

**Annual Parish Meeting**

**Great Brickhill**

**St Mary-the-Virgin Church**

**Tuesday 4th May 2021**

# **This report covers two very different years:**

- Normal activity**  
**From May 2019 to March 2020**
- Disruption to activity**  
**March 2020 to present**
- Update on The New Facilities**

# **From May 2019 to March 2020**

- All services continued as normal incl services for High Ash**
- The regular activities took place**
- Successful social and fund raising events held**
- Support for various charities**
- December - Food Box installed in church porch**

# Church Finances for 2019:

- The Accounts for the year to 31/12/19 showed a deficit for the year £1,444.
- The PCC were unable to pay the full Parish Share. £17,000 was paid to the Diocese (67% of the total amount due).
- The Parish Share allocated to Great Brickhill is extremely high. Discussions were held to reduce the amount to a more realistic figure.

## **Early 2020:**

- **Everything continued as normal except for the Snowdrop Walk in February, which was severely hit by bad weather on the two Sunday afternoons**
- **Then everything stopped in March due to the coronavirus pandemic**

# **Effect of COVID Time Line:**

- Sunday March 15th last service in church**
- March 17th all public worship and meetings suspended until further notice**
- March 22nd: Weekly Worship Details incl. the Rector's reflection sent out to those on the E-News data base and information uploaded to the website. Printed copies sent to the few not on e-mail. Details posted on the notice board. This is still continuing.**

## **Also on 22nd March decision to:**

- Keep the church open during normal hours, daily 10.00am – 4.00pm**
- Continue with the Prayer Chain**
- Keep the Food Box in the church porch**
- Offer assistance to those who need it**
- Plant Fayre cancelled**

**BUT: 23rd March full lock down - all church buildings had to remain closed until further notice**

**June 13th: Places of worship allowed to reopen for funerals and individual private prayer. Here, Church reopened for private prayer from June 21st**

**Sundays:- 10.00am – 2.00pm**

**Wednesdays:- 2.00pm – 5.00pm**

**Risk Assessment guidelines:-**

**Hand sanitizer available at the entrance**

**Much of the church was cordoned off**

**All bibles, books etc were removed**

**Places of worship allowed to re-open from 4th July, providing guidance is followed. Weddings could also resume with limited numbers.**



**June 28th: The Rector's weekly reflection and prayer, plus a story were recorded and the link made available on You Tube. This is still taking place.**

**July 5th: The first virtual service of Evensong was held. Choir practices have been held weekly via Zoom.**

**August 2nd: Live services resumed with one service at one of the four churches at 11.00am. No singing but the organ could be played. The occasional virtual services continued.**

**August 9th: The first service was held in GB.**

**Another Risk Assessment was completed - regulations:-**

**Hand sanitizing on entry to the church**

**Seating in accordance with social distancing rules.**

**Masks are a mandatory requirement**

**Contact details to be kept for 21 day**

**Special cleaning regulations**

**Wedding held on 3rd October – 15 guests only**

**Churches had to close from midnight on 4th**

**November until 3rd December, except for private prayer.**

**Remembrance Sunday wreath laying service at the War Memorial was filmed, 116 You Tube viewings.**

**Resumption of public worship allowed from 2nd December. Services in the Benefice resumed on Sunday 6th December.**

**The Village Nativity at the Cricket Club and the Christmas Eve Carol Service were cancelled. A socially distanced, no congregation Nine Lessons and Carols service in the church with the choir was recorded and made available via You Tube, 110 viewings.**

**A REALLY POSITIVE ACTIVITY WAS:-**

**THE ADVENT WINDOWS**

**With thanks to Claire Pincott for coordinating the windows, this initiative was a great success. There was an amazing display of festive 24 windows around the village - the final one was lit at the church on Christmas Eve.**

# THE STABLE – “Window No 24”



# **2021:**

**With the rise in Covid cases, during the third lockdown, church services were suspended from 20th January. During this time a virtual service via Zoom was held every week.**

**Services resumed on 28th March. Except for Easter Sunday when a service was held in each of the four churches, there is one service every Sunday at one of the churches in the Benefice.**

**Looking ahead, .....**

**A review of the service pattern for the four churches is taking place, ready for when things get back to normal. Any change to the regular pattern of services will probably be from September.**

# Church Finances for 2020:

- The pandemic inevitably had a major impact on the finances of the church. Without the Church collections the regular income was well down and there was virtually no income from fund raising activities
- The Accounts for the year to 31/12/20 showed a deficit for the year £2,670
- The PCC was only able to pay £11,000 towards the Parish Share to the Diocese (44% of the amount due)
- Discussions to reduce our Parish Share are ongoing



## **THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING 2020**

**The Meeting was postponed from April to 1st October.  
Julia Turner remains as Church Warden.**

**Mary Maley and Angela Northen resigned from the  
PCC. All other members of the PCC remain as before.**

## **THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING 2021**

**The deadline for this has again been extended, from  
the end of April to the end of July.**

# **UPDATE ON THE NEW FACILITIES**

**(An exterior toilet extension, servery, interior gathering area behind the font and new path).**

**We were delighted with the response to the local fundraising appeal in the summer of 2020. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the project.**

**Through the generosity of those people in the village, others who support the church, and other grant givers we were able to secure the money we needed to begin the work.**

**Permission from all the necessary authorities took a long time, significant delay caused by AVDC Planning Dept.**

**Work eventually started on 29th September but even more delays were incurred:**

- An archaeology find required time for recording and reporting**
- Plans had to be slightly changed due to this find**
- Delay by AVDC in approving the revised plans missed a deadline for ordering and cutting the stone**
- The weather was then too cold for work to continue due to the temperature required for the lime mortar**

**The architect and builders have been extremely patient and helpful during these delays. The level of workmanship is superb and the end result will be facilities befitting the wonderful church that we are so fortunate to have in our parish. It has to be remembered that permission to have these facilities was only granted because of the high specification.**

**We are planning to have broadband installed, which will open up the possibilities for using the church more frequently for activities other than holding services. (Live streaming of services has not been possible during the pandemic due to the lack of broadband and extremely poor mobile coverage).**

**We are very much looking forward to the completion of the work and the easing of Covid restrictions.**