

THE OCTAGON PARISH

West Sussex

Comprising the Parish Churches:

**St Mary, Compton;
St Peter, East Marden;
Christchurch, Forestside
St Peter, Racton
St Mary, Stoughton**

the Chapels of Ease of:

**St Mary, North Marden
St Michael, Up Marden**

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT of the PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

For the year ended 31st December 2022

INCUMBENT – until 4th July 2022

The Revd Lindsay Yates

The Vicarage, Compton, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 9HD

From 4th July 2022 until 31st December 2022 – the parish was in interregnum

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr Charles Lawton

BANK

NatWest Bank

WEBSITE

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

Charity Registration No. 1156866

The Octagon Parish – Open for All

*“Showing God’s love and caring for our community and churches in
the beautiful South Downs National Park”*

Administrative Information

The Parish is a Charity Registered with the Charity Commission under the name of **The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Octagon**, with the Registered Charity Number of 1156866.

During the year 2022 the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC):
[year of election/re-election]

Incumbent: The Revd Lindsay Yates – until July 2022

Churchwardens:

- Mrs Carol Stamper [2022]
- Mrs Sarah Lawton [2019]

Treasurer: Mr Edward Cottrell [2017]

Deanery Synod Reps:

- Mr Edward Cottrell [2017]
- Mrs Jennie Dolman [2017]
- Ms Pamela Payne [2017] - until November 2022

Elected members:

- Mrs Sally Ablewhite [2020]
- Mr Patrick Balfour [2022]
- Mrs Annie Barnes [2020]
- Mr Richard Barnes [2022]
- Mr Tom Maier [2019]
- Ms Pamela Payne [2020] - until November 2022
- Mrs Ros Velton [2021]

Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Tracey Hodkin [2018]

Data Protection and Compliance Officer: Mr Patrick Balfour

Ex-officio members: Mrs Maria Sadler [2018]* - until June 2022

Appointed roles: Ms Rachel Foister, Secretary and Electoral Roll Officer

Standing Committee: Rector, Churchwardens, Treasurer

**Lay readers are ex officio members unless requesting not to be on the PCC*

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27th May 2022

Structure Governance and Management

PCC Membership

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Octagon (hereafter referred to as “the PCC”) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Power’s Measure. The PCC is a registered charity – Reg. No. 1156866. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. For 2022, the membership of the PCC of the Octagon Parish is detailed on page 3.

Parish Local Committees

Each church in the Octagon Parish is run by a Parish Local Committee (PLC), comprising elected members. Each PLC is represented on the Octagon PCC by one of their members or by a Churchwarden and reports regularly on its activities.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee comprised the Rector: The Revd Lindsay Yates (until July 2022), the two Parish Churchwardens: Mrs Sarah Lawton and Mrs Carol Stamper and the Treasurer of the Octagon Parish Mr Edward Cottrell.

Members of Parish Local Committees (PLCs) in 2022

Compton and Up Marden	East and North Marden	Forestside	Stoughton	Racton
Sally Ablewhite*	Patrick Balfour	Jennie Dolman	Rosy Bell	Anna Blencowe
Fiona Baker	Edward Cottrell	Linda Fulker	Joanne Briffet	Peter Blencowe
Judith Davies	Annie Judd	Sarah Hutchinson	Pamela Harry	Phillip Cooper
Annabel Keville	John Robinson	David Parker	Di Hughes	Ros Gordon-Cumming
Amanda Jackson	Valerie Robinson		Joan Langmead	Audrey Hamilton
Tom Maier	Penny Walder		Sarah Lawton	Elizabeth Stanley
Steph Newell	Denise Watson		Caroline Taylor	Annie Barnes*
Pamela Payne*	Steve Watson		Ros Velton*	Richard Barnes
Robert Sawers			Jane Venables	
Valerie Seddon				

*served as Local Churchwarden in 2022

Octagon Voluntary Roles in 2022

Octagon Bell Ringing

Tim Wright and Joanna Woodcock

Octagon Magazine Editor

Caroline Taylor

Octagon Magazine Advertising

Roy Fulker

Octagon Music Licencing

Richard Barnes

Octagon Choir Lead

Martin Phillips

Ministry Team

The Revd Lindsay Yates – Octagon Rector (until 4th July 2022)

Mr Edward Mynors – Octagon Lay Reader

Mrs Maria Sadler – Octagon Lay Reader (until July 2022)

Mr David Parker – Authorised Lay Minister (from January 2022)

The Revd Canon David Nason – Rural Dean

Sidespeople for Local churches 2022

Compton	East Marden	North Marden	Forestside	Racton	Stoughton	Up Marden
Barlie Adams	Annie Judd	Patrick Balfour	Jennie Dolman	Annie Barnes	Rosemary Bell	Michael Ablewhite
Fiona Baker		Jean Balfour	Linda Fulker	Audrey Hamilton	Fiona Gowar	Sally Ablewhite
Judith Davies			Roy Fulker	Gill King-Smith	Barney Gowar	Valerie Seddon
Amanda Jackson			Nonie Holmes		Pam Harry	
Annabel Keville			Paul Holmes		Di Hughes	
Stephanie Newell			Helen Honeyman		Charles Lawton	
Thomas Newell			Sarah Hutchinson		Sarah Lawton	
Pamela Payne			David Parker		Ros Velton	
Robert Sawers					Jane Venables	

Trustees Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council 2022

Our Aims and Purposes as a Charity

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Rector, currently a vacant position since July 2022.

- The promotion of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England;
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical;
- Enabling our churches to be accessible to all regardless of their faith or lack of, age, colour, sexual orientation, ability, need.
- Knowing Jesus and making Him better known;
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the eldest to the youngest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay;
- Providing financial support to those in need and, to other organisations with similar objectives.

What We Planned to do In Order to Achieve our Charitable Objectives

When planning our activities for the year, our incumbent and PCC considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognizing its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

For 2022 we discussed and planned the following objectives and activities to fulfil our aim. These included:

- Enabling as many people as possible to feel confident to worship in our churches as Covid regulations are lifted and to reduce the reliance on online platforms;
- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community;
- Teaching, baptizing and nurturing new and existing believers;
- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish;
- Considering how services can involve the various groups that live in the parish;
- Putting faith into action, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament;
- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in Jesus;
- Reaching out to the community through provision of village events, festive services, support of the Octagon Choir, the Stoughton Bellringers, the Octagon Magazine and the Octagon Parish Website and Facebook Group;
- Maintaining the fabric of the church buildings as historic centres and focuses of community life in our villages;
- Provision of pastoral care of people living in the parish;
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish.

What We Achieved and How We Affected Beneficiaries' Lives

In July 2022 our Rector, the Reverend Lindsay Yates left to move to Canterbury. The parish organised a well-attended farewell party outside St Mary's at Stoughton following the morning service. Her leaving presented us with a challenge as a vacancy ensued. However, the PCC rose to that challenge and was instrumental in supporting the Church Wardens and part-time parish administrator in enabling most of our services to continue along with our work in the school and the wider community. We are grateful to our Bishop, the Right Reverend Bishop Martin Warner, our Archdeacon, the Venerable Luke Irvin Capel and the Acting Rural Dean, the Rev. Canon David Nason who have supported us. Also, the many retired clergy who have been more than willing to officiate at the Eucharist each week. Indeed, their contributions have brought new and interesting perspectives to our acts of worship. They were assisted by those who read and intercede. Our Lay Reader, Edward Mynors and David Parker, who was commissioned as an Authorised Lay Minister at Chichester Cathedral by Bishop Ruth Bushyager on 8 January 2022, have taken on extra work with the All Age Service, supporting the School Assemblies and taking Funerals amongst many other tasks. Fiona Mullett, a retired Head Teacher has joined them in taking school assemblies and leading the All Age Services. They make a very effective team.

Maria Sadler completed her ordination training and was ordained Deacon on 2nd July. We said a tearful goodbye as she left to take up her Curacy at Bosham.

The standard of church music has been maintained by our many organists under the leadership of Richard Barnes.

It was also a year of recovery from the effects of the Covid Pandemic, although Covid itself had not disappeared, with many parishioners and volunteers suffering several bouts of illness. However, we managed to maintain church attendance and catch up on the Quinquennials and health safety audits which had to be deferred as a result of the restrictions.

On the administrative side is the Standing Committee of the PCC, comprising the Rector until July, Rachel Foister, Administrator and PCC Secretary, Sarah Lawton and Carol Stamper, Churchwardens, and Edward Cottrell, Treasurer. This team operates alongside committed local teams in our seven churches to ensure that we are able to keep running for our beneficiaries. Indeed, the parish is dependent on over 70 people who give their time to support the work of our parish.

We have continued to support Compton and Up Marden C of E school by taking the school assembly weekly and supporting its school fetes. Many children progress from the school to the Bishop Luffa School in Chichester. In April, the school attained a rating of good in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

Attendance at Worship

Unfortunately, we had not been able to provide our full pattern of services after the Rector left but we have offered a weekly Eucharist and a monthly All Age Service, morning prayer service, and service of prayer at Stansted House Chapel. Evensong once a month at East Marden continued until the winter set in. We were unable to continue with our Wednesday morning Eucharist.

We hope to resume our Tuesday morning online Morning Prayer services next year.

We held special services to commemorate the late Queen's Jubilee and her funeral and provided a book of remembrance in each church.

Our Christmas services were well attended despite the rise in Covid and influenza. We were able to provide a Carol Service at every church and a crib service at St Mary's Compton.

Recent Attendance Across the Octagon:

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Easter	228	0	120	154
Christmas and Advent	581	20	285	526
October (average Sunday attendance)	45	7	45	24

Numbers on electoral roll:

2022	127
2021	134
2020	138
2019	139

Teaching, Baptizing and Nurturing New and Existing Believers

We resumed providing coffee after each service which gives us an opportunity to get to know new people attending and strengthen our relationships one with the other.

There were 10 baptisms in 2022 which provided an opportunity to share the Christian faith with young families and to welcome visitors to our churches for the services.

We followed up those baptised with a card on their birthday.

During Lent 2022 we set up a series of talks on the theme of the 'Church in the World' at St Peter's East Marden.

We had good attendance at our Mothering Sunday and Crib services. Our All Age services for those who feel more comfortable with a less formal service were well attended.

Edward Mynors, Lay Reader, David Parker, Authorised Lay Minister and Fiona Mullett, a retired Head Teacher, continued to lead weekly assemblies at Compton and Up Marden CE Primary School.

At Christmas we held a Christingle service for the School in St Mary's Compton.

Evangelism and Outreach

The Octagon Magazine continued to be disseminated to most members of the community. The parish also continues to publicise its activities and those of other organisations in a weekly email bulletin which is received by around 230 individuals and on its Facebook page.

Many events were held which bring people together to enjoy fun, food and fund raise. These included a flower festival at St Mary's Stoughton, a vintage tea party in Compton, a school fete and a village barn dance.

We supported the many events held in each village to commemorate the Queen's jubilee, including the dedication of a Jubilee tree in Stoughton.

Provision of the Church Buildings for People to Enjoy

During 2022 we have maintained our seven historic church buildings. Our churches remained open during the daytime for private prayer and exploration. The offering of our church buildings for prayer and peace and quiet is an important part of our mission and outreach and we are grateful to all those across our villages who help to clean and maintain our churches as well as those who arrange the flowers.

In 2022, over 745 people signed our visitor books, some were walking groups or groups interested in historic churches. Our churches may well have been visited by over 1000 people this year. They include walkers and cyclists. This, coupled with the folk who attend weddings, baptisms and funerals, gives us a wonderful opportunity for outreach. We intend to capitalise on this next year by initiating a project to improve our welcome and provide information and other facilities to enable people to feel comfortable and cared for.

Provision of Pastoral Care for People Living in the Parish

This is a vital part of what we offer to our beneficiaries and pastoral care has continued in person where possible and over the telephone until our rector left in July. However, the Rural Dean and our Lay Leader have made themselves available and we publicise the availability of support on our website and bulletin. Monthly coffee mornings in Compton for those who are living alone and Forestside have resumed along with our monthly pub lunch in Walderton.

The Nursing home at Lordington Park where we provided pastoral care closed this year

Provision of Tangible Support to Those in Need and Charitable Giving

The parish made a concerted effort to support the West Sussex project to provide homes and support to those fleeing from the hostilities in Ukraine. However, our very rural nature and distance from towns, along with our lack of public transport and school places proved too difficult to overcome in most cases. Two young women were housed by one of our families.

The Parish supported Sage House set up to support those suffering from Alzheimers disease and their families, raising funds through our Lent Lunches.

We also provided collection points in our churches for those wishing to contribute items to the Chichester Food Bank.

We collected money for the Marine Society for Sea Cadets at our service at St Peter's, East Marden on Sea Sunday in July.

A number of donations were made from the Rector's Discretionary Fund to those in need across the parish at Christmas and throughout the year. This year we made a smaller number of more substantial amounts to assist with fuel bills of some of our less affluent parishioners.

Summary of Birth, Marriage and Funeral Services Across the Parish:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Marriage Services	7	9	0	9	8
Marriage Blessings	6	2	0	3	1
Baptisms	6	9	3	6	10
Burials in our Churchyards	6	6	2	6	5
Interments of Ashes	3	6	4	2	5
Funerals Services only	4	3	5	5	4

Financial Review

The Consolidated Accounts for the Octagon PCC for the year ending 31st December 2022 are presented on page 13. These are based on the five constituent PLC annual statements and the Octagon central account. The statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis as follows:

	<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>Independent Inspector</u>
Compton and Up Marden PLC	Robert Sawers	Sarah Hutchinson
East and North Marden PLC	John Robinson	George Papworth
Stoughton PLC	Steve Barrett	Ken Symons
Forestside PLC	Sarah Hutchinson	Robert Sawers
Racton PLC	Philip Cooper	Helen Spilsted
Octagon Central Account	Edward Cottrell	Charles Lawton

A copy of the separate annual statements. Also attached is the statement of investment policy.

The consolidated accounts for 2022 show a surplus of just over £5,000. Without a generous legacy of £6000, a deficit would have been recorded. The five churches managed to produce surpluses in their accounts. Over the last three years the centre has waived contributions from the churches so that they can meet the cost of the Parish Mission Cost. This rises relentlessly every year. 2022 saw a rise of £2157 and we know that another £2029 has been asked for in 2023. This takes the Parish Mission Cost for our half stipend parish to £51,186, a 19% rise over the last five years. We must hope that we can continue to fundraise and donate whilst bearing in mind that, like many other things, religion costs more each year. The central account had a deficit of just over £4000. Almost half of this was down to a reprint of the Octagon Walks magazine which helps increase the footfall in our churches and hopefully donations from walkers. The central account relies on a few generous donors who have been very supportive. However central costs have been rising and these have not been passed on to the churches. Sadly we have now fallen into a vacancy as a result of our rector leaving and so our churchwardens and the community will have to carry on without any help from the vicarage. The Parish Mission Cost is still payable even if we have no incumbent.

Planned giving was lower in 2022 and fundraising saw a substantial fall as no fête was held.

Happily, fees, collections and investment income took up some of the slack and the aforementioned legacy underpinned the income numbers. On the expenditure side, some of the lumpy items of 2021 were not repeated, and repairs and maintenance were a lot lower.

Staff Costs

The PCC pays for an administrator who assists the Rector in running the parish. This is a vital role during a vacancy, without our amazing administrator the parish would grind to a halt.

Trustee payments and expenses

In the absence of a rector the PCC still has to provide heat, light and maintenance for the vicarage so that a new incumbent will still have a comfortable home.

Reserves

Reserves fell by £53,840 as investment markets all fell. At the end of the year reserves were £635,078. The current insurance valuation for the churches of £16,400,000 also provides a perspective on this number.

Many thanks to everyone who has donated or helped to raise money for our small parish and thank you to all the treasurers and auditors for the individual churches. Many thanks also to R Sadler & Co who manage our payroll very efficiently. Let us pray for peace in Europe and lower inflation.

Edward Cottrell, Octagon Treasurer

OCTAGON PCC Accounts 2022

		Totals	
INCOME		2022	2021
		£	£
Incoming Resources from Donors			
	Planned giving (Gift Aid)	36345	42960
	Collections (inc. wall safes)	10295	7969
	Income tax recovery	15514	10617
Other Voluntary Incoming Resources			
	Fundraising	11288	34156
	Donations and miscellaneous	25781	20986
Incoming Resources from Operating Activities			
	Fees	7289	4868
	Investment Income	11039	10135
	Total receipts	117551	131690
EXPENDITURE			
	Grants to charities	3501	4045
Church Activities			
	Parish contribution and Deanery exps.	49164	47142
	Church running expenses (inc. admin)	27693	34806
	Octagon Costs (inc. Clergy expenses)	10156	2546
	Church repairs and maintenance	21733	33198
	Total payments	112247	121737
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER EXPENDITURE		5304	9954
ASSETS			
	Investments	635078	688918
	Restricted Funds		
	Movement over year	-53840	83651

THE OCTAGON PARISH
Compton and Up Marden, East & North Marden,
Forestside & Stansted, Stoughton, Racton

Independent Report by the appointed PCC Inspector of Accounts

The Consolidated Accounts for the Octagon PCC for the year ending 31st December 2022 are based on the five constituent PLC annual statements and the Octagon Central Account. Separate statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis as follows:

	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Independent Inspector</i>
Compton and Up Marden PLC	Robert Sawers	Sarah Hutchinson
East and North Marden PLC	John Robinson	George Papworth
Stoughton PLC	Steve Barrett	Ken Symons
Forestside PLC	Sarah Hutchinson	Robert Sawers
Racton PLC	Philip Cooper	Helen Spilsted
Octagon Central Account	Edward Cottrell	Charles Lawton

As the appointed Independent Examiner of Accounts for the PCC, I have seen all of the separate accounts and copies of the reports by the six Independent Inspectors listed above. I have also checked that the published consolidated accounts of the Parish, as prepared by the Treasurer Edward Cottrell, are an accurate statement of the facts presented to me.

A copy of the inspected Consolidated Accounts 2021 is part of the annual report of the parochial church council.

Signed 

Date 20th March 2023

Inspector of Accounts
Mr Charles Lawton
Walderton House
Walderton
Chichester PO18 9ED

Signed 

Date 20/3/23

Octagon PCC Treasurer
Mr Edward Cottrell
Battine House
East Marden
Chichester PO18 9JE

The Octagon Parish PCC Investment Policy

Adopted by the PCC, November 2017, reviewed March 2023

Introduction

The Parochial Church Council (PCC), as trustees of parish funds, is responsible for investment policy. The purpose of financial investment is to yield the best financial return within the level of risk considered to be acceptable - this return can then be spent on the charity's aims. It is recommended that PCC members read what the Charity Commission says on the matter: <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/money-and-accounts/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-cc14/>

In order to act within the law, the PCC must:

- know, and act within, their charity's powers to invest
- exercise care and skill when making investment decisions
- select investments that are right for their charity
- take advice from someone experienced in investment matters unless they have good reason for not doing so
- review investments on a regular basis
- explain their investment policy in the annual report.

The PCC manages an 'unincorporated charity' and as such the trustees are personally liable for their actions. However, if trustees can demonstrate that they have considered the relevant issues, taken advice where appropriate and reached a reasonable decision, they are unlikely to be criticised for their decisions, or for adopting a particular policy.

Parish Funds and Investment Policy

Parish funds are currently managed in six separate 'pots': the five main churches (Compton, Stoughton, East Marden, Racton and Forestside) and a central fund. It is proposed, until otherwise instructed by the PCC, to continue to manage the six 'pots' separately but to set an investment policy based on the combined financial aims and needs of the parish. As such, the investment policy will allocate to a combination of suitable investments, taking into account the particular needs of a church and the parish's needs as a whole. All funds will be either deposited in recognised UK bank accounts or collective investment schemes managed by an authorised investment manager, approved by the trustees.

Investment Objective

The combined investment objective is to protect the capital value of the funds in real terms and to provide sufficient income for any shortfall in cash flow raised annually by the parish. To this end, the PCC with the advice of the PLC committees will determine from time to time the financial needs of the parish specifically:

- immediate cash needs (eg deposits)
- funds that can be invested for the short term (up to 2 years- eg fixed income)
- funds that are not required for the foreseeable future (longer term investments – eg balanced funds of equities, bonds and property)
- funding for unforeseen circumstances

Risk Policy

In order to meet the investment objective, some risks need to be taken. These risks will be continually assessed guided by the parish's financial needs. The PCC may also give guidance on capital, market, valuation, liquidity, regulatory, counterparty and governance risks. Above all, the investment policy will be diversified across asset classes and sectors.

Delegation of Investment Powers

The PCC is responsible for all investment decisions and risk assessments. It may take investment opinions from their appointed Finance committee, and it will delegate the day-to-day management of funds to the same committee. The PCC may also seek a third-party opinion. The day-to-day management will be based on the investment policy and risk profile the PCC determines from time to time based on the expected financing needs of the parish.

Investment Performance

The PCC will review investment performance as a regular item on the Annual Meeting agenda.

The Octagon Parish Reserves Policy

Adopted by The Octagon PCC November 2017, reviewed March 2023

The Octagon Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for the upkeep and administration of seven churches (the upkeep of St Paul's, Stansted is the responsibility of the Stansted Estate) and for the pastoral care of its parishioners. The churches are old, some dating back to Saxon times, and require constant upkeep and repair. Their Collective insured value is over £16 million.

The PCC has determined to accrue for known expenses relating to the annual running repairs based on previous years' experience but has also set aside reserves of £75,000 per building, for unforeseen repairs exposed by the rota of quinquennial inspection reports.

The PCC has also determined to reserve an additional sum of £70,000 to administer the Octagon Parish in case of emergency.

The PCC has designated the responsibility of investing the reserves to the PCC Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer. The committee consists of the PCC treasurer, the local church treasurers, and a churchwarden. All investment decisions will pass through the committee. The committee should meet at least once per year. Decisions between meetings, if they are necessary can be made by email.

The reserves are generally to be allocated and invested in recognised and agreed funds of differing risk profiles, managed by UK-regulated Fund Managers, or a bank deposit account. The asset allocation mix of the reserves takes into account the risk profile of each fund and an assessment of the date at which the reserves may be required.

The PCC, together with the Finance Committee recommendations, regularly reviews the policy and investments throughout the year based on a continual assessment of expense risks.

Material State of the Churches of The Octagon Parish

Octagon parish church repairs report May 2023

The post-covid backlog has meant delays in some Quinquennial Inspections (QI) and the subsequent work specifications and recommended works have been slow over the past year. However, it should be noted that the churches are generally in sound condition. The status of recent inspections and consequent works is:

Compton, St Mary

The inspecting architect for Compton and Up Marden retired in December 2022 before a specification for the last QI Phase 2 works had been drawn up. Simon Dyson, who already inspects a number of The Octagon churches, has agreed to take on the inspection of these two churches and the PLC has decided to defer any outstanding works until after the next QI due in 2024. This includes the redecoration of the South transept and repairs to windows.

Up Marden, St Michael

As above, any works to this church are on hold. These include repairs to tower weatherboarding and lead flashing, the windows, and replacing the rain runoff drains. The next QI is due in 2024.

North Marden, St Mary

Repairs to defects reported after the 2020 QI, including replacing the wooden casement of the bell tower, have now been completed by Couzens Ltd. Additionally, removing a stump of the weathercock and replacing ineffective lead flashing was required. The final bill for £12,419.02, including VAT, has been paid. The next QI is due in 2025.

East Marden, St Peter

The most pressing work required for St Peter's East Marden consists of measures to prevent water ingress from the redundant chimney, with other miscellaneous minor defects. The PLC agreed to obtain a report from the architect to be included in the faculty application to address this problem and others reported after the 2021 QI. Removal of the chimney is the favoured action. The faculty application will also include proposed measures to improve the church access path, and any other work considered necessary and affordable. The PLC secretary has approached AIM to enquire whether they may be interested in bidding for work of repairing East Marden church, and possibly becoming involved with the regular maintenance of Octagon churches.

Stoughton, St Mary

Following the QI in 2021, the inspecting architect has been instructed to draw up a specification of works considered the highest priority, mostly around the south transept/bell tower, plus repointing and ground-level water drainage repairs which will be submitted for List B approval.

The Archdeacon's approval has already been granted for repair to storm damage of the roof surface and, as an insurance claim, work is due to be undertaken by The Tarrant Group. The advice of an arboriculturist was requested regarding the Poplar tree which overhangs the Chancel roof and as a result, permission is now being sought from the South Downs National Park and the Diocese for the removal of the tree. Not only will this help with the dampness caused by leaf-fall and blocked drains but will pre-empt the future structural failure of the tree that would very likely cause considerable damage to the church.

The next QI is due in 2026.

Racton, St Peter

Delays due to the pandemic meant the QI was undertaken in 2022. The church was found to be both watertight and structurally sound and there is little of major concern within the report. Permission is being sought to fit a wireless light switch at the entrance to the church.

Forestside, Christchurch

Following the failure of the previous architect to produce a report of his QI carried out in September 2020, the newly appointed inspecting architect, David Swarbrick, inspected the church in April 2022. The building is generally in good condition internally and a quotation is awaited for maintenance work to areas of the roof covering and general moss removal. The next QI is due in 2027.

Sarah Lawton, Churchwarden

Safeguarding in The Octagon Parish

Fundamentally, safeguarding is about the use and misuse of power and the exploitation or protection of the vulnerable. Given this, safeguarding is very much about how 'healthy' our church life is. In the Octagon Parish we work within a good safeguarding culture and follow sound safeguarding practices.

Safeguarding was included as a key area on the Octagon community website, and we continue to prioritise loneliness and isolation issues within our community.

Tracey Hodkin, our Octagon Safeguarding Officer for four years, stepped down from the role in January 2023. Tracey offered the PCC consistent and valuable advice for which we were extremely grateful.

We welcomed Fiona Mullett, retired Head Teacher to South Harting CE Primary School, to the role in early 2023.

The members of the PCC are in the throes of undertaking the appropriate levels of Safeguarding training as advised by the Diocese.

All relevant staff and volunteers are up to date with their DBS checks.

Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policies for the Parish are published on our website and are regularly reviewed following the guidance and requirements of the Diocesan Simple Quality Protects system.

Westbourne Deanery Synod - Annual Report for 2022

Role: To promote the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. We aim to help parishes **grow together**, become a **mutual resource**, and feel part of the wider church.

Our parishes: **Bosham, Chidham** (St Mary & St Wilfrid), **Funtington** with W Stoke & Sennicotts, **The Octagon** (Compton, N. E. and Up Marden, Forestside, Racton, Stansted, Stoughton), **Southbourne** with W Thorney, **Valley** (E Dean, W Dean, Singleton) and **Westbourne** with Woodmancote, with 20 churches.

The Synod met five times in 2022. Reports from the General Synod were received in February, and in September from an invited guest, and from the Diocesan Synod in February and June. Each month the Synod was reminded of need to keeping Safeguarding on the Agenda and ensure training was undertaken as recommended.

Two members of the clergy left the Deanery during the year. The Octagon parish remains in vacancy, but a new vicar was appointed to Southbourne with West Thorney to be inducted in February 2023.

The Rural Dean retired from that appointment at the end of April.

In February the Secretary resigned after 14 years in post, and a new secretary was appointed.

Sadly, the treasurer died in April, and a new treasurer was appointed in September.

At the February meeting, a report of the review of the Deanery by the Diocese was shared, and members discussed in small groups the parish initiatives which would form their Mission Action Plans.

At the June meeting, the draft Deanery Mission Action Plan was received, and the meeting noted that the small size of the Deanery made it difficult to have a broad focus. It was hoped that neighbouring parishes might join our Deanery. The Synod learnt that this was under discussion together with an appointment of a new Rural Dean.

In June the Synod thanked the retiring Rural Dean and bid farewell to two members of the clergy moving to new pastures.

In September we welcomed a new Curate to Bosham parish and learnt of the appointment of an interim Rural Dean. We received a presentation on the July General Synod from an invited guest.

An extraordinary meeting was held in October to consider the proposal that Apuldram and Fishbourne parishes should join the Westbourne Deanery – the proposal was welcomed by the Synod with enthusiasm.

At the November meeting, we learnt that the Chapter had discussed suggested changes to the Deanery MAP, which would be sent to the Diocese with the hope of approval by the Bishop of Horsham. It was also hoped that the incumbent of Fishbourne and Apuldram would attend a Chapter meeting in November.

The new treasurer introduced himself and presented a financial report giving the details of the Parish Share for 2023 and the pledges being sought from the parishes both for 2023 and aspirations for future years.

Consideration was given to the efforts being made in the Deanery to support the Warm Places initiative to help those in need in the forthcoming winter months.

A confirmation service was held in Chichester Cathedral in May jointly with the Chichester Deanery, and candidates from the Parishes of Bosham, Southbourne with West Thorney and Westbourne were confirmed by the Bishop of Chichester.

A Deanery Evensong was held in St Mary's Church Funtington which was well attended.

Training was held for new Lay Ministers of Holy Communion in Southbourne and Westbourne.

Monthly Prayer Gatherings continued throughout the year, visiting the churches in the Deanery and meeting in a different Parish each month.

MK/March 2023

THE OCTAGON PARISH
Compton & Up Marden, East & North Marden
Forestside & Stansted
Stoughton, Racton
www.theoctagonparish.org.uk
The Vicarage, Compton, Chichester, PO18 9HD
Tel: 023 9263 1252



**Annual Meeting of Parishioners to be held at
Compton and Up Marden CE School Hall at 7:00pm on
Thursday 18th May 2023
AGENDA**

*The meeting will be chaired by Rachel Foister
Secretary of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Octagon*

1. To approve the minutes of the last meeting
2. To re-elect Mrs Sarah Lawton and Mrs Carol Stamper as Churchwardens of the Octagon Parish.

followed by:

**Octagon Annual Parochial Church Meeting to be held at
Compton and Up Marden CE School Hall on
Thursday 18th May 2023 at 7:05pm
AGENDA**

*The meeting will be chaired by Sarah Lawton
Chair of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Octagon*

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. To approve the minutes of The Octagon Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022
4. Reports -
 - a) Annual report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the Parish
 - b) Changes to the electoral roll since the last annual meeting
 - c) The independently examined financial statements of the PCC for the year ending the 31st December 2022
 - d) A report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the churches of The Parish
 - e) A report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
 - f) Safeguarding report
5. Elections of parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC
6. Elections of Deanery Synod representatives
7. To appoint the independent examiner of accounts for next year
8. Notices
9. Closing prayer

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THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 12th May 2022
at Compton and Up Marden CE School Hall at 7pm

Present:

- Sally Ablewhite (SA)	Local Warden and PCC Rep. Up Marden Church
- Patrick Balfour (PB)	Parish Churchwarden
- Annie Barnes (AB)	Local Warden and PCC Rep. Racton Church
- Edward Cottrell (EC)	Octagon Treasurer and Deanery Synod Rep [arr. 6:45]
- Sarah Lawton (SL)	Parish Churchwarden
- Pamela Payne (PP)	Deanery Synod Rep. and Local Warden and PCC Rep. Compton Church
- Maria Sadler (MS)	Octagon Lay Reader
- Carol Stamper (CS)	
- Ros Velton (RV)	PCC Rep. Stoughton Church
- Rachel Foister (RDF)	PCC Secretary and Octagon Administrator

11 members of the public were present.

The meeting was chaired by Rachel Foister, PCC Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Jennie Dolman (JD)	Deanery Synod Rep. and PCC Rep. Forestside Church
- Tom Maier (TM)	Octagon fundraising advisor and Compton PLC Rep.

1. The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on the 27th May 2021 were approved unanimously.

2. Election of Churchwardens of The Octagon Parish:

Carol Stamper was elected and Sarah Lawton was re-elected by unanimous vote

The meeting closed at 7:00pm

Approved by:

Date: 18th May 2023

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
OCTAGON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting held on 12th May 2022
held at Compton and Up Marden CE School Hall at 7:05pm

Present:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| - Sally Ablewhite (SA) | Local Warden and PCC Rep. Up Marden Church |
| - Annie Barnes (AB) | Local Warden and PCC Rep. Racton Church |
| - Edward Cottrell (EC) | Octagon Treasurer and Deanery Synod Rep [arr. 6:45] |
| - Sarah Lawton (SL) | Parish Churchwarden |
| - Pamela Payne (PP) | Deanery Synod Rep. and Local Warden and PCC Rep. Compton Church |
| - Maria Sadler (MS) | Octagon Lay Reader |
| - Carol Stamper (CS) | Parish Churchwarden |
| - Ros Velton (RV) | PCC Rep. Stoughton Church |
| - Rachel Foister (RDF) | PCC Secretary and Octagon Administrator |

12 members of the public were present.

The meeting was chaired by The Revd Lindsay Yates, Rector of the Octagon

1. The meeting was opened at 7:05pm with a prayer.

2. Apologies for absence were received from:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| - Jennie Dolman (JD) | Deanery Synod Rep. and PCC Rep. Forestside Church |
| - Tom Maier (TM) | Octagon fundraising advisor and Compton PLC Rep. |

3. To approve the minutes of The Octagon Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the 27th May 2021

PB proposed and PP seconded – all voted unanimously to accept the minutes.

4.a) Annual Report on the Proceedings of the PCC and the Activities of the Parish.

LY gave an overview of activities across the parish and presented her report for the meeting. The Rector expressed her thanks to Patrick Balfour for all his hard work as Churchwarden of the Octagon Parish for the past 7 years, noting particularly his efforts in keeping the buildings in excellent condition.

4.b) Changes to the Electoral Roll.

There has been a drop from 138 to 130, mainly due to deaths and churchgoers moving away from the area.

4.c) The independently examined financial statements of the PCC for the year ending the 31st December 2021.

EC expressed thanks on behalf of the PCC to all to all those who had donated money to the church in the previous year. He also thanked the local treasurers and their auditors for their efforts throughout the year as well as Charles Lawton who audits the central account and has oversight of the local church accounts.

d) A report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the churches of The Parish
PB presented his report.

LY thanked PB for all his hard work.

e) A report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod.

PP remarked that Deanery Synod had been notably quiet despite the move to online meetings.

LY noted that the Mission Action Plan will be completed on a Deanery basis and that the rural Dean will collate input from the various parishes. The next Deanery Synod meeting will be held on the 16th June via Zoom. LY noted that she has received a lot of help from the Deanery incumbents and Martin Lane during the previous year. PP remarked that the Synod prayer gatherings continue on the 1st Tuesday of each month touring the different churches of the Deanery. Those interested should contact PP or MS for details.

f) Safeguarding update.

LY thanked TH for her ongoing help and expertise. TH will be standing down in the coming year and a replacement is currently being sought.

5. Elections of lay members of the Parochial Church Council.

Patrick Balfour and Richard Barnes stood for election to the PCC. All voted in favour.

6. Elections of Deanery Synod representatives.

All voted in favour of re-electing the current Deanery Synod members. It was noted that the position for a 4th representative remained vacant.

7. To appoint the independent examiner of accounts for next year.

All voted in favour of re-electing Charles Lawton.

8. Notices.

9. The meeting closed with The Grace.

LY thanked all for attending.

The meeting ended at 8:15pm

Signed:

Date: 18th May 2023

The Octagon Parish – Open for All

