

# **The Parish of Hawkley with Priors Dean**

## **Annual Reports and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.**

**Vicar:** The Venerable Peter Sutton, The Vicarage, Hawkley, Liss, Hampshire GU33 6NF

**Banks:** HSBC, Lloyds TSB, National Westminster Bank, Virgin Money

**Independent Examiners:** *to be arranged*

### **Administrative Information**

The Church of St Peter and St Paul is in Hawkley. Priors Dean Church is at Priors Dean. The Parish is part of the Diocese of Portsmouth in the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

The Maberly Trust is a separate charity, registered with the Charity Commission (Registered Charity No. 307240). Its trustees are the members of the PCC.

PCC members who have served during 2024 are:

**Vicar:** The Ven Peter Sutton, Chairman

**Reader:** Miss Elizabeth Hawkins

**PCC Secretary:** Mrs. Mary Keer

**Churchwardens:** Mr. Neil Chrimes, Mrs. Jane Wyman (until 21.4.24), Mr. Tom Wilkinson (from 21.4.24)

**Lay Pastoral Assistant:** Mrs. Margaret Johnson (RIP 18.10.24)

**Deanery Synod Representatives:** Mrs. Margaret Johnson, Mr. Neil Chrimes (ex officio)

**Diocesan Synod Representative:** Mr. Neil Chrimes

**Bishop's Council Member:** Mr. Neil Chrimes

**Elected members in addition to the above:** Mrs. Alexandra Wilkinson (Treasurer), Mrs. Carolyn Fair, Mrs. Deirdre Green (Priors Dean Treasurer), Mr. Nick Pettman (Treasurer Maberly Trust), Mrs. Joanna Knight (Safeguarding Officer (taking over from Mr. Michael Offin 21.4.24).

Simon Adler is appointed representative on the Village Hall Trustees.

Electoral Roll 2024: 100 people of whom 20 are not resident within the Parish.

Electoral Roll 2025: 72 (54 resident; 18 non-resident)

### **Vicar's Review of the Year**

Both Hawkley and Priors Dean Church obtained Eco Church Bronze Awards in 2024.

Our work with children continued, with two workshops, a Light Fantastic party and a Christingle led by Elizabeth Hawkins being well received. New to Hawkley has been SundayFunday on the first Sunday of every month led by Hannah Adler. Children, after the first hymn, cross the road to the Village Hall for activities and return in time for Communion. This has increased young family involvement in Hawkley Church life significantly across the year. With an increase of young families now living in the village we are very grateful to Elizabeth and Hannah for all they contribute to this aspect of Church life.

Weekly Coffee and Chat, open to all whether residents or visitors, continued to be a popular and valued occasion. Many thanks, in particular, to Christine Offin, Elizabeth Hawkins and Maggie Johnson for their leading roles in this.

Musical life continues to thrive with the Hawkley choir led by Henny Chrimes, with valuable input from organist Kevin Jacot who sadly reduced from two Sundays per month to one Sunday. This means increased use of the HT-300 Hymnal Plus Machine (known locally as Timothy). We are grateful to Robin Crittenden for being the primary

operator of Timothy and who has now handed this role over to Tom Wilkinson. Peter Sutton has often played the organ or piano at services. We are grateful to Pippa Dice for organ playing at Priors Dean.

The Priors Dean Committee continued to meet to deal with operational matters relating to Priors Dean, bringing any matters of significance to the PCC. In addition to the two monthly Sunday services, the Yewlian meetings are also popular, sometimes with as many as 12 people present.

Mike Offin handed over responsibility as Safeguarding Officer to Jo Knight in line with the Benefice Safeguarding scheme. Following a thorough review of the C of E guidance on the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 it is confirmed that we comply with current regulations. The PCC continues to note the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and possible changes to our buildings and other provisions needed to assist those with disabilities. There is level access to the side door of Hawkley Church and a wedge in place at Priors Dean, easily negotiated by wheelchairs, baby buggies, etc.

We are very grateful to Rev Kate Lloyd Jones, Revd Sue Jones, Paul Goddard (Reader) and Elizabeth Hawkins (Reader) and Liz Buckle (Lay Preacher since September 2024) for their enormous ongoing contributions to the ministry team and the spiritual life of the parish.

We were very sad to lose Maggie Johnson who died suddenly in October.

Peter Sutton, in addition to responsibilities in the Benefice also maintained his 0.3 Deanery Incumbent's Responsibility for Lay Training and Development. He also supported West Meon School and Blackmoor School with weekly assemblies. He announced his intention to retire as incumbent in the Spring of 2025.

## Fabric

2024 was a very busy year for project and maintenance activity to keep our special parish churches in good working order despite their age and vulnerability. Both churches received a favourable report from the Archdeacon's Fabric Visitation in September.

### Hawkley

The major bells project was finally brought to a successful conclusion. The refurbishment of our eight bells and the church clock were satisfactorily completed, the bell frame treated and repainted, and the ringing room has undergone major enhancement. The bells are now a joy to both play and listen to, the environment for the ringers is much more comfortable, and installation of the bell simulator and a dumbbell has enabled much more frequent training opportunities for new and younger ringers. Grants of over £24,000 towards the project were received, plus a refund of over £9,000 in VAT payments via DCMS' Listed Places of Worship Scheme. Enormous thanks are due to Roger Barber and his team of volunteers who did so much of the work, and also to the many people from our village community and beyond who donated extra funds.

Urgent repairs were made to the lych gate masonry, and all the tower roof shingles were over-nailed to reduce the risk of them being removed by increasingly violent wind gusts. The contract to repair the flint wall on the eastern side of the churchyard (destroyed by a falling tree many years ago) has now been let, and the work will be undertaken this spring.

Much effort was expended exploring (with the help of the Diocesan Environment Adviser) various green options for the replacement of our ageing oil boiler, the status of which had worried us for some time. Sadly nothing we considered, including infra-red radiant lighting for which two surveys supported by the Diocese were undertaken, has proved to be economically or technically feasible. This thorough approach to find the right solution stood us in good stead with the diocesan authorities when the old boiler did fail in January, and we were able to install a replacement boiler in record time. Hawkley Church also achieved its Bronze EcoChurch Award.

We encountered multiple problems with the increasingly unreliable Sum-Up contactless payments machine throughout much of the year. Thanks to our Treasurer's persistence these have now been resolved, and the machine has performed without problems for several months. The microphones and transmitters that provide excellent sound throughout the church had also become increasingly unreliable after 15 years of regular use. Replacement components were sourced and purchased; these were installed, with invaluable help from Nick Davis,

in time to be used for Norma Tomlinson's Thanksgiving Service in early 2025. Plans are in hand to replace the failed lighting in the lych gate. Regular inspections of our electrical equipment and lightening conductor were undertaken. The Fire Risk Assessment & Health & Safety Policy have also been updated.

#### Priors Dean

The church remains in good condition. The focus this year has been to deal with the most recent Quinquennial Inspection recommendation to deal with the poor state of the render on part of the external face of the north wall. List B consent was obtained with remarkable speed thanks to our very efficient Archdeacon. This enabled us to place the contract in time for work to begin in early 2025, weather permitting. The contract was given to Anstey & Stone who have done excellent work at both churches in the parish over many years and are well known to us.

## Financial Review 2024

The PCC's financial position is generally healthy.

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), now active in both churches, has continued to simplify and increase our income, especially since most participants have chosen to have their giving index-linked. It is hoped that more people will be encouraged to join this very effective, simple, and efficient means of giving to the church. The Contactless Giving unit in Hawkley Church provides a steady income, especially from events; reliability has been a challenge but these problems were resolved by the end of the year. Income from investments remains solid, and the balance in all accounts has thus remained healthy.

Our Parish has continued to meet our Parish Share contribution in full.

We are very grateful to Alex Wilkinson for her service as Parish Treasurer and to Deirdre Green for her service as Treasurer to Priors Dean Church. We are again also grateful to Mike Offin for his continued work on the Gift Aid.

#### Charitable Support

Hawkley has not succeeded in 2024 to meet its target of giving at least 10% of unrestricted income to support charity each year. We continued actively and regularly to support Portsmouth Family Welfare and The Roberts Centre with financial donations, gifts of food and other items as requested. We also continue to support Christians Against Poverty. In addition, we supported our CMS link missionaries and the Rowans Hospice. Other charities supported by both churches include the Royal British Legion. Both churches were again open for Ride and Stride. Funds from Produce in the Porch at Hawkley and a proportion of the collections at both the Hawkley carol services were donated to Rowans Hospice.

The PCC members are trustees of the Maberly Trust, and this valuable charity has enabled us to give financial support to members of the parish. Grants this year, mostly of £300 were intended as an alternative to the Winter Fuel Allowance which the UK Government discontinued in 2024. These were very gratefully received.

## Submitted Mission Statistics

	Hawkley		Priors Dean	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
October Sunday averages	40	26	14	10
Easter attendances	88	88	38	24
Easter Communicants	63	60	17	16
Christmas Day attendance	147	128	21	48
Christmas Communicants	79	101	15	22
Baptisms	4	6	2	0
Weddings	3	2	0	0
Funerals*	0	3	1	0
Interments of ashes	1	2	0	0

There is a service every Sunday at Hawkley, with two Holy Communion services and two Morning Worship services each month, and Morning Prayer each Wednesday. There are two Sunday services a month at Priors Dean, one BCP Holy Communion service and one Evensong. A reflective Yewlian meeting is also held at Priors Dean once a month. On any fifth Sunday in a month, a joint whole-benefice service is held at one of the benefice churches in rotation.

\*The pattern of funerals has changed, with a new trend for memorial or thanksgiving services following or preceding cremations in which the Church is not involved

## Deanery and Diocesan Report 2024

The Diocese of Portsmouth, under the guidance of Bishop Jonathan Frost and his new executive team, has been working intensively on developing its updated vision and strategy (details are at <https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/our-strategy/>). This is built on Mission Action Plans produced in each of the deaneries, and is a living process that evolves in real time. The financial situation of the diocese post-pandemic remains very parlous, despite substantial efforts to tighten up procedures and control expenditure.

A new scheme for calculating Parish Share contributions has been developed after substantial research and wide consultation with deaneries and PCCs. Unfortunately the calculated outcomes for Hawkley with Priors Dean appear to be quite anomalous, resulting in a massive increase in our medium-term ask of over 60% (increases capped at 5% pa in the nearer term). Our PCC has challenged these calculations, and is now engaged in a process of dialogue with the Diocesan finance team and Bishop's Staff Team to find a satisfactory and affordable resolution.

A central theme of Petersfield Deanery's plan is the 0.3 shares role which each incumbent has accepted to develop deanery-wide engagement – Peter Sutton's specific area has been Lay Ministry and Training. The main work of the Deanery Synod over the past year has focussed on the implementation of this plan, and working together to support growth including:

- A pilot of "Experience Easter" with interactive prayer stations for school children, held in Froxfield and Greatham churches, attended by around 280 children in all.
- Collation of activity and approaches to spirituality and discipleship across the deanery, to form a basis for sharing of ideas and further development.
- One-to-one conversations across parishes regarding mission, evangelism and outreach, and sharing of ideas including "How village churches thrive"
- Further development of lay vocations, with 10 people commissioned as lay preachers
- Petersfield Deanery Chapter starting to work together in a Diocesan pilot of "Cairns" – Benedictine style networks to support clergy wellbeing and further develop collaborative working for mission.

Deanery Synod acts as the electorate to Diocesan Synod, and elections took place in 2024. At time of writing, there are still vacant seats to represent the deanery in the House of Laity of Diocesan Synod (including, sadly, that previously held by Maggie Johnson – who is deeply missed by the Deanery). Everyone is encouraged to consider whether this could be a role for them – it is not necessary to already be a member of Deanery Synod.

Signed by ..... Vice Chair of the PCC

Date .....