

Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Salisbury

Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2020

The Mothers' Union, Salisbury Diocese, is registered with the Charity Commission (No. 249696) and the registered address is The Mothers' Union Office, Church House, Crane Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2QB.

The Mothers' Union is especially concerned with all that strengthens and preserves marriage and Christian family life. Its Aim is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life.

Mission: To demonstrate the Christian faith in action by the transformation of communities worldwide through the nurture of the family in its many forms.

The Trustees as at 1 January 2020 were:

Rosie Stiven	Diocesan President & Chairman of Trustees
Revd Joanna Naish	Diocesan Chaplain (Ex officio)
Jenny Harrison	Diocesan Secretary (Ex officio)
Suzanne Waters	Diocesan Treasurer (Ex officio)
Sheila Soper	Archdeaconry Chairman, Dorset
Jo Higgs	Archdeaconry Chairman, Sherborne
Marlene Haffenden	Archdeaconry Chairman, Wiltshire
(Vacant)	Archdeaconry Sarum
Sandra Gamble	Joint Action & Outreach Unit Co-ordinator
(Vacant)	Joint Action & Outreach Unit Co-ordinator
Elizabeth Wood	Faith Unit Co-ordinator
Mike Bowler	Administration Unit Co-ordinator
Liz Bowler	Prayer and Fellowship
(Vacant)	Fund-raising and Communications Co-ordinator
(Vacant)	Training Unit Co-ordinator
Rosemary Allen	Diocesan Members' Representative
Daphne Furey	Elected Trustee
	Elected Trustee
	Elected Trustee
	Elected Trustee
	Elected Trustee
Alison Oakes	Co-opted as Gift Aid representative
Carole Jones	Co-opted

The members of the outgoing Mothers' Union Council elect the Trustees every three years. This is the second year of the new triennium.

Jenny Harrison (appointed May 2005), working 12 hours per week, organises the Mothers' Union Office. Laura Kachale (appointed September 2017) is employed for

18 hours per week as the part time Community Development Coordinator. Her current contract is until 31 August 2020.

The office occupies two rooms, a small kitchenette and WC in the Diocesan Church House for which we pay an annual rent of £2,400 (including VAT). At our request, the Diocese replaced the storage heaters throughout the Office area. The charity owns a computer, 4 laptops, risograph, colour printer, projector, 2xvirtual baby packages (5 babies per set), cupboards, filing cabinets, display boards, flip chart and resource drawers, plus a mobile home and some second hand toys and pushchairs which were used for the 'Away From It all' (AFIA) Holiday Scheme. The MU Office computer and printer were replaced by a new system in 2018. In addition, we have equipment to the value of £759 at the Salisbury Law Court Café.

Rosemary Allen organises the literature department. The stock for this is ordered through MU Enterprises, our trading company in Mary Sumner House in London, and sold at purchase price. The stock is held in the office with a value calculated as being £608 at the end of 2020. The accounts were managed by Suzanne Waters.

At the end of each year the Salisbury Diocese receives a turnover-related grant which represents approximately 10% of the value of stock purchased by members from MU Enterprises; in 2020 this amounted to £451 which was an increase on 2019 (£528).

The Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Salisbury in 2020 had 982 members which includes 118 Diocesan members whose membership is administered by Mothers' Union, Diocesan Office. The annual subscription received is shared between Mary Sumner House (£14,239) and the Mothers' Union Salisbury Diocesan General Fund. Total receipts in 2020 were (£36,408) with payments of (£43,179).

Donations to the following Mothers' Union Funds were made by members and also grants: Holidays (Away From It All) £10,761. Overseas Fund donations were £3,963 for 2020. The donations from members were raised by means of various events, collections at church services, overseas boxes and donations from individuals, legacies, branches and deaneries.

Monies received in memory of Vice President Andrea Fox continue to be allocated within the Holiday Fund and are ring fenced for items for the mobile home.

The charity owns 1,426 shares, which are invested in the Central Board of Finance, the market value of which was £29,157 as at 31st December 2020, a rise of £1,812 from the previous year. The main bankers for the charity are Lloyds TSB, Salisbury and the Nationwide Building Society.

Reserves Policy: The Trustees continue to retain the Central Board of Finance Investment (£29,157) and part of the Nationwide deposit (£8,660) in reserve to ensure that adequate funds are always available to cover unexpected expenditure, particularly in regard to our responsibility as employers.

Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow

Led by the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocese of Salisbury continues to work to the theme: Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow. Within this theme, Mothers' Union members were also mindful of our own theme of 'Building Hope and Confidence' for 2020.

Mothers' Union Trustees recognised and have embraced the correlation between both themes and our objectives. This report is presented in that context.

Pray:

Prayer is the foundation of all that we do in Mothers' Union. We are delighted to have our own Mothers' Union Chaplain. The Revd Joanna Naish leads us in

Prayer and Worship at our Trustees' and Full Council Meetings. Our Worship and Discipleship have been truly enhanced by her presence and we thank her for all that she is doing.

In addition to their attendance at the regular five Board meetings, which are held each year, smaller groups of trustees take part in a number of sub committees as follows:

- a. The Steering Group which monitors and guides the work of the Community Development Coordinator
- b. The Grant Committee which researches and applies to external charities for funding – specifically for the role of the Community Development Coordinator
- c. The Constitution Committee, which reviews the Charity's governing documents.

All sub committees are subordinate to the Board of Trustees. The Diocesan President acts as Chairman of all the sub committees. All sub committees report to the Board of Trustees.

The 982 members in the Diocese each have a copy of the annual Prayer Diary, produced by Mary Sumner House, which has replaced *Families Worldwide* and which encourages and enables daily prayer, for the world and for MU projects and workers as well as providing information to help our prayer times and understanding. Members are encouraged to pray at midday each day.

Members would usually gather each month for communion in the Cathedral from across the Diocese. Parish Priests from different parts of the Diocese are invited to lead the Services. However, due to the pandemic, the Cathedral was closed for most of 2020.

One of our Trustees prepares a monthly *Reflections and Intercessions* leaflet which is circulated throughout the Diocese. The leaflet encourages members to pray for named individuals as well as for specific matters. Throughout the lockdowns, members were unable to meet together in prayer and fellowship. The Reflections and Intercessions leaflets became a life line for everyone and united us all in prayer and worship.

In early February our members gathered once again throughout the Diocese to join together in our Wave of Prayer. Members specifically prayed for our link dioceses in Kenya, Botswana, Nigeria and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Salisbury Diocese continues to have strong links with the Sudanese Dioceses and although Salisbury Mothers' Union no longer has official links with Sudan and South Sudan, members continue to pray for our brothers and sisters there and are pleased to receive news of them. The Board of Trustees have submitted a formal request to Mary Sumner House, which was supported by our Diocesan Bishop, to re-instate our Diocesan links with Sudan and South Sudan. We look forward to receiving a response. With the re-scheduling of the Lambeth Conference to 2022, the Diocesan President joined the Diocesan pre Lambeth Hospitality Committee. The Chairman is Bishop Andrew Rumsey. The Committee has been formed to prepare for a week of hospitality in Salisbury Diocese for the Sudan and South Sudan Bishops and their wives prior to the Conference.

Women's World Day of Prayer took place on 5 March 2020 and focused on the lives of women living in Zimbabwe. Many of our members joined with friends from other churches in this inter-denominational worship throughout the Diocese.

As the first lockdown was imposed, Branches and Deaneries were unable to hold their own special Service to celebrate Lady Day on 25 March. However, many

members took part in the weekly national doorstep applause for the NHS, which began on the following day.

Lockdown did not stop the Mothers' Union celebrating 100 years at St. Mary, The Virgin, West Moors on Sunday 7 June 2020. The MU Banner was displayed and Revd Andy Muckle blessed the Centenary Certificate sent by Kathryn Anderson, Provincial President for Canterbury Province.

By the time Mary Sumner Day came round, we had discovered the magic of zoom and under the careful guidance of our Chaplain, Reverend Joanna Naish, we were able to join together as a Diocese for an inspiring Service of celebration to mark Mary Sumner's Special Day.

In partnership with The Clewer Initiative, members marked Anti Slavery Day with a virtual Service led by Revd Jo on Friday 16 October. This was a deeply moving Service which highlighted the evil presence of slavery in our world and its many forms. Revd Jo shared pictures and music which gave real focus to our worship.

Revd Jo also prepared a wonderful virtual Service for our 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender Based Violence. The details of this very special Service are to be found later on in this report.

Without the prayers, support and encouragement of Revd Jo, our wonderful MU Chaplain, the pandemic year of 2020 would have been so much more difficult and harder to get through. I am most grateful to Revd Jo for all that she does for MU and its members in this Diocese – thank you.

Serve:

Our mobile home at Rockley Park, Poole (purchased new in 2017), is available for all parishes to refer families for a break between March and October at very reasonable rates (£250). That's a minimum of 30 families and depends upon churches and members identifying families who will benefit from this holiday. We also welcome carers who wish to take a much needed break from their full time responsibilities. Teams of members provide welcome hospitality and undertake the cleaning. Andrea Fox's legacy of £1,905 continues to enable us to provide special items for families using this facility. Outside school holidays, families with pre-school children take priority, but members may hire the mobile home at a higher rate thus contributing to the costs of this project during these periods. However, due to the stringent COVID -19 regulations and restrictions, it was considered too high a risk to both members and visitors to make use of this facility.

In March 2020, Mary Sumner House launched a major Appeal to raise funds in support of our national and global work. Individual members from Salisbury Diocese generously supported the fund raising campaign.

The COVID lockdowns throughout 2020 prevented our members from meeting in person. Thus, fund raising was prevented as our normal events such as coffee mornings and garden parties could not take place. However, we were able to provide £500 toward the purchase of a TriRide for a disabled lady living in Salisbury Diocese with family connections in Bristol Diocese. This donation was made in collaboration with Bristol Diocese.

The Virtual Baby project would normally run in 9 secondary schools throughout the Diocese. In 2020, we managed to take the project to Sarum Academy, Moyles Court and Matravers Schools before the COVID lockdowns prevented any further work in schools.

The Salisbury Law Court Café opened from January to the beginning of the first lockdown in March. It remained closed for the rest of 2020.

Mothers' Union is a significant supporter of the Salisbury Women's Refuge – a number of the residents have been guests on earlier holidays. Our members also provide resources for residents in other Women's Refuges across the Diocese. Members are very generous in their donations to the Salisbury Women's Refuge with whom we have a special relationship having been one of the original founders of this facility. As well as financial donations members make collections of clothes, household items and vouchers. Although access to the Refuge has been denied throughout 2020, members have continued with their donations.

Our promotion of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign Against Gender Based Violence continues and support for the campaign is increasing. In 2020, our Service, led by Revd Joanna Naish, was virtual. We were honoured to have as our guests: Councillor John Walsh, The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Salisbury and the Mayoress, Mrs Carrie Walsh; our Provincial President, Kathryn Anderson, and the Chairman of Salisbury Women's Refuge, Mrs Ros Hepplewhite, who also gave the address. Our virtual congregation numbered nearly one hundred members and supporters.

Mothers' Union is a partner with Prison Fellowship in providing Christmas gifts for the children of prisoners at both HMP Erlestoke and HMP Guy's Marsh. Mothers' Union funds, sources and wraps the gifts for the children. We act upon the prisoners' applications to send gifts to their children. This year 55 children received gifts through the Angel Tree Project purchased through funds raised in previous years. In spite of the COVID-19 restrictions, the Angel Tree Project was successfully and safely delivered.

Grow:

- We continue to seek to underpin all our service with Bible Study and Prayer
- Members naturally grown in confidence and in faith
- We see the opportunities to invite our non-member and sometimes not – yet –Christian volunteers to join us and have worked on this in parallel with that undertaken by staff at Mary Sumner House
- We celebrate the opportunities to serve alongside others
- We believe the objectives of Mothers' Union have the capacity to help whole families grow together in faith and discipleship and consider we have been faithful to our objectives.

The finance team and in particular our Treasurer enabled Salisbury Mothers' Union to operate within our means in 2020 despite a projected shortfall of £3,470. Thanks to donations from members and branches we managed to end the year with a small underspend and were therefore able to maintain our reserves. Our Community Development Coordinator was employed throughout 2020 but took maternity leave from May 2020. Grant funding provides for this post until 31 August 2021.

Promotion. Increasing numbers of members are buying MU products via the internet. The footfall in the office is therefore reduced as well as our awareness of members' buying patterns. Trustees continue to monitor the viability of continuing with the office and the consequent costs. Most communication takes place by e-mail. However, when larger documents such as magazines, booklets, surveys and notifications from Mary Sumner House require distribution to members, every effort is made to do this in pre-packed envelopes for collection at Autumn and Spring Councils, thereby saving on postage. Our Diocesan Secretary relies upon the assistance of a team of office volunteers in this preparation. However, during the lockdowns of 2020, no physical Council meetings could take place and both publications of *Windows* were posted.

Without a dedicated member to come forward to administer our website, we have made regular and consistent use of the Mothers' Union web pages on the Salisbury

Diocesan web site and have contributed weekly /monthly articles to the Diocesan e-bulletin and Grapevine communications. These items are not only available to our own members but are distributed and read throughout the Diocese. Our own Diocesan magazine *Windows* is also published on our web pages of the Diocesan website. From feedback received from members and non-members alike, this method of communication and publicity throughout the Diocese has proved effective.

Training. All Trustees attended a Trustee Training Day which was held in Salisbury in January 2019 at the beginning of the new triennium. Trustees have made use of the Diocesan 'virtual' training courses throughout 2020.

Safeguarding. Working in conjunction with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer as well as following the guidelines issued by Mary Sumner House, Trustees together with our Community Development Coordinator have reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy and put in place our induction procedures for new members and volunteers. Safeguarding within our organisation is regularly reviewed and remains an agenda item at our trustee meetings. Members throughout the Diocese have taken part in the Safeguarding Training provided by the Education Department of Salisbury Diocese.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) In accordance with current legislation and following the guidelines from Mary Sumner House, Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Salisbury has put in place a Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice which has been communicated to the membership. As an organisation, Mothers' Union adheres to the Data Protection Policy.

Revision of our Constitution. The Constitution for the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Salisbury was last reviewed in 2005. In order to bring it up to date, a small committee was established to review and amend the document. The revision of the Constitution was completed in 2020 and forwarded to Mary Sumner House for approval by the central charity, to which the Diocesan charity is affiliated.

New Initiatives. In spite of the lockdowns, our members have continued to gather items needed by mothers leaving hospital with their newborns. We know about the mothers who are in need as they are referrals to Spurgeons. Items such as nappies, breast pads, little babygrows and wipes have been collected together to make 'Baby Bundles'. The Bundles were distributed to the mothers and babies as soon as lockdowns were eased.

As a separate initiative, members were engaged in knitting baby blankets to a specific pattern. This initiative was in response to a call put out by Salisbury District Hospital where on average, 100 babies are born every month. The Maternity Unit was unable to provide blankets for the babies and so Mothers' Union came to the rescue. Every blanket is hand knitted with love and carries the Mothers' Union label. Several hundred blankets have been taken to the Hospital and the knitting continues.

2020 An Overview

There is no doubt that 2020 was a very different and a very challenging year. Just about everything the Mothers' Union does in this Diocese had to stop in March when the first lockdown began. The MU Office closed in March and our Diocesan Secretary worked from home throughout the rest of 2020. No longer could we rely on meeting members at our Spring and Autumn Councils in order to distribute our Annual Report, the two editions of *Windows* together with the Prayer Diary. These publications were sent out either by email or by post. Any sorting of magazines was done by single individuals working alone in MU Office observing COVID regulations.

Our members are extremely resourceful and will always find ways different ways to help others. In spite of the lockdowns and the restrictions of the COVID regulations which made it impossible for our members to meet face to face, everyone managed to keep in touch sending cards to each other; holding outdoor cake sales, meeting in gardens and leaving posies of flowers in Church porches (Mothering Sunday). Members in Blandford joined the Parish's virtual Christmas Tree Trail, decorating their MU Christmas tree with handmade/knitted teddies and socks. Over 1,000 followers viewed the Trail on Facebook. The branches, which would normally be involved in providing Christmas Day lunches, raised money for take away meals instead. As well as knitting baby blankets and making up baby bundles, branches prepared PPE for their local hospitals and surgeries.

With the help of the Church House team of Salisbury Diocese, a Mothers' Union Diocesan Zoom account was set up. This enabled our members to have individual zoom Branch meetings, and for us all to join for our zoom AGM/Autumn Council. After March, all Trustee meetings were virtual.

The Diocesan President continued to represent Mothers' Union on the Diocesan Synod (as a co-opted member), Mission Council, the pre Lambeth Conference Hospitality Committee (Lambeth postponed until 2022), Diocesan Social Justice Working Groups as well as The Clewer Initiative national and south west regional meetings. In addition, the Diocesan President organised the south west cluster meetings for Diocesan Presidents which met every 3 to 4 months and represented south west cluster at the Provincial Strategic Committees which met quarterly. There was one virtual Provincial Conference in 2020. All of the Committees mentioned above held virtual meetings throughout 2020.

Also, let us not forget that there is a huge amount of hard work and careful administration going on behind the scenes. I am most grateful to the Diocesan Secretary, Jennifer Harrison, and Diocesan Treasurer, Suzanne Waters, for their conscientiousness and devotion to the many varied and frequently demanding tasks, which come to them. COVID may have forced us to re-think how we do things but it did not prevent us from doing all of those routine tasks, which must be completed. This Diocese is blessed in having two very resourceful ladies, who proved throughout 2020 that a pandemic was just another challenge which would be overcome. Thanks to them, the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Salisbury continued to function smoothly and efficiently. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for their invaluable and faithful guidance and support throughout this difficult, challenging and unique year. They have successfully maintained the precious link between our members and our central organisation, at all times keeping everyone informed and maintaining that important level of support. There has been much to do and I cannot praise the dedication and fellowship of my colleagues more highly. The work just wouldn't get done without them and I am most grateful to them for their time and devotion so generously given to Mothers' Union in this Diocese. Thank you.

Rosie Stiven

December 2020