

Gallery for 2019



Bell ringers joined by friends for their outing to Leics in October



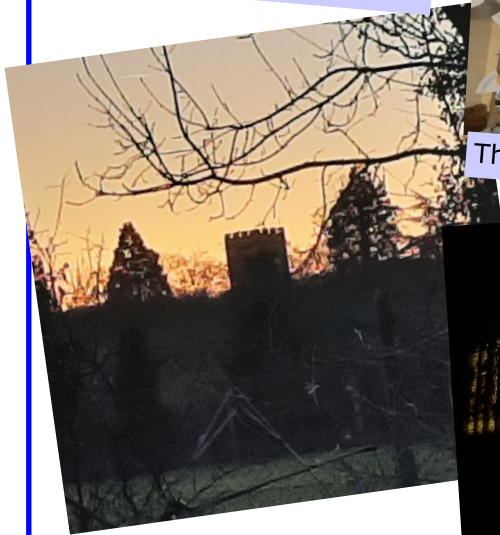
The carol service



Lego church constructions



The Christmas angel



The Parish Churches of Great Gransden and Little Gransden

The Annual Report for 2019



Great Gransden church—August 2019



Little Gransden church—May 2019

The Ministry Team

Rev'd Rachel Blanchflower — Priest in Charge
Anthony Bevens — Licensed Lay Minister
Sheila George — Authorised Lay Minister — Music



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Gallery for 2019

Good Friday parish walk



Rachel and Abbie are admitted to the choir



Joint choir with St. Neots for Deanery evensong



To explore faith and discipleship we went "fishing" in the churchyard.



Gt Gransden church fete



Sponsored bike riders at Potton church in September



More information can be found at:

Websites

Great & Little Gransden Churches
<https://www.facebook.com/greatandlittlegransdenchurches>

The Bluebell Benefice
<https://www.bluebellbenefice.org.uk>

Gransden Church Bells
<http://gransdenbells.btck.co.uk/>

The Ely Diocese
<https://www.elydiocese.org/>

Facebook Pages

Great Gransden Bell Ringers
<https://www.facebook.com/greatgransdenbellringers>

Great and Little Gransden Churches
<https://www.facebook.com/greatandlittlegransdenchurches>

Safeguarding Concerns

CHILDLINE for children and young people - **0800 1111**

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>

NSPCC for adults concerned about a child - **0808 800 5000**
24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline - **0808 2000 247**



Priest in Charge Report Rev'd Rachel Blanchflower

To read these reports is to be reminded of the time, energy, talents and hard work that so many people give to serving these parishes. The reports reveal the range of skills required not just in looking after the fabric and finances of church buildings, but in caring for them as living, breathing and creative expressions of God's beauty, love and service in a world that grows ever busier and faster-paced.

What is hard to capture in the facts and figures of a year, is the purpose and end of what all this activity has been about, namely: love of God, and love of neighbour. These are not just accounts of what we have been up to, but of the myriad different areas in which we have sought to see God's Spirit at work and tried to respond in trust and thanksgiving, offering back what we have been given. 'To those to whom much has been given, much is expected' (Lk 12:48): these reports remind us that much indeed has been given us.

As we look back over this year, I am mindful we have also shared the grief of the loss of many loved ones in our communities. They shall not be forgotten and their lives continue to bless ours as we give thanks for all they mean to us.

It has been an immense joy and privilege to have completed a first year here. I am repeatedly drawn to the Lady Chapel window in St Bartholomew, depicting '**Faith, Hope and Love.**' These three shape my daily prayers for the vision of our shared ministry going forwards: that we might grow in the depth and substance of faith, in the joy and possibilities of hope and in the outreach of love and blessing to others.

As you read these reports, do pray with the eyes of faith, hope and love, and be thankful to God for His provision this year. There is so much to rejoice in!

New rhythm

The pattern of services changed this year to enable balance, breadth, equity and regular start times across the Benefice. All services are now intended to be Benefice-wide as none run concurrently. Some of the special services held in the Gransdens this year have included: commemoration of the rededication of the 405 window, and Remembrance Sunday itself; a harvest flower thanksgiving service; All Souls; Good Friday all-age 'treasure hunt' walk across the Dole; evensongs; Mothering Sunday/rededication service of LG; Barnabas Oley Christingle service; Good Friday sung

Priest in Charge Report (*continued*)

devotional service; the Carol Service in support of local homeless work, and the Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

Exploring faith

Individuals from all four parishes met together through Lent to study our great calling in Christ as His disciples; further discussion took place through Advent in an exploration of four great songs of faith (*the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Benedictus and the Gloria*). Meanwhile, a Children's Confirmation class got underway, full of insightful questions and observations.

Pupils of Barnabas Oley have helped keep their priest on her toes with some extraordinary discussions during visits to RE classes, and in contributions in assemblies. A highlight was a class pilgrimage between Great and Little Gransden churches, with children then producing inspiring artwork about the meaning and transformation of 'pilgrimage' for their Spirited Arts project, displayed in St Bartholomew's through the summer. Achieving excellence in their SIAMs inspection has further cemented the strong relationship that the school continues to have with the church, and the commitment we all hold in giving our children safe, honest and substantive space in which to question and enjoy their own journeys of faith and spirituality.

Areas of hope

Plans have been forming about how this Benefice might grow a ministry of prayer retreats and Quiet Days for visitors and groups, especially offering hospitality and peace for those from city centre parishes - bringing visitors to discover the beauty of our churches and villages.

A new benefice-wide website has been created to help support this outreach (www.bluebellbenefice.org.uk).

Relationships with the college patrons have continued to be a blessing this year, with joyful trips to Clare College at Pentecost and Pembroke College Evensong in November.

The Benefice continues to cherish the very young to the very old, as we seek to learn from one another how to best provide worship for all ages in welcoming, thoughtful and inclusive ways. Plans are being developed to relaunch Sunday School and begin an informal music group for the 10am service in Great Gransden.

St. Neots Deanery Synod Report

Jennifer Wilkinson

Our four parishes are part of the Deanery of St. Neots. All Deanery clergy are members of the Deanery Synod and it has lay representatives from every parish in the Deanery. Rachel Fogg and Jenny Wilkinson represent Great Gransden and Betty Bates represents Little Gransden.

The regular business of the meetings covers Deanery events, reports from Diocesan and General Synod and finance, particularly the consideration of Ministry Share (the money we pay to the Diocese). We meet with people from other churches in our Deanery and learn more about their situations and their plans for the future.

Janet Perrett, the Deanery Chair, represents the Diocese on the General Synod and has given us reports on a variety of agenda items from clergy wellbeing to ongoing talks between the Methodist Church and Church of England and The Anna Chaplaincy is raising the profile of workers with dementia and their carers.

We had presentations from the Deanery Treasurer; on Digital Evangelism by Emma Puttock and on Ely Diocesan REACH Project: Geoffrey Hunter on behalf of the Diocese of Ely with Dr Timur Alexandrov and Dr Helen Haugh from Cambridge Judge Business School gave a presentation on Reimagining Churches as a Community Asset for the Common Good.

During the year Father Paul Andrews left St. Neots Church to become Priest in Charge of St Peter's Ely and Assistant Director of Ordinands in the diocese. Canon Annette Reed stepped down from her role of Rural Dean after 12 years. At the November meeting Revd Canon Grant Fellows was commissioned as Rural Dean of the St. Neots Deanery by the Archdeacon, the Ven. Hugh McCurdy and Canon Annette Read was thanked for her 12 years of service.

We pray for the churches in the Deanery as they continue to review their mission and ministry in their communities.

Foundation Governor at Barnabas Oley School

Iain Strath

It is very reassuring to hear parents who visit Barnabas Oley for the first time say that they can tell it is a Church of England school. Foundation Governors are charged with the additional responsibility to ensure that its Christian identity is evident and staff and governors are hugely supportive in weaving those values into the rich and happy environment in which the children learn and have great fun. This year of course the school has given a warm welcome to Rev Rachel, our new priest in charge, and to her great interest and enthusiasm in all the school activities.

The key priorities this year have been writing, especially grammar and spelling; history and geography; and design and technology. A visit to the school website highlights the wide range of activities and opportunities offered to the children to support and widen their learning horizons: safer cycling tuition; public speaking and spelling competitions held at Cambridge colleges; a science week with visiting scientists; and numerous outside visits for example to Warwick Castle, Dinosaur Adventure and Wimpole Hall.

The children also enjoy fun ways to raise funds for Children in Need and Save the Children and love to perform in the Christmas Plays and Barnabas Oley's Got Talent. This year the school has introduced a daily mile run in the school grounds for every pupil for 15 minutes each day to encourage health and well-being.

All the children visit St Bartholomew's each term for Harvest, Christingle, Easter and Founders' Day services. Students who enter higher education and have attended Barnabas Oley are eligible for a book grant from the Oley Trust, and 16 students received one this year.

Finally, mention must be made of the marvelous fundraising events organised by the PTA. More than £10000 is raised each year and the children benefit enormously from the additional books, equipment and support for educational visits the funds provide.

The school and the children are always pleased to welcome visitors and more information may be found at www.barnabasoley.cambs.sch.uk



Priest in Charge Report (*continued*)

The sound system improvement project for both churches is now well underway, opening up new possibilities for how our services and our churches can be used. It was a delight to have The Revellers put on a 'Very Victorian Christmas' evening in Little Gransden church in early December.

Reaching out in love

Lego Church has taken place in the (centrally-heated!) informality of the Vicarage and uses play, imagination and building skills to listen afresh to the stories and truths of the Bible, and to learn from one another's insights and understanding. The great joy of this group has been that ages have ranged from 1 to 90 years! A great deal of cake is also involved...

Creating regular spaces for times of healing and quiet prayer has been another focus. It is rare that I am on my own for Morning Prayer during the week, with these times being important for marking the anniversaries of the deaths of loved ones, and for ongoing prayer for all those in need within the parishes. The midweek Communion Service in LG is a contemplative, gentle space for those who perhaps find Sundays 'a bit much'. Similarly, the evening healing Taizé service in Abbotsley provides safe space and music for those who need to draw breath midst all that life is throwing up.

Resourcing St Bartholomew's repair work and completing St Peter & St Paul's redecoration work has taken careful management this year, for which I am especially grateful to the Wardens, Treasurers, PCC Secretary and numerous fund-raisers.

The PCCs have also reviewed when, how and whom we support financially, with ongoing support being given to Traidcraft, MIND and the Children's Society, and a special focus at Christmas to the work amongst the homeless by Three Pillars (St. Neots) and Emmaus Cambridge. This coming year, the PCCs will be supporting a special project in Malawi introduced to us by Lynn Walton, which helps teach women, and facilitates access to education for young girls.

I continue to be inspired by the charitable trusts left by my predecessors in centuries past for the blessing of those in need in generations to come. May all we do create similar legacies of faith, hope and love!

Rachel

The Parochial Church Councils

Background

The parishes of Great and Little Gransden are part of the benefice of Great Gransden, Abbotsley, Little Gransden and Waresley, with the deanery of St. Neots.

Priest in Charge The Rev'd Rachel Blanchflower

Great Gransden PCC membership

Churchwardens: Mr. Iain Strath (Vice Chair)
 Mr. Rob Chignell

Representatives on Deanery Synod:
 Mrs. Rachel Fogg—Hon Sec joint PCCs
 Mrs. Jennifer Wilkinson

Elected Members: Mr. Andrew Fogg - Treasurer
 Mr. James Harvey
 Mrs. Jane Middleton

Ex Officio: Mr Tony Bevens - Licensed Lay Minister

Little Gransden PCC membership

Churchwardens: Prof. Nicholas Wareham - Vice-Chair
 Mrs. Betty Bates

Representatives on Deanery Synod:
 Mrs. Betty Bates

Elected Members: Mr. Nick Collett
 Mrs. Rachel Fogg - Secretary
 Mrs. Sheila George
 Mr. Ian Ramsay - Treasurer

The PCC's are charities in their own right, exempted from registration with the Charity Commission. The PCCs always meet jointly for ease of administration and planning.

The Gransdens' Mothers' Union

Avril Bevens

It is my sad duty to report that the above Branch closed in March, 2020. This has been a very difficult decision for all concerned. Remaining members will become Diocesan members, meeting (monthly/bi monthly) at a mid week morning prayer. This is particularly sad, since in 2012 Little Gransden celebrated 100 years membership. It is hoped that retaining all artefacts belonging to the four churches in the Benefice, someone may come forward in the near future and the Mothers' Union will thrive again.

The year began under the leadership of Lynn Walton, with eleven members, and continued under Avril Bevens, when Lynn moved home, in August. We thank Lynn and Nick for their hard work and support in The Gransdens. During the year, members enjoyed a New Year Lunch; talks led by Tony Bevens LLM on Advent and Lent in 2020; Rev. Rachel on Lent 2019; Janet Cockroft - discussing books written by Michelle Guinness and her Jewish family; Members relating memories of MU past and present; Craft- card making; a Summer lunch at a Garden Centre and Catherina Griffiths- talk and slides of her tour of Chile. (ABC- Adventures, blessings and challenges)

Rev. Rachel Blanchflower led a Lady Day service for Gransdens members. Mothering Sunday bookmarks were provided for all churches.

Members were invited to join St. Neots Branch for Deanery Christmas celebration and luncheon. We always appreciate their generosity and will continue the friendship in future. Deanery Harvest Service to be held at Gransden was cancelled.

We would like to thank all villagers who have kindly donated clothes, food, toiletries and knitted garments for the charities we have supported. We shall continue to collect donated items and deliver to named officers for distribution, viz. Huntingdon Women's Refuge, Addenbrookes Sick children's services, Rosie and Hinchbrook Maternity units, Sudan children's knitted garments. All recipients are extremely appreciative.

Members past and present supported The Parent and child changing facilities at The Gransden Show, under the leadership of our outreach officer, a much needed facility. We thank the Show committee for their generosity in enabling MU to provide it.

I would like to thank Betty Bates, (Past Deanery Vice President and Branch Leader) Gina Presland (Past Deanery treasurer, Branch leader and treasurer) and Tony Bevens (Past Diocesan Gift Aid Officer, Branch Treasurer and Speaker) for their devoted support.

All remaining funds will be divided between MU charities AFIA (Away from it all holidays for distressed families) Overseas Funds (Projects empowering women and children) and Diocesan Parenting projects.

The Mothers' Union Church Notice Board will be maintained with current information and leaflets.

Bell Ringers' Report

David Prest (Deputy Tower Captain)

"I heard the church bells hollowing out the sky, deep beyond deep, like never-ending stars." John Betjeman

The year had its traditional start with the 2019 date touch, composed and conducted by Phillip. There were eight quarter peals, five rung by local bands, including Sue's first QP, and two including Georgia, achieving Level 3 in Learning the Ropes within 2 years! We welcomed The Revd Rachel Blanchflower, with a QP and service ringing, including ringing friends from St. Edward's Cambridge where Rachel had been an ordinand. Two memorial QPs were rung, for local ringer David Armistead, and for Dorian George, Phillip's brother, who had been an accomplished ringer. For Remembrance Day we rang a half muffled QP, particularly poignant.

Other special events included marking the centenary of Save the Children, tolling following the fire at Notre Dame, the Archdeacon's Visitation, and firing the bells for American Independence Day. There was ringing for one wedding, and one funeral, of Angela Steele, a much-valued member of the congregation.

We enjoyed ringing tours to Leicestershire, and local "mini-tours" including a mini-ring. We also visited local towers on practice nights, and welcomed their ringers in return, a great way of developing ringing skills. We visited towers at Abbotsley and Little Gransden, to see the historic bells and frames (sadly not ringable) and the clocks. We also had a top of the tower trip at St Batholomew's, with beautiful views across the village and countryside.

Our band performed well in the District striking competition, achieving a very creditable 4th place.

Ringers from other towers included a group from Kettering, and we were delighted to provide a "bell ringing experience" to a group who were curious about church bells.

The Ringers Christmas Party and the Ringers and Singers Summer Supper were both splendid social events, good food and drink and, most importantly, good company.

Improvements to the tower focused on the ropes, with new tail ends fitted to three so far, others to follow.

Open Day was successful in recruiting one new ringer and one returning ringer. We welcome anyone interested in learning bellringing, which is fulfilling, challenging, sometimes frustrating and always enjoyable! Training covers complete beginners onwards, and you will soon be part of the regular team. Updates about the bells and tower activities are on the website, <http://gransdenbells.btck.co.uk> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/greatgransdenbellringers/>

The Parochial Church Councils' Committees

Standing Committees

Each PCC has a Standing Committee. This is the only committee required by law. They have the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the respective PCC.

Members in each parish are: Priest in Charge, Churchwardens, Treasurer and Secretary.

Great Gransden Finance and Fabric Committee

Attends to matters relating to the stewardship of the church finances, building and churchyard.

Members: as for the Standing Committee.

Churchwardens Meetings

The churchwardens of the benefice meet together on a regular basis to discuss matters relating to the four parishes.

All Age Worship and Planning Group

Meets monthly to plan the services of All Age Worship.

Members: The Rev'd Rachel Blanchflower (PiC), Ed Badcock, Tony Bevens, Sheila George (chair) Tamsyn Hadden, Teresa Miller, Iain Strath.

Mission and Outreach Group

This committee organizes fund raising events for charities and ensures information received from these organisations is disseminated to the church, school and community.

Members: Jennifer Wilkinson (chair) (Gt.Gransden), Christine Badcock (Waresley), Teresa Miller (Gt.Gransden), Alison Wareham (Lt Gransden). Vacancy (Abbotsley)

Sidespeople—both parishes

Betty Bates, Stephanie Beaumont, Avril Bevens, Janice Brown, Michael Capps, Jenny Capps, Celia Chignell, Rob Chignell, Nick Collett, Anne Constantine, Margaret Davenport, Rachel Fogg, Sheila George, Jeff Gorton, Jim Harvey, Tom Hipwell, Sue Lawrence, Jane Middleton, Julian Miller, Teresa Miller, Craig Santus, Mick Ward, Nick Wareham, Alison Wareham, Jenny Wilkinson.

Other adults and children are encouraged to help with these duties especially at All Age Worship services.

Electoral Roll Reports

Great Gransden — Mark Doggett

The electoral roll was completely revised from scratch in 2019.

The electoral roll for Great Gransden (as last approved by the PCC at the 2019 APCM) shows 70 members of whom 63 are resident and 7 non-resident.

The electoral roll figures (as approved by the PCC at the 2018 APCM) indicated 104 members of whom 93 were resident and 11 non-resident.

The electoral roll changes between the 2018 and 2019 approved figures are 42 leavers (37 Resident – 34 not renewed, 1 moved and 2 deceased; 5 Non-resident - 3 not renewed and 2 moved), and 8 joiners (7 Resident and 1 Non-resident).

Little Gransden — Alison Wareham

In March 2019 in line with the proscribed 6 year cycle, a new Electoral roll for Little Gransden Parish was established. It stands at 33, of whom 18 are resident and 15 are non-resident. In 2020 and subsequent years, the Electoral Roll will be revised. A new roll will be established in 2025.

Choir Report Sheila George — ALM Music

There have been some changes of faces in our Choir during the year. At the beginning of the year Ella Dutton and Christopher Walker decided that choir was not for them, and Poppy followed her sister in the summer.

Our adverts for new singers bore fruit and we have welcomed Rachel Greaves and her daughter Abbie to our ranks. However numbers at our services (and practices) has been lower over the year averaging 11; on one occasion being as low as 5. Due to outside commitments/elderly parents/illness, 6 singers are only able to join us spasmodically, often not having rehearsed any of the music.

We were delighted to sing at the licencing service of our new priest Rev Rachel and over the year she has made sure that we have been included in our services. The introduction of Evensong at Great Gransden each month has given us the opportunity to learn different music; we now sing at the Benefice Communion service at Waresley every month.

Highlights during the year

- ♪ Joint choir with St. Neots at Deanery Evensong in March
- ♪ The sung devotional service on Good Friday
- ♪ Choir Festival at Ely Cathedral in May
- ♪ Awards Evensong for 4 with Ely Cathedral Choir in June
- ♪ Music Sunday celebrated in June at Great Gransden
- ♪ Ringers & Singers supper held on a lovely sunny evening in June
- ♪ Choir Festival in Kings College Chapel, Cambridge in September
- ♪ Christmas celebrations – 4 services and 1 practice over 1 week.

We sang at 3 weddings during the year which involved obtaining and learning new music including 'Hallelujah' by Leonard Cohen, and sadly were asked to sing at 3 funerals.

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who support me by turning up almost every week and to David who is able to play anything I throw at him often at a moment's notice. Without this constancy we could not continue to provide the music to a good standard during our services.

The Sunday that we enrolled our new members was also the 60th anniversary of my joining this choir in 1959 along with all my family. Many singers have come and gone during those years, new music has been learnt, old pieces revived, festivals attended, weddings sung for including ex choristers, but nothing really changes.

Mission and Outreach Report

Jennifer Wilkinson

Mission and Outreach gives us opportunities to practice Christian fellowship in our churches, in our own communities and across the world.

We support charities caring for others, in prayer and financially, whilst encouraging fellowship within our parishes.

During 2019 we made the decision to stop financial support to the parish of Christ the King in Rio de Janeiro and their priest, Father Antonio Terto, due to the extremely difficult situation there with drug gangs shooting down police helicopters and Father Terto unable to enter the parish. We will continue to support them through our prayers.

We continue to support Mind in Cambridgeshire, a branch of the nationwide charity Mind, supporting people in their recovery from mental health issues and campaigning against stigma and discrimination.

We have collected used postage stamps for the Hospice at Moggerhanger and will continue to do this.

In December we had a collection of items, e.g., hats, scarves, gloves, toiletries, canned and dried foods and canned dog food for the people who use Wintercomfort in Cambridge. We had an amazing response and they were very grateful when we delivered all the items. We aim to continue with this.

Thanks to Teresa Miller we continue to have a Traidcraft stall once a month in Great Gransden Church. In March we held a successful Big Brew event for Traidcraft.

We have brought The Children's Society collection boxes under the umbrella of the Mission & Outreach group and I am now responsible for organising these.

We will continue to pray for all the charities we support and try to raise awareness of the needs of others wherever they are and in so doing pray to foster fellowship in our group of parishes.

Secretary's Report — Joint PCCs — Rachel Fogg

The PCCs have met jointly since the APCM 2019, meeting in June, September and November 2019 and February 2020.

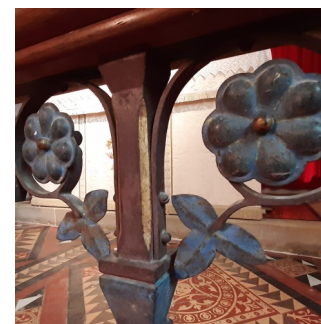
There have been no reported Health and Safety incidents in either church in 2019.

A new pattern of services was begun in September 2019, with the aim of offering a consistent number of services in each church in the benefice and offering clarity over service times, now at the regular times of 08:30 and 10:00 and 6:00pm (except for Lego Church in the Vicarage at 4:00pm on the 4th Sunday).

The PCC has discussed Safeguarding and approves the Safeguarding policy each year. Phillip George has now agreed to become the Benefice Safeguarding Officer (previously Safeguarding Officer for Great Gransden and Little Gransden PCCs).

The PCCs have considered various fabric matters including plans for upgrading the sound systems in both churches which will improve facilities both for the worshipping congregation and for the wider community. The usual fundraising activities have taken place and the PCCs are grateful for the support of the villages.

The school and the Revellers have made use of the church and a carol service before Christmas 2019 supporting the work of Three Pillars and Emmaus was very well attended.



Detail of the altar rail at
Lt. Gransden

Treasurer's Report — Great Gransden

Andrew Fogg

As of 31 Dec 2019, the General Account held £32286; on 31 Dec 2018, the balance was £5670, the difference being largely due to £30k on loan from Little Gransden to support cashflow during the Quinquennial works. Gift Aid and GASDS were successfully claimed for 2018 in April 2019, yielding £2966 in total.

The annual Church Fete continues to raise around £3000 and remains a very important source of income.

There was a most welcome donation to church funds of £7000 from Angela Steele, dedicated to the provision of a new sound system. This is under way but requires further fundraising (to the tune of £15000) to do the job properly.

We have acquired enough new regular donors to return our monthly income to a slightly better figure than before, which is welcome news.

The PCC agreed last year to suspend any donations to charities for as long as the PCC still has any loan to pay off, except in the cases of services or events which are for special causes (eg the Christingle). This remains true.

There were a few retiring collections that were dedicated to various charities during the year.

Ministry Share increased slightly to £17534 (from £17024). It will increase by another 2.5% in 2020. The insurance premium increased slightly to £3992. Heating oil prices were fairly stable; we spent £1239 on oil (£1214 in 2018), but these figures of course do not correspond exactly to a year's usage in either case.

The loan from the Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust was paid off in May 2019. The Category A works raised in the 2016 Quinquennial Inspection cost just under £30000 (exc VAT) and have been paid for. Income from grants and donations *just* covered the cost and the VAT was reclaimed.

The only withdrawal from the deposit accounts this year was £220 from the Music Fund, leaving it essentially empty.

The Special Projects Fund remains dormant.

The continuing current miserable rates of deposit interest mean that the funds we have on deposit are still not keeping up with inflation.

All Age Worship Report

Sheila George

Over the year we have lost several members of our planning group with Lynn and Nick Walton's move away, Angela Steele's death, and Tony Bevens' temporary absence due to illness. We also lost an occasional service leader when Dan Whiddett moved. However we have a new younger member as Ed Badcock has joined us. Our group continues to find it difficult for all to meet to plan the All Age Worship part of our services and now it is often just the leader of the next service and Rev Rachel who meet.

We were pleased to welcome Rev Rachel to her first service in February in Great Gransden, the Christingle Service at Candlemas and she was able to be involved, something which she wished to do in the months ahead. So that this was possible for a brief time we moved the time of the service to 4pm but this was not suitable for all.

From September, the 3rd Sunday of the month main morning service at Great Gransden has changed to All Age Communion, the first half continuing the form of our AAW and lay led, moving into the communion service at the Offertory led by Rev Rachel. This also removed the problem of our services often falling during school holidays.

During the year our services have covered a variety of themes exploring faith and discipleship; the Explorers helped Tamsyn in January at Epiphany; we went fishing in the churchyard in May; Ed and Rev Rachel led a train themed service in July when everyone was invited to bring trains and track along; in November we were searching for the Lost Temple (without Indiana Jones). We assisted at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve, where everyone was encouraged to be included with signs and actions. Even the gentlemen in the choir supported halos as part of the heavenly host.

Looking at the data we seem to be welcoming a few more families with children to this service as well as maintaining our regulars from previously. We worried that combining the AAW part with our normal communion service would be detrimental, but attendance seems to be rising slightly since the change.

My thanks go to the planning group Tony Bevens, Iain Strath, Teresa Miller, Tamsyn Hadden, Ed Badcock and Rev Rachel for the support they have given these services and me over the last year.

Joint Parish Reports

Safeguarding Report

Phillip George — Safeguarding Officer

There have been no safeguarding incidents during the reporting period.

A review of our safeguarding policies and procedures took place in the early part of 2019 to ensure that it complies with the National Church Guidelines.

New posters have been installed in notice boards for both churches, which give contact details if information about safeguarding is required or in the event of a safeguarding incident.

I attended the annual safeguarding co-ordinators workshop at Cambourne in September and completed my safeguarding level 2 training in October at Histon.

Twenty-one members of the congregation have DBS certificates and ongoing monitoring ensures that they are renewed every five years.

I have had talks with the Rev'd Rachel on two occasions, and together with representatives from Abbotsley and Waresley, to discuss the strategy on safeguarding for the group of parishes, and we will implement integration of the safeguarding system across the benefice during 2020.

The Church of England has provided copies of "The Safeguarding Handbook" to all parishes. I have a paper copy for reference and the document can be found online at the following link:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

CHILDLINE for children and young people - **0800 1111**

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>

NSPCC for adults concerned about a child - **0808 800 5000**
24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline - 0808 2000 247

Fabric Report — Great Gransden

Rob Chignell

During August and September Herringbone Restoration carried out our Quinquennial repairs. These were mainly cleaning up and protecting the external "clunch" around windows. A little pointing was done and replacement of loose stonework around windows and on parapets. The window guard over the East window was completely replaced. Total works approx £33,000 plus VAT. We are very grateful to Lt Gransden PCC for a short term loan towards this.

In June our architect, Stephanie Norris, left Purcell's in Cambridge and set up her own business. We decided to keep her as our architect and so finished our association with Purcell's, who were quite happy about this as church works are not one of their main concerns.

Between Friday morning 9th and Sunday morning 11th August someone entered the church (unlocked as usual) and forced the lock to the door at the bottom of the bell tower. They climbed to the top of the tower, breaking a trap door. From this vantage point they could see all our roof lead and also our alarm sensors. We hope that having seen these sensors they will not return.

The lock to the bell tower was replaced with a stronger one, and Philip George repaired the broken trap door. The key to the flag turret was stolen and Herringbone had to cut away some stone work to open this door.

There are still two internal jobs to be completed by Herringbone. These are redecoration of the north wall by the standards and repair of the south wall just west of the choir vestry. These will be done when the walls are dry, hopefully in April.

The church is unlocked from approx 9am to 6pm daily.

Fire extinguishers have been tested, boiler serviced and thermostat repaired, roof alarm serviced, organ tuned, down pipes and gulleys kept clear.

The tower, bells and clock are all kept in excellent condition by Philip George and we are very grateful to him on the amount of time he spends on this. We are also very grateful to those people who regularly clean areas in the church and spring clean around Easter time.

To make life easier for those who lock or unlock the church in darkness we have now have four people who are able to remotely control the porch lights.

The large lime and beech trees are checked regularly, this is organised by the Parish Council.

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Treasurer's Report — Little Gransden

Ian Ramsay

As in previous years the summer fete and autumn bazaar raised money for day to day running costs. The church is extremely grateful to everyone who helped in any way to raise money.

Charitable donations were made to Cambridgeshire Mind, Christian Aid and the Children's Society. The overseas mission donation to Chifundo UK was paid in early 2020.

The project to restore the internal decoration was completed in 2019. The cost of this work was paid from the Pickard legacy. The VAT paid in this project, and the final payment for the nave roof, was claimed back. The automation of the church clock was completed in 2019, and the project to update the sound system was started. This will be completed in 2020.

Apart from the overseas donation and the Priest in Charge expenses, which were paid in 2020, the annual accounts are a complete record of the church's situation. Unfortunately, the church's General Account, which covers every day costs, continues to run at an increasing loss.

Further information on all aspects of the parish's finances will be given in the statement of accounts for 2019 which is being issued separately at the Annual General Meeting

Fabric Report — Great Gransden

Continued from page 10

Churchyard

We fortunately still have the same team of grass cutters. Barry Girling not only cuts a large area of grass but also has cleared a lot of ivy and invasive shrubs.

The beds, tended by Ann Girling, looked very good last summer and now have an extra 100 tulips planted. Something to look forward to.

We have two war graves in the churchyard and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission have requested permission to install a sign indicating the presence of these graves, at the entrance to the churchyard. If approval is granted by the Parish Council this will go ahead.

Fabric Report — Little Gransden

Nick Wareham

February 2019, Herringbone Restoration completed the internal restoration work of the church, a project made possible by the Pickard Fund. On Mothering Sunday, we held a service of thanksgiving and rededication to mark the re-opening of our beautifully renovated church. It was lovely that the service was attended by so many of Ms Pickard's friends, one of whom wrote that "Liz would have been so pleased to see the church looking so immaculate".

Wright Consulting of Oulton act as structural engineering consultants for the church and have overseen various repairs, reinforcements and the installation of "tell tales" to monitor movement in various cracks within the church and outside on the south buttress. They will return on a biannual basis for 5 years to provide the PCC with comprehensive data to monitor movement of the building.

Other minor works in 2019 included the repair and restoration of the coats of arms by Chroma Conservation. This has now been repainted in the historically accurate original colour. Towards the end of the year, we commissioned Cumbria Clocks to automate the winding mechanism of the tower clock.

As ever, we are grateful to all those who clean the church and keep it and the churchyard maintained.



The newly painted coat of arms



The clock undergoing the automatic winding upgrade