



BRANKSOME, ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

www.st-aldhelm.com

Registered Charity Number: 1130874

**PARISH REPORT &
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

together with reports from church organisations
for the year ended 31st December 2020

Vicar

Rev. Philip Martin

Churchwarden

Peter Sharp & Ian Gray

Honorary Treasurer

Peter Sharp

Honorary Secretary

(position vacant)

**BRANKSOME ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
AND
THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
SUNDAY 25TH APRIL 2021 AFTER THE 10AM SERVICE**

AGENDA

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. To elect 2 people to the Office of Churchwarden

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

3. To receive the updated Electoral Roll and Report
4. To receive the Annual Report and accept the examined Accounts for 2020.
5. To receive the Treasurers Report.
6. To receive the Churchwardens Report.
7. Vicar's Report & Memorial to the Departed.
8. To receive the Deanery Synod Report.
9. To elect members of the laity to the PCC & Sides persons.
10. To accept the minutes of the APCM for the 18th Oct 2020.
11. Matters arising from the 2020 minutes.
12. Closing Prayer.

MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
HELD ON 18TH OCTOBER 2020

Meeting of Parishioners

Thanks were given to Jane Rosewarn following her extended term of office due to COVID precautions delaying the meeting until today.

Nomination of Churchwardens - Peter Sharp and Ian Gray voted as Churchwardens with Ray Beverley, Clair Eaton and Diane Eaton continuing as part of the churchwarden team.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Electoral Roll - as of 31st December 2019 there were 47 members from within the parish and 48 from outside the parish.

Accounts - Peter Sharp - Treasurer - summarised the accounts included within the annual report. Thanks were given for his efficiency. Accounts were voted unanimously. Proposed by Gary Waldron and seconded by Ian Clothier.

Peter had written the treasurers report in March ready for the original meeting which was delayed until today by the COVID-19 pandemic. Peter forecast a loss of £10,000 for every quarter when going into lockdown. £10,000 down for the whole period since March. Collections have dropped. The parish centre managed to break even. Busy Bodies have helped with their continued Government funding and have continue to pay hall rent. £4,000 has been received from Government for the Furlough scheme. Unrestricted funds £23,000 down by £10,000. Church is still solvent! More donations have been given on-line and in person. Our main income is from the regular planned giving.

Churchwarden Report - was received. The feeling is that spiritually

St. Aldhelm's has held up well during the difficult time. Visiting priest and DDO, Nigel Done remarked that he thought there was a wonderful atmosphere here. There have been three adults confirmed here and this reflects the spirit of the church.

Vicar's Report - a number of people have died since our last annual meeting, they were remembered. Pip finished with asking everyone to continue to encourage and pray for one another.

Deanery Synod Reps - are Pip Martin, Gary Waldron and Andrew Dray. Pip attended Diocesan Synod via zoom on 17.10.20.

Sides Persons - all presently on the list are happy to continue with the addition of Rona Orme. The church is looking for two volunteers to clean the church on Saturday in readiness for the Sunday service.

P.C.C. Members - three new members were elected - Ian Clothier, Philip Sandom and Denzil Sheppard. The following P.C.C. members confirmed that they would service on the PCC and were duly nominated.

Ray Beverley, Jackie Ree, Samantha Waldron, Peggy Elliott, Diane Eaton, Clair Eaton, Tim Mitchell, Andy Pidgley.

P.C.C. shares responsibility with the Vicar for strategic decision.

Apologies - were received from Dave and Barbara Marsh and Andrew Pidgley for not being able to attend the meeting.

Pip was thanked for his wonderful ministry during this difficult time especially with the online services enabling people to remain connected.

These minutes were taken by Jennifer Hamblin

BRANKSOME ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH

Annual Report and Accounts of the Parochial Church Council
for the Year ended 31st December 2020.

Administrative Information

Brankosme St. Aldhelm's Church is situated in St. Aldhelm's Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset. BH13 6BT. It is part of the Diocese of Salisbury within the Church of England. Correspondence should be addressed to The Parish Office, 401 Poole Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset. BH12 1AD.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission. Charity Number: 1130874.

PCC Members who have served from October 2020 until the date of this report was approved are:

Licensed Ministry Team:

Incumbent:	Rev. Philip Martin, Chairman
Hon. Assistant Priest:	Rev. Stephen Flatt
Licensed Lay Reade:	Rona Orme

Pastoral Ministry Team:	Joy Warne, Jackie Ree, Tim Mitchell, John Tubbs
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Churchwardens:	Peter Sharp, Ian Gray
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Deanery Synod Reps:	Andrew Dray, Gary Waldron
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Elected Members of PCC:

Ray Beverley	Jackie Ree
Samantha Waldron	Peggy Elliott
Diane Eaton	Clair Eaton
Tim Mitchell	Andy Pidgley
Philip Sandom	Ian Clothier
Denzil Sheppard	

Officers of the PCC:

Hon. Treasurer:	Peter Sharp
Hon. Secretary:	<i>vacant position</i>
Electoral Roll Officer:	Diane Eaton
Health & Safety Officer:	Tim Mitchell
Safeguarding Officer:	Heidi Moxam

Elected Sides Person:

Donna Noonan, Ted Hadley, Ian Gray,
Diane Eaton, Dave Marsh,
Barbara Marsh, Lisa Stroud,
Christine Shaw, Linda Beverley,
Ray Beverley, Isobel Woodbury,
Rona Orme

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Branksome St. Aldhelm's PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure 1956.

The method of appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

St. Aldhelm's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, Rev. Philip Martin, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical.

It has maintenance responsibilities for the Church, the Branksome St. Aldhelm's Centre and its surrounding grounds.

The major risks to which the PCC is exposed, as identified by the PCC members, have been reviewed and systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE **CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

There are 105 Parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, 49 of whom reside within the parish and 56 from outside. There was 1 deletion from the last report, as 1 member moved out of the area.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Mr Peter Sharp and Mr Ian Gray were elected as Churchwardens for a further term of office. Mr Peter Sharp was elected as Treasurer.

The P.C.C. meetings were mainly held on-line via zoom. The Standing Committee and Crisis Committee (Crisis Committee formed during COVID pandemic) met in between these meetings and the minutes from those meetings were taken to the full Council for discussion where necessary.

There were no safeguarding issues during the year.

Ecumenical links continue within the Deanery (Poole East Churches Together) as do our links with Busy Bodies Pre-School and Bishop Aldhelm's C.E. Primary School and our international links with Lutheran Church in Stockholm, Sweden and Anglican Church in Ecuador.

The Parish actively supports the work of Poole Food Bank and regularly donates food which is then passed onto those in need within Poole.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The coronavirus pandemic has had a serious effect on the financial position of our free or "Unrestricted" funds. It is hard to compare with the optimism of our anniversary year. Planned Giving declined by 10% while collections, along with the drop in attendances, more than halved. On the other hand, many generous donations were made. Fundraising income dropped by over 75% partly through the reduction of the scope of the Christmas Tree Festival and the curtailment of the Tuesday lunchtime recitals, but also as a result of not repeating the income from the 2019 celebrations. Hall rental collapsed by 50%, though this was in part due to Busy Bodies taking responsibility for its cleaning and having a corresponding reduction in its charge.

With the reduced activities, some savings were made. Fundraising costs, naturally, almost disappeared while personnel costs were

considerably reduced thanks to the government's furlough scheme. No long-term repairs or maintenance were carried out. The wifi improvements have been more than covered by donations.

At the APCM in October I was fairly upbeat about our position. However, I had not foreseen that there would be two more lockdowns and we would continue to lose money. While Restricted Funds have shown a healthy surplus, our Unrestricted Funds are, if not disappearing, considerably reduced. We express Reserves for the church and hall separately and those for the church have now sunk to zero. Overall, our reserves have diminished by less than £5,000 in the year but the proportion that is locked in Restricted Funds has moved from 27% to 71% in just two years.

Since the end of 2020, I think our finances can be said to have reached the crisis stage. The least gloomy part is that our expenses this year are in line with last year's, though (with one exception) there is little scope for further reduction. However, income goes from bad to worse entirely due to the absence of rentals from the centre and church - though they have just started trickling in in the last few days. In 2020 these amounted to almost £15,000.

Our unrestricted funds in the first three months of 2020 will be down by at least £8,000, reducing the reserves to £10,000. Should the present circumstances continue, they will be virtually nil by mid-year. We would then have to take the only available and exceptional step to reduce expenses which is to suspend (or reduce) our diocesan share. - Peter Sharp - Treasurer

Signed Rev Philip Martin

BRANKSOME ST. ALDHELM
CONSOLIDATED FUNDS YEAR TO 31/12/2020

Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds		Actual to 31/12/2020	Actual to 31/12/2019	Change 2019>>2020
32,882	33,925	Reserves at 1st January	66,807	78,948	
30,610	2,329	Planned Giving	32,939	35,859	-2,920
5,355		Collections	5,355	13,801	-8,446
12,912		Gift Aid Received	12,912	9,857	3,055
9,074	7,500	Bequests & Donations	16,574	3,431	13,142
1,869	3,698	Fundraising Income	5,567	23,668	-18,101
1,007		Fees Received	1,007	2,199	-1,192
509		Orchestra & Players	509	3,421	-2,912
14,566		Hire/Rent of Rooms	14,566	27,209	-12,642
386	1	Sundries	387	850	-463
76,288	13,528	Total Income	89,816	120,294	-30,479
58,583		Diocesan Share	58,583	59,009	426
82		Fundraising Costs	82	2,927	2,845
379		Grants Given	379	443	64
7,933		Personnel Costs	7,933	15,964	8,031
839	467	Travel & Expenses	1,306	2,284	978
776		Postage & Telephone	776	780	4
1,330		Printing & Stationery	1,330	2,341	1,011
		Computer Bureau		324	324
8,332		Gas, Electricity & Water	8,332	8,769	437
4,373		Insurances	4,373	3,970	-403
1,465		Services & Refreshments	1,465	2,455	991
912		Cleaning & Bins	912	5,480	4,568
4,027		Repairs & Maintenance	4,027	21,457	17,430
1,455	3,120	Equipment Purchases	4,575	4,803	227
339		Licences	339	555	216
277	42	Sundries	319	873	554
91,101	3,629	Total Expenditure	94,730	132,435	37,705
		Transfers			
18,069	43,824	Reserves, 31st December	61,893	66,807	
		HSBC Current Account	26,760		
		CofE Deposit Account	35,033		
		Petty Cash	100		
			61,893		

BRANKSOME ST. ALDHELM
Unrestricted Funds, Year to 31/12/2020

	General Fund	Parish Centre	Vicar's Fund	TOTAL
Reserves at 1st January	17,873	14,639	370	32,882
Planned Giving	30,835			30,835
Collections	5,355			5,355
Gift Aid Received	12,912			12,912
Bequests & Donations	9,049			9,049
Fundraising Income	1,869			1,869
Fees Received	1,007			1,007
Orchestra & Players	509			509
Hire/Rent of Rooms	1,300	13,266		14,566
Sundries	386			386
Total Income	63,021	13,266		76,287
Diocesan Share	58,583			58,583
Fundraising Costs	82			82
Grants Given	379			379
Personnel Costs	4,937	2,997		7,933
Travel & Expenses	684		155	839
Postage & Telephone	776			776
Printing & Stationery	1,330			1,330
Computer Bureau				
Gas, Electricity & Water	4,401	3,840		8,332
Insurances	3,498	875		4,373
Services & Refreshments	1,465			1,465
Cleaning & Bins		912		912
Repairs & Maintenance	3,031	996		4,027
Equipment Purchases	1,400	56		1,455
Licences	319	20		339
Sundries	277			277
Total Expenditure	81,251	9,695	155	91,101
Reserves, 31st December	-357	18,211	214	18,069

BRANKSOME ST. ALDHELM
Restricted Funds, Year to 31/12/2020

	Church Energy	Maroy Fund	Organ Fund	Ecuador Fund	Friends	TOTAL
Reserves at 1st January	8,953	1,221	11,696	1,943	10,113	33,925
Planned Giving	1,260		1,069			2,329
Collections						
Gift Aid Received						
Bequests & Donations	6,000				1,500	7,500
Fundraising Income			1,940	250	1,508	3,698
Fees Received						
Orchestra & Players						
Hire/Rent of Rooms						
Sundries			1			1
Total Income	7,260		3,010	250	3,008	13,528
Diocesan Share						
Fundraising Costs						
Grants Given						
Personnel Costs						
Travel & Expenses		467				467
Postage & Telephone						
Printing & Stationery						
Computer Bureau						
Gas, Electricity & Water						
Insurances						
Services & Refreshments						
Cleaning & Bins						
Repairs & Maintenance						
Equipment Purchases					3,120	3,120
Licences						
Sundries			42			42
Total Expenditure		467	42		3,120	3,629
Reserves, 31st December	16,213	753	14,664	2,193	10,001	43,824

Pine Garth, 23 Lindsay Road, Poole BH13 6AN
Tel : 01202 751553

To: The Vicar, Church Wardens, Parochial Church Council and members of Branksome St
Aldhelms Church.

I have examined the bank statements, receipts and payments related to the 2020 accounts
maintained by the Church Treasurer and can confirm that, in my view, everything is well organised
and accurately accounted. The prepared accounts correctly present the status of the parish
finances for the year ended 31 December 2020.



John Sprackling
27 April 2021

VICAR'S REPORT

*At our last Annual Meeting, delayed by the pandemic restrictions until late October, I reflected on our experience through lockdown. Here though I want instead to look more to the future by sharing with you a revised version of a document discussed by our Parochial Church Council. In this paper, **After the Pandemic**, I attempt to look forward with realism and with confident hope.*

It is difficult to raise one's eyes from all the immediate challenges and priorities that the Coronavirus pandemic presents. But it is certain that the world – and the church – will be changed by this crisis and **it is important therefore, that alongside a necessary 'survival mode' we seek to renew – and, I would argue, enlarge - our thinking and our vision for the changed circumstances that lie ahead.**

We will all be affected by global and national changes that we cannot control or even influence very much, such as an increasingly partisan and divided politics and economic difficulty for many. We are, however, as the Christian Church, endowed with a past, and a future, that give us a bigger perspective and an unshakeable hope. These are gifts that many in this bewilderingly changed world will increasingly yearn for and seek.

In what ways is St Aldhelm's more vulnerable in these new circumstances?

- Our active membership, in common with many churches, is at the older end of the spectrum and likely to be cautious about commitments outside the home for a considerable time. We may have lost permanently from our services a considerable number of our older members.
- Our membership is not among the 'most able to pay' and our regular income, from giving and from other sources, has been and will continue to be for some time depleted seriously.

- ‘Social fellowship’ has been traditionally one of our strengths and this is unlikely to be possible to recover in the short or medium term.
- We have only a small Ministry Team of one stipendiary priest, one non-stipendiary priest whose main ministry is his employment as a senior nurse, and a non-stipendiary Licensed Lay Minister.

In what ways is St Aldhelm’s well-placed in these new circumstances?

- We have maintained an active praying and worshipping presence in the community throughout lockdowns and changing circumstances.
- Our online presence, though not among the most technologically advanced, has been persistent and well received by a diverse following. Our ‘style’ and our way of conveying the Christian message are seen as welcoming and accessible.
- Our open building has been a well-used refuge for prayer and solace by many, both members and others who do not regularly attend services. The building itself is one of our best proclamations of the Gospel: beautiful, open, imposing and yet welcoming, awesome and yet inclusive, dedicated to prayer and yet well-suited for concerts and other public gatherings. With the new world likely to be more local our building’s witness within the community is timely and fortuitous.
- Some new and younger members have joined us, both online and in public worship.
- We have many members who are willing to help and several younger members keen to explore some kind of vocation to ministry.
- If, as I suspect, an increasing number of people will hunger for spiritual wisdom, support and rituals that comfort and touch the

heart, but are put off by dogmatic certainties, then our tradition of inclusive theology and Anglo-Catholic worship may well be able to address many people's hunger.

- Our tradition of encouraging a questioning and reflective faith, although it may not suit some, will I think be increasingly attractive to many who have not previously either had time or opportunity to explore their 'spiritual dimension.'
- Our Hispanic ministry attracts a younger congregation for whom the sacraments of the Mass – and of Christian fellowship – provide a home from (in many cases exiled) home. There is rich potential for mutual benefit of our English-and Spanish-speaking communities. Our Busy Bodies pre-school is also an extraordinarily diverse and rich mixture of nationalities. Amid an increasingly partisan and fearful world, St Aldhelm's has the potential to model a diverse and enriching spiritual community.
- A Church Hall that has benefitted from recent investment and is available to diverse groups in the community.
- The church grounds (including the 'side garden') offer huge potential as a green space amid a busy urban environment. There has been a remarkable recent revival of interest in and commitment to enhancing this resource, the fruits of which are very evident – and welcome. A vision diagram for re-developing the side garden/Vicarage garden is included on the final page of this report.
- A parish magazine (both printed and online) that seeks to be a resource both for the church and for the wider community.
- We have people gifted in 'thinking outside the box.' As an example I would cite our (not the) Christmas Tree Festival. With all the usual care and attention to detail, our usual event was replaced by a smaller-scale, quieter and more spiritually-focussed event, 'Keeping the Lamp Alight', conveying a message of hope and encouragement amid a dark period.

I think in response to such considerations **we must be both realistic and ambitious**. What should be our aims? **Here are some of my suggestions:**

- A clearer focus on basic Christian formation: simple and short sermons, Bible reflections, first communion and confirmation courses, etc.
- Stewardship renewal by which to ensure the largest portion of our annual income comes from committed voluntary giving. In addition, inviting a one-off contribution by those who feel able, to help us offset our deficit (mainly caused by the enforced shutdown of the church hall for over a year.)
- We should seek to emphasise our inclusive Anglo-Catholic tradition. Our future will not be secured by seeking to be like most other churches in our area but will be better served by our providing what we can do best: combining a generous, thoughtful Anglican theology with an unapologetically Catholic emphasis on prayer, the sacraments and transformational worship.
- A once-in-a-generation investment in our building: improved facilities for online transmission and security; new heating system; new lighting; re-decorated interior; renewed notice-boards and entrances around the church 'campus'; church grounds (including: improved visibility of the building, a more sustainable arrangement for the Garden of Remembrance and a more strategic use of the side garden.) This together will entail significant expense (and may even justify employing a part-time project manager whose role would include accessing grant aid and finding other means of income as well as overseeing the work itself.) Some specific items could of course be financed as memorials given in memory of loved ones.
- We should do all we can to encourage the diocese to place a curate here (application was sent following the PCC meeting in January).

- There was much talk internationally of rich and poor nations having equal access to the available vaccines, while the reality has (inevitably?) been different. As a church we have a link with a Latin American country among the hardest hit and with the Anglican Church there that is very close to the poor and marginalised. I hope we can find ways to use that link to support them and so make a little more real the undoubted truth that this pandemic has made clear: we are all in this together.

This document is intended as a ‘scene-setting prompt to our thinking’ and NOT as a fixed proposal. It is vital that we find ways to engage the wider membership of the church in a process of forming a vision for our future and I very much welcome your thoughts about how this might be done most effectively. Perhaps two or three sermons could help prompt thoughts, two or three open discussions in person or by Zoom help to discuss ideas, and a carefully prepared questionnaire elicit other ideas and suggestions as well as helpful or cautionary questions.

Rev. Pip Martin

CHURCHWARDENS REPORT

After last year's lively commentary, 2020's is very flat. The coronavirus pandemic and the resultant lockdowns curtailed our activities outside worship almost completely. The only social/fundraising event of note was the fish-and-chip supper held in March, just before lockdown.

The Friends' recitals, naturally, took place early in the year. But only a brief season was possible in the autumn and these were not so well attended as previously for understandable reasons.

By far the most important aspect of life at St. Aldhelm's this year has been the continuation of worship whenever possible. While some neighbouring churches have remained closed almost continuously, we have continued to come together nearly every Sunday. This has been helped by being able to re-arrange the seating into pods and the willingness of all to make it work.

Services were also live-streamed. Although we already had some primitive equipment, a fund-raising drive enabled us to improve it. Through the internet, we are now able to reach anyone who wishes to join us and it could become a regular feature even after restrictions have ended.

And to show that St. Aldhelm's is thriving, we were delighted to welcome Bishop Karen to conduct a confirmation service in September.

Finally, our thanks to Jane Rosewarn who, having indicated that she wished to give up the role of churchwarden, served almost the entire calendar year until the delayed annual meeting.

Peter Sharp

Ian Gray

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF
BRANKSOME, ST. ALDHELM**

**THE FOLLOWING REPORTS ARE
FROM CHURCH ORGANISATIONS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020**

CHARITY NUMBER: 1130874

FRIENDS OF ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH

Both the Spring and Autumn Recitals began on optimistic notes but were curtailed when they both succumbed to covid 19 regulations and the 1st and 2nd lockdowns.

The Spring series hosted 5 performances out of 15 while the Autumn series hosted 5 performances out of a total of nine. The Summer Music Festival that plays monthly from June to September was cancelled altogether. The performances that did take place raised over £800 for the Friends.

During the year the Friends were able to upgrade the tea station with new cabinets and counter top. Also new church tables were bought and new signage outside of the church.

Although activities were cut back somewhat, it still produced a positive situation.

Jackie Ree, Chair

MOTHER'S UNION REPORT 2020

Actually this will be a very short report as due to Covid restriction we have not met since February 2020 but we have all kept in touch with each other.

We are hoping to commence Monthly Mass on Wednesday 2nd June and maybe an afternoon meeting in July but it all depends on any restrictions that are in place.

Thank you for your continued, even if distanced support and we look forward to suggestions for future meetings. Take care and stay safe.

Diane Eaton

MUSIC REPORT FOR 2020

For most of this difficult year music has been able to continue at our 10a.m. Sunday service. Our choir continues to have weekly practices, though during recent lockdowns these have been short and take place on Sunday rather than Friday, and we continue to sing during the communion.

Perhaps two highlights of 2020 were firstly to welcome a new soprano and a new tenor to our choir, they are both beginning to learn the music and both are doing really well. Secondly on Tuesday 6th October we were able to put on a 40-minute music concert when we sang three of our favourite anthems and I played three organ pieces. Several members of the Bournemouth and District Organists' Association attended and were impressed with the high standard of singing and playing. I enjoyed playing to a fairly large group of people who all sat and listened carefully, which is very different to what I find every Sunday. It is always disappointing for me to practise for many hours in order to play quality organ music, only to find almost nobody sitting and listening to it at the end of the service.

Finally I must thank our choir. We are a small group but very friendly and supportive, and with a good sense of humour. I expect a lot from them, they always work hard and the results are very creditable. It is good that we are able to just "tick over" during difficult conditions so that when things improve we will be able to welcome more new singers and resume singing anthems old and new which so many have said they enjoy listening to.

Philip Sandom
Organist & Choirmaster

GUIDING AT ST. ALDHELM'S DURING A PANDEMIC

Wow what a year it's been! On March 16th, 2020 we received the email we had all been dreading that all face-to-face meetings had to stop with immediate affect (this landed in my inbox when I got home from Brownies)

We decided there was 2 ways to tackle this situation, to sit back, have some time off and admit defeat which would have been the easy option or 2, embark on online meeting using something called "zoom" that we had never heard of before. Well, we went for option 2 and by April 2020 we were meeting weekly with all sections from the comfort of our own homes.

We have had a great year meeting online with all sections. Would be lying if I said it didn't come with its challenges, but in true Guiding spirit we faced them all head on! We have managed to adapt the Guiding programme for online meetings so the Girls can still gain skill builders and earn minutes toward their theme awards, this has enabled girls to achieve their Bronze awards and start working on their silver award.

The Girls have been very busy completing interest badges, making the most of their time spent at home.

We completed the county May lockdown challenge badge and the summer Challenge badge.

We have tried baking, craft, games nights, toasting marshmallows over tealights, scavenger hunts have been very popular which got the girls more active and away from the screens.

We all clapped for carers in our uniforms and joined in the 2 minute silence on our doorsteps for Remembrance Day.

For those of you familiar with Zoom the mute button has been very handy as you can imagine, especially with 29 Brownies all online trying to ask questions or just general excitement to see their Brownie friends.

We were lucky to fit a few outdoor meetings in over the summer Holidays using the church side garden. It was so lovely to see all their smiley faces in person. The Autumn term brought its own challenges of the wet weather and the darker evenings, but we had meetings by torchlight in the garden and sat under tables to shelter from the rain (all socially distanced of course). The rangers enjoyed walks down through the woods to the beach, they were just happy being out and having people to talk to. We are so lucky to live where we do and have the outdoor facilities as I know not all groups have been so lucky.

Then once again we found ourselves back on zoom! But at least we were more prepared this time round.

The Girls had the opportunity to join an online county space day in November where they made space outfits for their teddies, tried science experiments and had a session with a planetarium, joined by hundreds of girls across the county.

Sadly, the pandemic has meant no camping or residential this year but will be hopefully be back on track with these next year.

Like lots of other groups our fundraising was all been put on hold so we have been unable to replace the floor in the den but hopefully 2021 will put us back on track and we will be able to complete our much-needed refurb project. We have managed to keep ourselves afloat and will come back fighting!

I am very lucky to have an amazing team of leaders that have

enabled us to carry on Guiding during the Pandemic I couldn't have done it on my own!

The Girls parents have also been very supportive of our weekly sessions and have helped us with some of our crazy online ideas, that may not have always gone to plan.

As always, the Girls themselves have done us proud, they have been very resilient with all the changes and gave 100% to all the new challenges we threw at them.

A BIG Thank you to everyone that has joined us on our online journey, never did I expect to be zooming a year later but there is light at the end of the tunnel, and we are very grateful to be coming out the other side.

Clair Eaton

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers.

BUSY BODIES PRE-SCHOOL

Due to Covid-19 Busybodies Pre-school made the extremely hard decision to remain closed and place the 2 children that could access childcare into alternative provision from March 23rd until September 2020, however we continued to work and support all our families with a virtual package, this included a weekly catch up with the child's keyperson offering learning and development ideas and sometimes a socially distanced visit at the park to support with learning to ride a bike etc.

During this time, we helped many of our families with emotional support a shopping trip or a simple a little bit of adult conversation.

Prior to temporarily closing in March 2020, We continued to work with the residential care homes for our intergenerational work, with Zetland court coming into pre-school every fortnight and us retuning the visit once a month, this was additional to us visiting both Park manner and The Lindsey. Due to Covid these visits had to come to an abrupt end, but I am happy to report that we have eventually resumed these visit via Zoom with Zetland court, this new way of working all be it very strange has been very welcomed as we have missed our friends so much over the period of time.

The numbers of children attending Early years provision has dropped nationally with parents choosing to keep their children at home instead of accessing provision, this did mean that we have had a drop in numbers of children in Busy bodies however I am pleased to announce that these numbers are raising now and we are feeling very confident about the future.

Sue Fallon
Pre-School Manager

