

2024 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St Laurence Longney

1) Aims and Purposes

St Laurence's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest-in-Charge, the Rev Richard Martin, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, liturgical, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and grounds. Our parish is one of three parishes within a United Benefice (the other parishes being St Nicholas Hardwicke and St John the Baptist Elmore).

2) Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to become part of the worshipping community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions as to how our services can attract the many different people who live there. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities, we bear in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and the supplementary guidance on the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through

- worship and prayer, learning about the Christian faith, and developing their personal devotion and trust in Jesus
- provision of pastoral care for people in the parish.
- mission and outreach work in the community

We also try to help people live out their faith in their daily occupations. To facilitate this work we maintain the fabric of our Church and grounds.

3) Achievements and Performance. The normal pattern of Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sundays, accompanied by the choir continued. Our Benefice website and A Church Near You page are kept updated.

2024 was a momentous year in the history of St Laurence Longney. By God's grace, and wafter much toil, the re-ordering project works were completed (several grants were obtained to enable this) and new under-pew heating was installed in the nave. We believe that this provides Longney residents with a community hub as well as a place for reflection and worship for the foreseeable future.

A memorial concert for the late Sue Catcheside was held in July.

The fund-raising Advent Coffee Morning raised over £1550.

A new noticeboard was donated to the Church.

(a) Worship and prayer. The fortnightly 9.30am Holy Communion service continued. Attendances, discounting the choir, are normally in single figures. Our Parade Harvest Festival service and the Remembrance Sunday service were well supported by Elmore and Quedgeley Guides and Brownies and their families, but the blessing of pets this year attracted no extra families. We hosted one blessing of marriage and one baptism (including the blessing of a same-sex relationship – a first for our Benefice under the Church of England's new provisions). One thanksgiving for life was held in church and there was one interment of ashes.

(b) The Church building and grounds. The Church is listed Grade 1. The project to install a toilet, upgrade the kitchenette and replace the West end pews with movable chairs was

completed. The most recent (2021) Quinquennial architect's report listed several items of repair as being urgent and a large job on the roof remains to be undertaken.

The grounds were well maintained, and once again the Parish council agreed to pay £500 towards the cost of this.

(c) Pastoral care Home Communion and visits are carried out as requested. Contact is also maintained by phone or email.

(d) Mission and evangelism. We provide material for the quarterly village online newsletter and on a weekly basis advertise events and services on the village Facebook page.

Other forms of outreach are our fund-raising events, and our involvement with Longney CE Primary school, where two congregation members are Foundation Governors and the vicar ex-officio Governor. Fortnightly assemblies are taken by the vicar in school and the Open the Book team 'perform' once a term. The Remembrance Day attendance was again boosted by the presence of some Elmore Brownies and Guides, their leaders and parents.

In December the school Christingle service was held in Church, as was a Carol service and presentation night for Elmore Brownies and Guides. The Easter Day Holy Communion, and the 9 Lessons and Carols, were well-attended. Epney and Longney Parish Council met in the Church.

We are praying that the newly re-ordered West end of the Church will be well used as a hub for various activities for the village.

(e) Co-operation within the Benefice. The Ministry team met monthly. Rev George Parfitt and our licensed Readers Pat Buckland, Judy Cheshire and Mike Williams, together with our licensed Leaders of Worship Neil Hollis and Doff Stone, took a full part in fulfilling the rota of leading and preaching, in their various styles. Rev'd George began a 6 month sabbatical in September. He will return on 27 April 2025, the date of Richard's last Sunday services prior to retirement. We were delighted to welcome Rev Duncan Hutchison on a year's secondment from Hucclecote, as Assistant Priest in our Benefice. Mike Williams retired as a Reader on 31 December after 51 years' ministry here and in other parishes – we will greatly miss his wise and gentle encouragement and challenges.

(f) Co-operation with local Clergy and Churches Collaboration with the new vicar of Quedgeley (Rev Mark Siddall) has continued. He and Richard say Morning Prayer together twice a week, and offer chaplaincy at Severn Vale school fortnightly.

(g) Deanery Synod

Our reps are Justine Sullivan (Hardwicke) and Doff Stone (Elmore) – we have a vacancies at Hardwicke and Longney. If you are interested in filling one of these you'll find the Synod a good place of co-operative spirit as we seek to work together more and more.

The Deanery Synod met 3 times this year, with Area Dean Rev'd Jo Pestell and assistants Rev'd. Sarah Todd and Rev'd. Richard Martin. The Lay Chair is Mary Gould, the Treasurer Jane Orr and the Deanery Secretary Justine Sullivan.

The first half of each meeting is given over to exploring a particular theme. The February meeting focussed on Stewardship and Giving, the July one on our links with the Cathedral, and in November we had an extended time of prayer for our city. The other half of each meeting is taken up with business.

The Deanery Strategic Plan is the focus for this part of our meetings. The Five chosen areas are:-

- 1) Deanery Finance and Buildings Project.
- 2) Youth Ministry.
- 3) Pioneering/ Mission/Outreach work.
- 4) Collaborative working.
- 5) Links between Cathedral and Deanery.

Rev Richard Martin provides a quarterly update for all members, which is available also to PCC members.

Elections were held for our Deanery's clergy and lay representatives on Diocesan Synod. We have reports from this, and General Synod, at our meetings. Rev Jo Pestell is now the chair of the House of Clergy.

This year we had a Deanery Evensong at the Cathedral on 30th September 2024, followed by refreshments- this was a great success.

Rev Richard Martin 30 January 2025

(h) Ecumenical relationships None

(i) Safeguarding: The Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Some Members of the PCC have completed The Basic Awareness online training course, there are some members who need to update this training. Foundation, Leadership and Safer Recruitment training has also been completed by the relevant members of the PCC and Clergy. Members of the PCC took part in the Domestic Abuse training which was held at Elmore Village Hall on the 22nd October 2024.

No Disclosures were made during 2024

During 2024 I became Safeguarding officer for the Benefice as no one else could be found to take up the role in Longney and Hardwicke. However, I do not think this is good practice and therefore as from the APCM I no longer wish to be Safeguarding Officer for the Benefice but I am happy to continue the role for Elmore

Liz Bates

Health and Safety inspections of our premises and grounds are carried out annually and Risk Assessments compiled for any special activity.

(j) General Data Protection Rules: The Church aims to be fully compliant.

4) Financial review –

We ended the year with our finances depleted to the tune of £20,000. But on the positive side we have provided a disabled friendly toilet, improved kitchen facilities and a warmer church.

This has cost in the region of £70,000, but thanks to grants and some generous donations we have achieved our goal. We look forward to it being used more now as a facility for the whole community.

There was a slight increase in offertory cash last year, but covenanted donations via Parish Giving remain largely unchanged. The Advent Fair/Raffle raised less than previously, mainly down to a reduction in raffle ticket sales. This may need a rethink for this year.

There were less funeral and wedding fees than 2023, but a useful £450 obtained from the hire of the church twice as a polling station.

Parish Share is a large part of our annual expenditure which no doubt will increase this year. Repairs on our grade 1 listed building are never ending. We are also due for a quinquennial inspection in the next twelve months which may highlight more problems. We are facing a large expenditure fairly soon for roof repairs for which we will need to obtain grants. And the clock has lost its chime. We were quoted about £3500 for a complete dismantle and rebuild to repair it, which we cannot justify and we are investigating alternatives. Never a dull moment.

Mike Farmer Hon Treasurer

Detailed copies of the Accounts are available from the Treasurer, Mike Farmer.

5) Volunteers

We would like to thank all those who volunteer in any way to further the work of the church. In particular we would like to thank our Wardens Tom Whittaker and Sue O'Reilly, Hazel Morgan our Safeguarding Officer and choir leader, all those who provide floral displays for festivals, Cathi Beloe and Cath Brint who clean the Church, those who act as Sidespeople, read lessons and lead our intercessions, and Mike Farmer our Treasurer, and Sue O'Reilly, our Electoral Roll officer. We also thank all the members of the choir, and Mary Hughes and Colin Squire our organists. Thanks too to Tim Batt who keeps our clock on time! We also record our thanks to the contractors who have delivered our re-ordering project, among the them our electrician Tim Light, our plasterer Jed Hughes, and the lead contractor Dan Blakeman (Alexander's Property Development), along with our architect Harvey Faulkner-Aston.

6) Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the PCC Powers Measure. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church representation rules. The PCC membership consists of 3 ex-officio members, and up to six others elected at the APCM by those members of the congregation who are on the Electoral Roll. All those who attend our services are encouraged to join the electoral roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding how PCC funds are to be spent.

The PCC had 6 meetings during the year, with an average attendance of 80%. Its main business concerned the re-ordering of the West end of the Church.

7) Administrative information

St Laurence's Church and grounds are situated on Chatter Street, Longney , GL2 3SL . It is part of the Benefice of Hardwicke and Elmore with Longney, in the Deanery of Gloucester City within the Archdeaconry of Gloucester in the Gloucester diocese, whose Bishop is the Rt Rev Rachel Trewick. The correspondence address is Church House, Cornfield Drive, Hardwicke, GL2 4QJ. The Benefice's website is [Benefice of Hardwicke and Elmore with Longney \(hardwicke-elmore-longney.church\)](http://hardwicke-elmore-longney.church)

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2024 until this report was approved are

Ex-Officio members:

Churchwardens : Sue O'Reilly, Tom Whittaker
(Longney has no Deanery Synod rep at present)

Elected members

Claire McGoldrick (to 28 April 2024)
Hazel Morgan
Colin Stone
Doff Stone
Geoff Smith
Imogen Smith (to 28 April 2024)

Co-opted member Mike Farmer (Treasurer)

Approved by the PCC on 2025 and signed on their behalf by Rev Richard Martin (PCC Chairman)

Electoral Roll

A new Electoral Roll has been prepared for 2025. There are now 31 members of the Electoral Roll , 11 resident in the parish and 02 outside. Sue O'Reilly, Electoral Roll officer

Benefice Readers' report

When a sermon starts 'What four letter word starts with a Q and ends with a Z?' you know who the preacher is. Which is the strength of Reader ministry. Each of us brings our own experiences to how we lead services and preach. We take great delight in supporting our clerical colleagues in providing what we hope are high quality spiritual experiences across the benefice.

Pat, Judy and Mike

Longney & Elmore Church Choir report 2023

Longney & Elmore Church Choir report 2024 The choir continued to sing for all Sunday services in 2024, with anthems for the main religious festivals and holy days including the first Sunday in Lent, Easter Sunday, Trinity Sunday and both Harvest Festivals.

This year the Good Friday service was at St John the Baptist, Elmore and music included O vos omnes by Victoria and Den Tod by Bach. We sang for a wedding at Elmore in February as well as a confirmation service in June. A highlight of the year was singing at Percy's baptism with prayers for the dedication and blessing of Emily and Elle in November. The service was taken by Emily's aunt,

Susan Cooke and was full of joy and happiness. It was so lovely to hear Winnie and Floss sing the second verse of "Praise my soul, the King of heaven" so beautifully and with such confidence.

In June we held a memorial concert in memory of the founder of Longney and Elmore Church Choir, Sue Catcheside, who died suddenly in 2014. We invited back former members of the choir and members of Sue's family to remember Sue and celebrate the ongoing work of the choir. Zadoc the Priest was amazing!

The Elmore Chamber Music Festival took place in August as usual, followed by a Festal Evensong on Sunday 11 August. The canticles were Dyson in F and the anthem was Evening Hymn by Balfour Gardiner.

December is always busy but there were a few changes this year with carol singing at Saul Pound moved indoors and the service of 9 lessons and carols at The Lawns being cancelled due to an outbreak of flu at the care home. The service of 9 lessons and carols at St Laurence, Longney on 15 December was well attended with time to socialise during the refreshments afterwards. Music included Now may we singen by Cecilia McDowall and A Christmas Blessing by Philip Stopford. Carol singing at The Ship this year was in aid of Longfield Hospice, and we raised £128.00.

Thanks to Colin and Mary our talented and patient organists and to Cathi and Rachel for hosting Sunday morning choir practices in their homes. Further thanks to Cathi for being our treasurer and administering the choir accounts. Jed and Mary have spent a great deal of time and effort in researching and visiting potential organs for Elmore church this year. This is proving to be a challenging project. Finally, a big thank you to all the choristers who are not only dedicated and committed to the choir but also a lovely group of people.

The choir accounts will be presented at the meeting.

Hazel Morgan, January 2025

Longney Ringers Report

We have again had a busy year ringing with plenty of practice thanks to the support of regular local ringers who have been able to bring on the skill levels of a number of ringers – myself included ! We have been fortunate this year to have had regular support from both our branch ringing master – Linda Gittings – and also the branch secretary – Joanna Morley, and also the tower captain from Frampton Dave Merrett. They have all been invaluable this year in making up numbers so we are able to practice regularly. There is a very popular regular 8 bell practice with visiting ringers on the fourth Saturday in the month and more visits are planned in the coming year.

Our ringing practice nights continue to be the second, third and fourth Tuesday of each month, numbers permitting.

We heavily rely on visitors from the local area to make up our numbers. Without these regular visitors we could not ring at all. We are desperate to recruit new ringers. Please contact Claire McGoldrick to arrange a visit on a practice night, where we have very experienced ringers extremely willing to help beginners learn the art of bellringing.

Claire McGoldrick Tower Captain

OPEN THE BOOK

We “performed” one every half-term in Hardwicke and Longney schools from January-July. Great fun, and well received by staff and students alike. Due to Marion’s accident we weren’t able to offer OTB in the autumn terms.

We’d love more team members! It’s just a chance to dress up and tell a Bible story in a child-friendly way.

Anita, Claire, Derek, Richard, Sarah

PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP / PRAYER-LINE

Prayer requests are followed through on either: email: marknsarah1980@gmail.com or text, 07757944137. We can reach more than several friends very quickly.

-with my own prayers. Sarah

Longney CE Primary Academy

Self-evaluations throughout the year continue to confirm OfSTED’s last assessment that the school is “Good”. We have made excellent progress in providing for SEN and Pupil Premium children, and on the focus on writing and reading. Under the of the school being a body with many parts that all benefit the whole, we have 4 new values that will thread through all we do: Belief, Joy, Harmony and Compassion. Information about the school’s policies, activities and results can be found on its website: [Longney Church of England Primary Academy - Home](#)

The Friends of Longney school (FOLS) raised funds through a series of well-planned events. The proceeds were used by the school for extras for the pupils that the increasingly tight budget cannot cover. Many thanks to them.

Rev Richard Martin (ex-officio Foundation Governor)