



St Mary's, Hardwick

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2020



Team Rector

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The parishes of Barton, Caldecote with Childerley, Comberton, Coton, Dry Drayton, Great and Little Eversden, Hardwick, Harlton, Haslingfield and Toff

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Purpose of the PCC

St Mary's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, socials and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church building and Churchyard.

Organisation of the PCC

Incumbent & chair:	Revd. Canon Alison Myers
Treasurer:	Clare Bigg (LLM) (invited)
Assistant Minister (Team Curate)	Revd. Paul Garnell (from July 2019)
Church Wardens:	Thelma Westbury (to APCM 2020) Alison Marcus (from APCM 2020) Janet Hayman
Deanery synod rep:	Lois Frettsome (until APCM 2023)
Team Council rep	Clare Bigg (until APCM 2023)
Elected members:	Michaela McNeill (until APCM 2023) Tricia Maguire (until APCM 2023) Jane Muncey (until APCM 2023) Jeff Jones (until APCM 2022) Naomi Roy (until APCM 2021) Chris Ford (until APCM 2021) Sue Cornwell (until APCM 2021)
Co-opted:	Peter Cornwell (co-opted by PCC in April 2019, continued in 2020) Thelma Westbury (co-opted by PCC in October 2020, to APCM 2021)

The method of appointing the PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election on the PCC.

The below are subcommittees of the PCC:

The Local Ministry Team

In 2020, the local team consisted of Alison (the vicar), Janet Hayman and Alison Marcus (churchwardens), Paul Garnell (Team Curate), Michaela McNeill (Authorized Lay Minister), Tricia Maguire (Authorized Lay Minister), Howard Bigg (Associate Minister) and Clare Bigg (Licensed Lay Minister) and Peter Cornwell (Sunday Club).

The team met in a variety of ways during the course of the year including on Zoom. Generally its scope is to oversee the week-by-week running of the church: primarily organizing services, pastoral care, and the coordination of other church-run activities; and to pray together for church and community.

The local ministry team also acts as the standing committee. This is the only committee of the PCC required by law and consists of the incumbent, the churchwardens and two other representatives of the PCC. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions of the Council. Meetings of the standing committee are called only when required.

The Cabin Teams

The building team in 2020 was Ali Marcus, Peter Cornwell, Jeff Jones, Nicky Kerr, Chris Brown (secretary), Clare Bigg (treasurer), and Alison Myers. This team was stood down when the build when the main build phase was completed.

The management team in 2020 was Clare Bigg (treasurer), Jeff Jones, Anne Jones (bookings), Peter Cornwell, Sue Cornwell, Ali Marcus and Nicky Kerr, with Alison Myers.

The Events Committee

The Events Committee consists of Anne Jones, Caroline Edgley, Thelma Westbury, Sue Cornwell, Joan Segrave, Alison Marcus and Lois Frettsome. As vicar, Alison is an ex-officio member. It meets around 5 times a year to plan fundraising and social events.

The activities of the PCC (and of the church)

Preface

Alison Myers writes:

2020 was a year like no other. The pandemic, the lockdowns and restrictions on our daily lives, the closure of church buildings, the need to find other ways of being a church community together, the switch to digital and Zoom and the need to look out for each other have all played their part in making it very different year. And its affects continue.

It has forced us to change and has drawn out creativity and generosity that we may not have realised was there. Some of the changes to our lives and the life of our church community we will reverse as soon as we can, some we may continue to run with.

Perhaps our biggest achievement and change in 2020 has been despite the pandemic not because of it: the erection and opening (unofficially) of the Cabin at St Mary's, after so many years of dreaming, praying and, latterly, fundraising. We did it! And our thanks go to so many who helped in different ways.

In 2020 we learned to be more flexible and creative in personal and corporate worship – using both the outdoor space and Zoom, video and podcasts. For some of us, 'everyday faith' has deepened by using Worship at Home, Facebook reflections, and thought for the week' resources or participating in Zoom Compline during the week. We got to know other congregation members and neighbours in a different way with phone calls and walks. Some of us participated in the Hardwick Network and similar initiatives, including Pippins' cake boxes, offering care as individuals and on behalf of the church and in the Foodbank we enabled others to care too. In 2020, the church, the cabin and its grounds played a greater part in the lives of more people who enjoyed visiting for produce, books, wild-flowers and peace.

We have learned much and are grateful to God and to each other for getting this far.

This report reflects the very different year that we have had.

Worship, Prayer and Spiritual Life

Alison Myers writes:

Sundays and Worship at Home

The year started excitingly with a morning vision and prayer service and 'breaking the ground' prayers in January as the Cabin build started. We articulated the vision for the Cabin and the whole site in terms of 3 Biblical trees representing a place for encounter with God, hospitality for all and the offer of wholeness.

Then in the first lockdown we recognised the importance of 'worship at home', dispersed households though nevertheless still a church community. We contributed too, and benefited from, shared worship and prayer resources – in print, video, audio and social media – created by and for the Lordsbridge Churches (remember the virtual Palm Sunday procession, lighting candles for Easter at home or on the frontline, mini-reflections for Holy Week and Easter on Facebook, video reflections on prayer for 'Thy Kingdom Come' and the week-in-week-out distribution of Sunday prayers and a gospel reflection). Over the summer we held communion services outdoors under the 'cathedral pillars' of our trees, moving carefully indoors, masked and risk assessed, as the weather became chilly. We learned that under Covid-restrictions our building has a capacity of between 25 and 30.

Services in church ceased again in November and we returned to the now well-rehearsed Worship at Home, with some St Mary's members joining the Lordsbridge Sunday Zoom congregation. Our ecumenical, area-wide service at Christ the King was a premiered video this year with music recorded in lockdown to which congregation members contributed. Remembrance Sunday prayers and silence were held outdoors at 11am.

By the time we reached Christmas, and as we anticipated another lockdown, we were able to put into practice all we had learned about 'mixed-mode' church during the year – with the Advent 'Nine days, nine lessons, nine carols' video reflections, an outdoor Vigil with carols and more smaller services over Christmas itself, alongside Worship at Home resources.

Weekday prayer and 'Everyday Faith'

During the year 'Wednesday Morning Prayer for Hardwick and beyond' moved onto Zoom during the year enabling more people to join this ecumenical group. I introduced Night Prayer on Zoom during the first lockdown, initially twice a week, then led by Clare and Howard, once a week.

We have also discovered that creating and distributing print, pre-recorded and social media material has given people a greater range of homegrown resources available on days other than Sunday. This has been appreciated as a complement to Sunday services, and by some who would not or cannot gather on a Sunday morning.

Tuesday Mornings at St Mary's

Clare writes:-

Our toddler group became Monday Mornings at the School in January 2020 because the church was not usable without the supporting facilities of the old cabin. Meeting in a different venue brought some benefits (especially a quicker set-up and pack-down) but we missed the chancel as the story place.

When the pandemic hit, we moved onto zoom with some of the older children – it didn't work so well with the 1 and 2 year-olds. This continued up to the summer holidays, after which the older children had moved on, so Tuesday Mornings was mothballed until toddlers are allowed to meet without social distancing.

Church Community and Pastoral Care

Clare writes:-

The first lockdown made us become more intentional about keeping in touch via the phone, texts, emails, outdoor meet-ups and doorstep conversations. We became especially aware of the importance of finding means of social contact with those living on their own and/or without internet access. We hope that, when all restrictions end, we will take forward a memory of how much a phone call, text or visit can mean.

During the lockdown our prayer calendar was revamped to include points of prayer relating to the pandemic as well as climate change concerns. Praying regularly for one another helps build community in unseen ways.

We have sadly lost two 'fathers of the congregation'. Peter Richardson died aged 92. His funeral was at St Mary's on 6th Nov 2020 and was as packed as was possible in Covid times. Others lined the road to pay their respects. Peter was a resident of Hardwick for many years and a founder trustee of the first Village Hall Committee, and later the Community Association. As such, he was a fount of knowledge about the village. In later years he was very supportive of the Cabin project, always ready to give an encouragement to the team at every setback. He was a strong family man, practical, caring and wise and is survived by his wife Ruth. Douglas Skipper died on 28th Jan 2021, just months short of his 100th birthday. Douglas and Mary lived in Hardwick for 35 years before moving to be close to their son 5 years ago. Douglas was active in both village and church, using his practical skills in the gardening club, at the church fete, helping the WI with competitions among other things, supporting activities for children and getting involved with the Hardwick Happening. He was an approachable, kind man who gave sound advice and practical help with generosity. Both Peter and Douglas were men of quiet faith who led by example. Our prayers are with Ruth and Mary and their families.

This year Thelma Westbury finally laid her church warden mantle down and has become our church warden emeritus. Thelma has served faithfully and cheerfully for more than 35 years. She has always been ready to help, encourage and sort out clergy and lay ministers with patience, grace and a smile. Rain or shine, Thelma has always been there to open the church and get it ready, welcoming all and sundry, and efficiently doing those behind-the-scenes jobs which are so necessary but not always appreciated. There is little Thelma doesn't know about the church and we hope she will pass on her treasure store of knowledge to the next generation. She has left big shoes to fill! We had a special presentation of a medal and gifts for Thelma in church on 20th December to say a heartfelt 'thank you!' Sadly we couldn't have a party at that time – there is much partying to catch up on!

Mission, Outreach and Contribution to village life

Anne writes:-

Hardwick Network

'Hardwick Network is the village's COVID-19 mutual aid community group'. It was set up at the beginning of the first lockdown and enlisted a group of volunteers as part of a whatsapp group, including some members of the congregation at St Mary's Church. It is very ably co-ordinated by Ruth Enge. We were able to help residents of Hardwick with shopping, collecting prescriptions, providing a phone buddy and anything else to help and support the more vulnerable residents. It proved to be a lifeline for some people. Alongside this, we identified a group of older residents who would benefit from a cooked two-course meal once a week, free of charge, which are collected from Over Day Centre and delivered to their homes.

As lockdown continued, Hardwick Network had its own website www.hardwicknetwork.co.uk and developed into a social network too, setting up groups on Zoom for different groups of people in the community. These are... parents with young children, retired people, young professionals, 20s – 40s, a book group and a group playing online games. Again, with social activities on hold, this has proved to be useful for some people.

Hamper scheme

At Christmas time we made up 16 food hampers to accompany those made by the Evangelical Church which were delivered to families in Hardwick, identified by the school, who would appreciate some 'extras' during the festive period., We managed to get a £400 grant from Hardwick Network and we topped it up with food from the Food Bank. A working party met in the Cabin to put the hampers together. These were very much appreciated.

Pippin's

During 2020 we met at Pippin's for only 3 months due to Covid-19. At Christmas time we decided to share some festive cheer with some of the older residents of the village and those people who were missing their monthly cuppa & cake at Pippin's. Many of the bakers made their speciality cakes and biscuits and we made up 48 boxes of goodies which were distributed on the Monday before Christmas. We had very positive feedback with messages on Facebook, phonecalls and thank you notes. Again, something very much appreciated at a time when many were not able to see their families.



Paul writes:-

This past year has been a challenge to maintain contact with those for whom I had weekly in-person meetings, be that via the Friendship Club or walkabouts in the village. The Friendship Club momentarily gathered during the brief easing of lockdown in the summer of 2020, and it was good to meet together, albeit, a number remained at home shielding. Since that time, I have been unable to find capacity in the week to provide the weekly calls offered during Lockdown 1, mostly due to the demands of home-schooling coupled with my interim-lead role for St Peter's, Coton. Telephone calls have been infrequent, but each member of the Friendship Club knows they are being prayed for each week, and there has been the occasional social-distance doorstep knock and chat. In addition, members have been directed to the Lordsbridge Team Worship at Home resources either online or for those without internet access, the opportunity for weekly delivery of the resources. All have been appreciative of the link and support of St Mary's, Hardwick.

Events

Sue writes:-

Unfortunately we were unable to hold any of the usual events in 2020 - no Quiz Night, no Fete, no Harvest Supper, no summer afternoons, no Christmas Tree festival. This was even more disappointing as the lovely 'Cabin at St Mary's' was completed and ready for action. However, in the spring, we opened a Plant & Produce stall in the church porch which proved to be very popular and thanks to the generosity of Hardwick people giving surplus plants and produce from allotments and gardens, we raised a sizeable amount of money. We ran a treasure hunt for families. At Christmas, a 'Super Hamper' was raffled, raising over £800. A collection point for the Cambridge food bank was set up in the church porch. Again, Hardwick residents have been extremely generous, something which was noted by the staff in Cambridge. Since the autumn, the contributions have been shared with the school who have made up food parcels to help those in need in the village. In response to a suggestion from the Hardwick network, a bookstall was set up in the porch of the Cabin for people to buy or exchange books. This has been well received and has raised £200 to date. We do hope that we will be able to put on more events in 2021 - the plant/produce stall and the book exchange will continue as these have proved to be valuable to many in the community - the latter now includes a jigsaw swap.

Thanks to Paul, Tricia, Helen and others for their assistance.

Kigali link

Alison writes:

We celebrated Kigali Sunday with a video service that included a reflection from Bishop Nathan of Kigali and a song recorded in lockdown by the Kigali Cathedral 'Prince of Peace' choir and local Cambourne Community Gospel Choir.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (that is the duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Sharon McMahon writes:-

I write this report as the out-going Safeguarding Officer for Hardwick and Dry Drayton. Jane Muncey is going to take over the ropes. I'd like to thank her for offering to do this, and for taking the time to fulfil the role.

In 2020 and early 2021, a number who had their first DBS check using the new system are finding their checks need to be repeated to keep up to date. This is in hand.

The Parish Dashboard has proved a good way of keeping track of how each parish has fulfilled its safeguarding duty. There are policies to review in 2021, but we are on a good footing. The dashboard is particularly useful when handing over to Jane, as she can see at a glance where we are, and where we are heading next.

Jane has continued to work with me to ensure that all references are taken up and are on file.

Cabin at St Mary's

Ali Marcus writes:-

It is incredible to think that we have now achieved our goal of building a new community hall in spite of all the problems that have occurred in the project and the on-going COVID 19 pandemic. It certainly has been a journey of twist and turns, mountains and valleys!

Apologies for the length of this report but The Cabin build has been a major ongoing project for our church and it is important we recognise the time, money, emotional and intellectual resources that we have all put into it. This report for 2020 starts with a brief refresher of the events of 2019 which were possibly not reported last year due to the pandemic starting.

The working party consisted of Alison Myers, Clare Bigg (Treasurer), Peter Cornwell, Jeff Jones, Nicky Kerr, Ali Marcus (chair), Jim Lewis (who sadly passed away in 2019) and Chris Brown who kindly took minutes for us. It has been a real team effort to make the progress we have.

2019 was a year of much uncertainty and hard work. We were:

- Finalising our building specifications and participating in the design of the building which was drawn up by Ingleton Wood.

- Liaising with the Community Centre project to ensure we would keep our project complementary to that building rather competing with it and possibly jeopardising our own grant applications
- Liaising with the planning department to see if we could access any of the S106 money available to Hardwick. Unfortunately, it was not possible
- Arranging the necessary site surveys to comply with planning conditions.
- Removing of some of the trees along the northern boundary of the site in March 2019 prior to the bird nesting season. This ensured the project could commence in the summer of 2019 if we were successful with Grant applications.
- Waiting and planning for the outcome of the Newt survey. It was a huge relief in May 2019 when we were officially told there were no Newts!
- Working hard to submit grant applications in order raise the build costs of £250,000 so that we could give Coulson's the go ahead to start building. By May we were projecting a total budget of £300,000 including professional fees. We had already raised more than £100,000 by fundraising, donations and pledges and had confirmation of several grants. We had decided to focus most of our efforts on applications for larger grants including Garfield Weston, Amey Cespa and WREN. The amount of work involved in submitting the grant applications should not be underestimated and included a second consultation with the village.

In June 2019 we had submitted enough grant applications that we were able to agree in good faith with Coulson that subject to the applications being successful, we could aim to break ground in September.

In July 2019, whilst creating the detailed plans for the build, Coulson revised the budget and we were devastated that the build cost had increased by approximately 50%, which would require an additional £120,00. With grant applications already made on the basis of £250,000 build costs, the whole project was seriously threatened and we faced the possibility of ending our partnership with Coulson and going back to square one. We took advice from the diocese and building consultants, sought quotes from other builders and prayed. After intense negotiations and compromise on both sides, we agreed to a simplified design of the building and Coulson brought the build cost down to £300,000. At the time, we felt we would be able to cover the £50,000 uplift in the budget by further grant applications with the fall-back position of taking out a mortgage or using loans from some generous individuals. Therefore, we agreed and the project was able to proceed, subject to confirmation of funding.

We felt especially blessed when we heard in the autumn of 2019 that two of our major grant applications were successful and the granters were flexible enough to allow us to revise our financial plan. We were able to give the green light to Coulson and fix a start date.

Thus, 2020 started with detailed planning, and more negotiations with the planning department. After clearing out the old cabin which became the welfare unit for the builders, we broke ground for the project on the 24th January 2020 just before COVID 19 changed our world. Special thanks go to Nicky for her expert advice and eye for detail and Jeff for being our main onsite overseer of the build. Fortunately, the shell went up quickly without any problems and we were able to top out the building making it secure and watertight before work halted when we went into the first lock down of 2020.

Then, once the building trade was deemed safe to continue working in a COVID secure way, work was recommenced and slowly the rest of the build was completed. The keys were handed to us on 29th July 2020 at a socially distanced ceremony. Of course, a major landmark in the build was the removal of the old cabin with thanks to Chivers Farms.

There were pitfalls along the way. It should also be recognised that getting the planning conditions for the building work signed off was not straightforward and took the best part of 18 months to achieve.

Site drainage has always been a difficult condition of the planning permission. Because the ditch which receives our surface water is an Awarded Watercourse, there are regulations regarding the rate at which water must flow into it and specifications for the design of the headwall that must be adhered to. Unfortunately, the Planning Department did not communicate this and at the end of 2020 we still could not understand why there was a problem getting the drainage planning conditions signed off. In December Ali managed to speak to the Drainage Consultant dealing with this for SCDC and with the help of Jeff measured the water depth and relayed the water level specifications for the headwall to Coulson. A new head wall was designed and we finally received confirmation that all the planning conditions were signed off in February 2021.

Additionally, in February 2020, we discovered that a legal agreement called a Wayleave Easement would be needed to pass the drainage pipe under Chivers track and across Parish Council Land to the ditch which is privately owned by ex-patriots. This has been a protracted process, involving detective work to find out who owned the ditch and locate them living abroad, extensive negotiations with the Parish Council and the fact that getting a three-way legal document drawn up takes time. Before COVID times, who would have thought that getting several signatures witnessed would be a problem? We are still trying to get this finalised so that the last of the surface water drainage can be completed.

During the whole of the year Clare kept a tight reign on cash flow and liaised with the grant officers and Coulson to steer us through the complex process of proving value for money. This was a mammoth time consuming and stressful task. Thank you, Clare,

At this point it is worth taking a look back at the finances of the project which Clare has kindly summarised.

Finance of the Cabin 2015 – 2020

Income 2015 - 2020:

Donations from individuals, groups and local businesses and Gift Aid:	£189,059
Fundraising events:	£18,155
Grants:	£192,646
Total:	£399,860

(note roughly 50:50 grant and 'our' money)

Our grant funders were:

Amey £70,000;

WREN (FCC Communities) £63,896;

The Garfield Weston Found'n £20,000;

The Bernard Sunley Charitable Trust £10,000;

Hill £10,000;

The Shone Trust £7,500;

The Allchurches Trust £5,250;

The Rural Cambridgeshire Fund £5,000

South Cambridgeshire District Council £1000.

Thanks also due to Coulson's for pro-bono work prior to the build, the donor who gave £14,569 to cover the 'Contributing Third Party' funds needed to release the Amey and WREN grants and many others who gave time and expertise to help us on our way.

Expenditure 2015 – 2020

Professional fees, advice, planning:	£31,245
Contributing Third Party payment (to release Amey and WREN grants):	£14,569
Coulson's build:	£313,368
Additional fitting out:	£12,494
Electricity during build:	£857
Transfer to Cabin Running Fund:	£4,500
Total:	£377,033

Still to come retention payment to Coulson's, legal fees re easement, additional landscaping and drainage, memorial bench and board, grant funders plaque.

The final budget for the build is yet to be confirmed with these last bits to tackle but is as presented in the financial report for this meeting. It is a shame that due to COVID 19 we have not been able to use the Cabin as much as planned and we have yet to have our opening celebrations. But those who have been able to use it safely including the OWL Group, Pilates, Yoga, Colour Wheel and Bumps and Babies have all been very happy with the facilities.

In 2020, with the end of the building phase in sight, the Community Building Working Party have handed the reigns to the Cabin Management Team headed up by Peter and consisting of Sue, Nicky, Ali, Jeff, Anne (Bookings Secretary), Clare (Treasurer) and Alison. Policies and procedures needed to keep the Cabin running legally and ethically have been designed. Hallmaster has been chosen as a booking system which has been a worthwhile investment. It is a shame that COVID has greatly restricted the use of the Cabin but those who have used it are very happy with the facilities. So far it has been used by Pilates, Yoga, art and crafters, a mindful group, a new parents support group, The OWL support group and other one off hires. We are blessed that we have been able to fall back on the Cabin Running Fund to keep the lights on and the building warm for those who can use it. Hopefully, more groups will be able to use the Cabin in the Summer and we can determine if it will support itself. And, of course, we are looking forward to our postponed opening celebrations in the summer.

Church Building and Churchyard

Fabric of the Church Building

Jeff writes:-

For most of 2020 the church was unused for services, either due to them being prohibited due to the Covid-19 lockdowns or whenever possible by services being held outdoors. Nevertheless, the condition of the building was regularly monitored. When lockdown rules were eased during the summer, the church reopened for private prayer and services. Arranging social distancing of two metres and registering attendees at services, as well as accommodating private prayer and instigating an appropriate cleaning regime, was quite a challenge.

Unfortunately, at the end of November a small piece of ceiling plaster fell into the nave from above the chancel arch, whilst another piece was hanging precariously. With the help of our architect, a

lime plasterer, working from a scaffold tower, was quickly employed to carry out the repair. Services were able to continue and the work was finished well before Christmas. The total cost was £1170.

For the Christmas period, the LOTS team again installed an illuminated star on the lychgate and a larger, more prominent one on the tower, which were well received by the village community.

Churchyard and grounds

Peter writes:-

The team continue to meet each week to do jobs around the church and the Cabin.

Grass cutting

Several years ago we set aside a band of grass round the perimeter of the church yard which is strimmed after the cow parsley has finished and then left for the rest of the year. Similarly there is a triangle of grass behind the Cabin which is left. This triangle, along with other areas, has been set with snowdrops and other Spring flowering bulbs.

Our current award application to the Wildlife Trust will involve a review of the cutting policy. We shall be looking at several possibilities including Spring areas and Summer meadows.

Hedges/ trees

The site is blessed with large numbers of trees and surrounded by hedges. There is a newly planted hedge (bird-friendly native species) between the Cabin and the church. Hedges are trimmed once a year outside nesting times. The hedges are wild life friendly by providing food and shelter for birds, small mammals and insects.

The church is surrounded by mature Lime trees which are kept free of ivy and trimmed at the base each year. The limes are separately maintained by an expert firm.

Other trees on site: several oaks, cherry, field maple, ash (as yet unaffected by ash die back), crab apple, holly. All are well maintained.

The Cabin site is bounded on the west by a plantation of mixed species trees and on the south side by the Rectory hedge. The latter has ample amounts of mature ivy for nesting and autumn food for insects and birds.

Compost

We have three compost bays on rotation.

Flower beds

There are three recently planted flower beds near the Cabin where native species have been chosen with a view to minimum maintenance. They include some herbs which attract important pollinators,

There is a well maintained rose bed by the church porch. This is separately maintained by Brian Coxall.

Bird boxes

We set up a number of bird boxes several years ago. These are now in need of replacing. We shall be seeking advice from the Wildlife trust on boxes. We would also like to investigate the possibility of having a camera in one of the new ones with a relay to the Cabin.

Hedgehogs

We have several large piles of brushwood in the churchyard to attract hedgehogs. There are currently two further piles in the Cabin garden.

Tree stumps

We have several decaying tree stumps and a pile of roots. The roots serve as a play feature but will also attract wild life.

Pond

There is a large fenced pond on site. Some of the fencing is in need of repair. At the time of writing we are seeking quotes with a view to applying for a grant to help with the cost of repair. We have been looking at the possibility of creating a platform for dipping. The pond is not full all year. The pond is currently not managed other than through neglect but it provides drinking water for mammals, insects and birds.

Logs

There are lots of logs on site, some are well decayed. Others have been drilled with 10, 5 and 3mm holes to encourage insect life. A bug hotel has recently been built.

Campfire area

There is a camp fire area where the grass has been replaced by bark.

Snowdrops and Primroses

The site is well served with snowdrops. The team have split and replanted almost two thousand over the last few years, they have colonised particularly well on the north side of the hawthorn hedge next to the drive. The primroses are also growing well on the north bank and there are new clumps emerging to the east of the rose garden.

Nettles

Nettles are retained in the eastern perimeter, a sunny area to attract butterflies. The nettles are cut once a year.

Chemicals and herbicides

No chemicals or herbicides are used on site.

Summary Financial Report

Clare writes:-

The full accounts for 2020 are provided separately. Please email cebigg53@gmail.com if you'd like to see a copy.

Fabric Fund

Fabric Fund Summary	
Balance at 1 st Jan 2020	£9,716
Income	£3,563
Expenditure	£1,170
Balance at 31 st Dec 2020	£12,109

This Fund covers major expenditure on the church building. Income this year came mainly through donations and the work of the Events Committee raising funds via the Quiz Night and Christmas Raffle. The expenditure relates to the repair of the ceiling near the pulpit. We hope to build up this fund to help cover the expected outlay for Quinquennial repairs to the roof.

Community Hall Fund

There has been a LOT of activity relating to this fund to match the activity on the ground as the Cabin was built! We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the many individuals and groups, corporate donors and grant funders who supported the project. See the Cabin report for more details.

The major expenditure was to Coulson's, our builder. We appreciated their partnership with us and acknowledge the pro-bono help and advice they gave in the early stages of the project. They also gave us invaluable assistance as we worked with grant funders, planners and legal services. Thank you.

Other expenditure related to professional fees, fitting out and additional landscaping and electricity. As part of our funding strategy we also transferred £4,500 of Gift Aid money to provide a float for the Cabin Running Fund, knowing that there would be extra costs in the starting up period and less rental income. Little did we know in pre-Covid times the extent to which this would be true!

Community Hall Building Fund Summary		
Balance at 1st Jan 2020		£154,612
Income – donations & fundraising etc	£35,268	
Income - grants	£165,396	
Total income		£200,664
Expenditure – Coulson's	£313,368	
Expenditure - other	£14,581	
Transfer to Cabin Running Fund	£4,500	
Total Expenditure		£332,449
Balance at 31st Dec 2020		£22,827

The remaining sum will cover what we owe for legal fees and the final tranche owing to Coulson's. There will be enough left to finalise the landscaping and fitting out, commission boards to acknowledge donors and underwrite a small celebration and thanksgiving.

Cabin Running Fund

This was set up using the transfer from the Community Hall Building fund. Because of Covid, it is difficult to assess how costs and income will balance out in the longer term. We have yet to receive bills for water and wi-fi, and the electricity since completion has been wrapped in with the church bill. Inevitably there have been higher costs in supplying Covid cleaning materials, as well as generally having to stock up from scratch. However, we are confident that once the dust settles and the Cabin is in full use, rental income will cover all the regular costs with money to spare to build up a modest maintenance fund.

Cabin Running Fund Summary		
Opening balance		£4,500
Rental Income		£645
Expenditure – licences, insurance, fees etc	£740	
Expenditure – cleaner wages and materials	£552	
Expenditure - utilities	£0	
Expenditure – additional fitting out	£560	
Total expenditure		£1,853
Balance at 31st Dec 2020		£3,292

General Fund

General Fund Summary		
Balance at 1st Jan 2020		£6,581
Income – Parish Giving Scheme & Gift Aid	£13,195	
Income – other giving & donations	£10,329	
Income – wedding and funeral fees	£1,160	
Income - fundraising	£920	
Income - other	£536	
Total income		£26,140
Expenditure – charitable giving	£635	
Expenditure – ministry share	£20,511	
Expenditure – clergy & admin expenses	£1,811	
Expenditure – costs of ministry/outreach	£918	
Expenditure – relating to church services	£543	
Expenditure – relating to the building	£2,787	
Total Expenditure		£27,205
Balance at 31st Dec 2020		£5,517

The pandemic meant that for the most part Sunday collections could not be taken, and the fete (our main fundraiser) was cancelled. I am thankful to be able to report that many of the congregation stepped up as they were able: one-off donations were increased, new donors joined the Parish Giving Scheme and the events committee raised funds by means of the plant and produce stall and tea trail. So although we saw an overall drop in the fund of just over £1000, we fulfilled all our commitments and maintained an acceptable buffer.

Three quarters of our expenditure goes on our ministry share which is what we pay to Ely Diocese to cover clergy costs plus services like safeguarding, training, building advice etc. The costs of ministry includes our contribution towards youth work, work with families and other outreach expenses. Building expenses include insurance and electricity, and obviously the insurance element of this was not reduced by the pandemic. However, clergy expenses were significantly below budget this year.

Looking forward, we need to balance the books in the longer term and hope to do so through the generous support of the congregation.

Lordsbridge Team and Team Council

The Lordsbridge Team Council is the body of lay and ordained people from across the Lordsbridge Team now meets about three times a year in the Coton Parish Room. It has responsibility for communicating good practice, enabling sharing of resources across the churches and as a council of reference for whole team projects.

Clare writes:-

Each of the parishes in the Lordsbridge Team has a representative on the Team Council, and Clare Bigg is the Hardwick rep. The Team celebrated its 10th anniversary this year – sadly not in the let's-have-a-party way we hoped for. However, in true 2020 style, a video was created to mark the occasion and this can still be found on our You-Tube channel. A new logo has also been designed, comprising a cross surrounded by loose circles which allow for additions to be made.

In March 2020 we said farewell to Rev Becca Gilbert and wished her well in her new Cumbrian post. We were also saddened by the death of Rev Michael Langford who contributed much to the church in Dry Drayton. We have welcomed Priscilla Slusar, a retired priest who has wonderfully helped fill the gap left by Becca until a new vicar is in post. Interviews were held at the end of 2020 and the appointment of Revd Claire Robertson to the Team was announced just before Christmas.

The Lordsbridge Resource Hub, manned by Robbie Thomson and Gemma Markettos, has been of significant benefit in 2020. As well as handling routine admin, Robbie's skills have been key in helping us with zoom, audio and video services and enabling others to acquire necessary skills. There is nothing like a pandemic to encourage us to appreciate and develop new IT skills! Gemma left the Resource Hub team at the end of 2020 and we thank her for her input.

Most youthwork happens across the team and is organised and run by the para-church organisation WCCYM (West Cambridge Christian Youth Ministries). Teresa Taylor who was the youth work co-ordinator for Lordsbridge, working voluntarily with WCCYM, stepped down from her role in the summer of 2020. The work of WCCYM has continued, with services and groups online, and school's work continuing online or face to face where possible.

The Team holds about £15000 centrally. £5000 is a contingency reserve in case parishes cannot meet their parish share. Another £4000 is allocated to Youth, £2000 to the Resource Hub, £2000 is available for Mission and Ministry projects across the team, and the final £2000 is money given from the diocese for a particular project which has now folded (and so is currently unusable). The Team Council also has safeguarding and equal access regularly on its agenda.

Bourn Deanery Synod

St Mary's is a member of the Bourn Deanery Synod. This report has been provided by the Deanery Synod secretary.

Bourn Deanery Synod met only once during the year (in Nov 2020), due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jan – Feb 2020: At the start of 2020, church activities across the Deanery took place as normal. The Deanery had received a Ministry Share rebate and formal approval from the Bishop's Council for the recruitment of an additional 'pioneer' minister for Bourn Deanery, to develop church communities in Cambourne West (where building work has since commenced) and the Bourn

Airfield developments. From March 2020, the pandemic began to impact every part of church life within the Deanery.

March – Dec 2020:

News from the Deanery: In the Deanery, Cambourne, Lordsbridge and Papworth were all quick to move their church services online when it was no longer possible to hold in-person services in church buildings. They used a range of innovative approaches, including live services on Zoom and Facebook Live, pre-recorded services on YouTube, and services for those not online via the telephone (using PowWow Now) and via audio recordings with paper service sheets. Meetings, Bible Study groups and other activities also moved to Zoom. When possible, a number of churches across the Teams held services out-of-doors. Churches kept in touch with members and their communities in various ways, through regular online bulletins, magazines or weekly pastoral letters; Cambourne church allocated church members to small care clusters for mutual care. Outreach and mission continued via online courses and other activities.

All were also involved in organising and/or supporting local initiatives to help people during the pandemic, including providing food hampers, village volunteers, storing aid donations and delivering food, medication and other services to people within their local communities.

Ministers/clergy in the Deanery: Lordsbridge have been running with a vacancy for most of the year. Revd Becca Gilbert left Lordsbridge in the spring to take up her new post in Cumbria; her move was slightly delayed by the first lockdown. Initial attempts to recruit a new Lordsbridge Team Vicar were delayed by the moratorium on posts at a diocesan level, as finances affected by the pandemic were reviewed. The Bishop's Council, however, agreed in November that the recruitment could proceed and a new Team Vicar, Revd Claire Robertson, was appointed just before Christmas. Lordsbridge were also joined during the year by active retired minister Revd Priscilla Slusar. Revd Paul Garnell (Lordsbridge Team Curate) was ordained priest at Michaelmas in an ordination service in the deanery and Geoff Dodgson (Papworth Team) was ordained deacon.

Area wide youth work: WCCYM (West Cambridge Christian Youth Ministries) continued to work with young people in schools throughout the year, moving activities online during lockdown (such as 'Thirst' (the monthly youth service), the summer party, school Christian Union groups, and 'Deeper' (the Sixth Form Discipleship group)). WCCYM also provided a weekend of biblical teaching, group discussion times and activities online for young people (to replace the annual WCCYM weekend away) and created video resources for use in schools. During the year a number of their youth workers were furloughed; WCCYM is continuing to seek individual and church support for their work. Ministers and others from the three Deanery Teams worked with their local schools, online and through video assemblies during the year.

Diocesan Synod update: The Diocesan Synod met twice (via Zoom) in 2020. Key issues covered at these meetings included: the importance of the safeguarding work being undertaken at Ely; discussion of the 'Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together' (part of the 'Living in Love and Faith' (LLF) process); the financial challenges faced by the Diocese; the production of new Deanery Plans (all Deaneries are currently expected to produce new Deanery Plans by September 2021); and the elections of Deanery representatives to the next Diocesan Synod (2021-2024), which will take place in early-mid 2021.

Diocesan Budget for 2020 and 2021: A major shortfall of about £1m in the Diocese's budget occurred in 2020, due to reduced investment income as a result of Covid-19, and a further £1m shortfall is predicted for 2021, from lower Ministry Share payments. A number of churches across the Deanery are concerned about meeting their Ministry Share payments - a lack of fundraising

events and income from weddings in 2020 have contributed to financial pressures. Many PCCs are encouraging parishioners to consider giving regularly by Standing Order, Direct Debit, or via the Parish Giving Scheme, to help sustain church incomes.

At the start of the Deanery Synod meeting, the Rural Dean quoted some words of encouragement from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York:

“More than anything else, whatever the nation thinks, we know that we are in the faithful hands of the risen Christ, who knows our weaknesses, tiredness and struggles and whose steadfast love endures forever.”

Thanks to the following in compiling this report: Sue Cornwell (Events Committee report), Anne Jones (Hardwick Network and Pippins reports), Jeff Jones (Church Fabric and Churchyard Report), Peter Cornwell (Church Building and Churchyard Report), Clare Bigg (Treasurer’s, Church Life, Lordsbridge Council and Tuesday Mornings at St Mary’s Reports), Rebecca Cowburn (Synod Report), Revd. Paul Garnell (Pastoral and Outreach report), Ali Marcus (Cabin at St Mary’s Report) and Sharon McMahon (Safeguarding).