & Treasurer).

The trust was established in early 2020 to manage the finance of the Minster Makes Music Appeal. It is a non-membership charitable incorporated organisation. The five original trustees have been joined by Revd Canon Nigel Lloyd as an additional trustee. We met during the year and have overseen grants to the PCC for the organ rebuilding and for the WOOFYT courses (informs children about church organs). We also have some funds in reserve towards the cost of an organ scholar. We also have received a few funds which are restricted to special uses, e.g. help with music lessons. The accounts have been duly audited and agreed as required by the Charity Commission and the trust is now registered for reclaiming of VAT on donations. Cheques for the appeal should be made payable to: Wimborne Minster Musical Heritage Trust.