



## **2. Governance and Management Structure**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2011. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

This year, gross income is over £100,000 for the first time, so Widcombe PCC is in the process of registering with the Charity Commission as per the requirements.

The major risks to which the PCC is exposed have been reviewed and systems and procedures designed to manage those risks have been established and documented.

## **3. Aims, Objectives and Activities**

Widcombe PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar, promoting in and beyond the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibility for maintenance of both St Thomas à Becket and St Matthew's Churches.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. Its stated Vision is that *"God is calling us to be a Christian community that reaches out to the parish and beyond, to invite people to encounter God's grace"*. It promotes activities in line with its Mission statement, that *"We are an open, welcoming and inclusive Christian community, who combine contemporary attitudes with traditional worship"*

We have done this mainly through the provision of weekly traditional services and the sacraments of baptism and marriage at St Thomas', as well as weekly contemporary worship services at St Matthew's Church. We put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and provides both traditional and contemporary styles of worship, not only for those within the benefice but also for those in the wider Bath community who enjoy our services. We also aim to ensure that those in the parish who cannot physically attend church, but who want spiritual nurture, receive this through a pastoral care group.

The PCC also offers accommodation to other worship groups who wish to use our facilities for their own services and worship.

Our written policy for making grants or donations is that we pledge to donate at least 10% of our yearly income to mission and evangelism. All requests for regular charitable support or one-off donations are discussed at PCC meetings, agreed with the members with approval from the treasurer, and documented in Minutes.

The PCC is indebted to the large contribution that volunteers make in helping to maintain the churches and raise funds. There are no specific unquantifiable free facilities that the PCC relies on to do its work, just the pooled contribution from many supporters.

## **4. Achievements and Performance**

### **4.1 Church Attendance in 2016**

The revision of the Electoral Roll in April 2016 showed a further increase on last year, from 130 in 2015 to 136 in 2016.

#### **4.1.1 St Thomas à Becket Church**

St Thomas offers a variety of services, both traditional BCP HC and more contemporary Family Worship on Sundays at 10.30, with communion services on alternating Sundays at 08.00 and Thursdays at midday.

The average weekly attendance was reduced at around 25 per week, from an increasing regular worshipping community of 78 adults and 4 children.

There were three baptisms, four thanksgiving services, five marriages and one service of blessing. There were eight funerals /interment of ashes during the year.

Attendance at Christmas services was the most we have had for many years. The church was standing room only for the Nine Lessons and Carols (140) and a very good attendance of a total of 275 for the Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services.

The Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continues to use St Thomas à Becket church for its monthly services as it has done for over forty years.

#### **4.1.2 St Matthew's Church**

Weekly contemporary services and midweek Life hub groups and pastorates, have continued all year. Weekly attendance for the Sunday services varied considerably depending on student numbers, but with an average of 75. A Christingle service was held at St Matthew's, as was 'Carols by Laserlight', with approximately 380 between the two services. The worshipping community totals 150 of which 10 are children and 20 young people aged 11 to 17.

Two baptisms were held in 2016.

As well as these regular services, again this year St Matthew's Church was the venue for the Easter service, Leavers service, Harvest Festival and Christmas service for all for the staff, pupils and parents of Widcombe C of E VA Junior School.

The Orthodox Church continue to use St Matthew's for their regular weekly worship as per their five-year rental agreement to use the church exclusively on Saturday evenings, Sundays during the day and for Great Lent. This agreement runs until May 2018 and the arrangement continues to work well, with regular review.

### **4.2 Review of the Year**

After being granted a full-time priest-in-charge at the end of 2014, we were delighted to be offered the opportunity for restoring the patron's rights. Revd Tim Buckley was therefore given Incumbent status and a thanksgiving service to celebrate this historic moment was held in July. We believe that Widcombe is the only parish which has had a reversal of Suspension of the Living in the diocese.

Although the constitution of the PCC was changed in 2015, increasing the possible membership to 16, we had one vacancy unfilled at the APCM, so had 15 members from April onwards. The full PCC met nine times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 71%. A Standing Committee meeting was held prior to each PCC meeting to set the agenda and transact business not requiring a full PCC meeting.

The new parish office in St Matthew's vestry provides a very good hub for parish administration and the final restorations of toilet and washing-up facilities were completed early this year.

There were regular weekly church services and celebrations of all Christian festivals and baptisms held at both churches, plus weddings and funerals at St Thomas à Becket. Lent courses were again run in the community, which were all well attended and much appreciated.

The St Thomas Lay Team continues to take a service once a month and will continue to do so to help share Revd Tim Buckley's load and to keep the skills of this team current. It has been wonderful this year

to welcome a couple of young university students from the St Matthew's congregation to occasionally preach at our team service.

Regarding the upkeep and maintenance of our buildings, some works to replace failed lead flashings were done at St Thomas' under the supervision of the church architect. The electronic organ is now over 25 years old and in need of replacing as it is too old for spares and repairs. A legacy last year gave us the boost to start looking into this and at the time of this report, we are making a final decision as to choosing the best instrument to suit our needs. The diocesan advisor for digital organs is being consulted and permission will shortly be sought to purchase a new organ and additional speakers. St Thomas a Becket church continues to be in good order.

The settlement cracks to the north window of St Matthew's continue to be monitored and are stable. A plan to upgrade the whole building including re-roofing, replacing the boilers, transforming the entrance, changing the layout and complete new fit-out of the kitchen and toilet areas has been drafted. The PCC applied for a grant of £100k maximum from the Listed Places of Worship scheme and at the same time ran a campaign to provide significant funds from the church and local community. This raised a further £50k most of it within a matter of weeks, which we felt was a tremendous result. The grant application was unsuccessful this time, so a roof survey was carried out to determine the areas in most need of repair. A rolling repair scheme is being adopted, the first phase requiring approximately £70k + VAT. The remainder of the upgrade to the inside of the building is being researched now, with appropriately skilled architects being asked to provide ideas and their charges so that a suitable firm can be appointed.

St Matthew's continues to be rented out to various local groups to bring in income. A five-year lease for the Orthodox Church to use specific spaces at specified times runs until May 2018. In the week, an operatic group, ballet classes and other organisations have regular rentals, which helps with the running costs of such a large building. The church membership also hosts social events at St Matthew's, including a weekly coffee morning, monthly community lunches and other fundraising activities.

The PCC still owns the land at the back of the redundant St Mark's Church and has been working with a local firm of architects to try to obtain planning permission. Unfortunately, the pre-application was unsuccessful and we are looking into alternatives such as selling but with a retained financial interest if the site is ever developed.

Links with Widcombe C of E VA Junior School continue to grow, with Revd Tim Buckley being actively involved with assemblies and religious educational support for the teachers. During the year, the governors agreed to combine with seven other local schools to form the Palladian Academy Trust which takes advantage of the benefits of partnership. Each school retains its governing body to which some functions are delegated but the multi-academy trust (MAT) is governed by one trust and a single board of directors.

We continue to have strong links with our local residents' association, the Widcombe Association (WA), and they provide support in various ways, in return for the use of our facilities. This year they very generously donated £3,000 towards the cost of replacing the chairs at St Matthew's, which have transformed the comfort and welcome of the building.

We have forged a good relationship with the local Baptist Church and held joint carol singing in the main street in Widcombe at Christmas. As usual, the Widcombe Mummers also allowed us to shake the charity buckets for church funds during their annual Mummers' procession on New Year's Day.

During this year the PCC made a number of donations to various charities, as outlined in Section 5.2. The PCC has pledged to use 10% of its income to support mission and charitable work going forwards. Church members also did the door-to-door collections for Christian Aid Week and collected in excess of £1,400, less than last year but again another excellent result.

Both churches have signed up to Fairtrade Status and support Fairtrade Fortnight.

The PCC is indebted to so many who volunteer their expertise, support and time so willingly throughout the year, to ensure that our churches run smoothly, are well maintained and engender a super community spirit. We would not be able to achieve all that we do without such help.

## **5. Financial Review**

### **5.1. Overview**

In 2016, the PCC's total income and expenditure from normal activities was:

**Income**            **£112,969**

**Expenditure**    **£95,130**

As a consequence, the PCC achieved a surplus from normal activities of £17,839.

The PCC can meet its legal liabilities when they are due; the PCC's aim is to maintain a reserve of Unrestricted Funds of approximately £30,000 to cover emergency situations, equivalent to approximately three months' normal operating costs at current levels.

### **5.2. Unrestricted Funds**

At the end of 2016, the PCC's balance of Unrestricted Funds was £81,025.

#### **5.2.1 Unrestricted Income**

The PCC has four principal sources of income: Voluntary Giving; Gift Aid; Hall Lettings and Fundraising.

**Voluntary Giving** – The PCC received £65,666 in voluntary donations, of which £53,640 was Planned Giving.

**Gift Aid** - the PCC recovered an additional £11,248 in tax recovered on Gift Aid.

**Hall Lettings** – The PCC received £14,622 in rent from lettings of St Matthew's Church and Church Hall, the principal users being: The Orthodox Church, Bath Operatic and Drama Society and the Widcombe Association. This is a reduction in letting income of £522 from 2015.

**Fundraising** – A number of fundraising events were undertaken in 2016, including sale of refreshments at the Widcombe Art Trail and WA Christmas Craft Fair, along with a collection from the Mummers on New Year's Day. Regular donations are also received from the Wednesday Coffee Morning. In total, fundraising raised £1,504.

#### **5.2.2 Interest on Investments**

The PCC has three interest-earning investments: the Church Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) fund, Nat West Deposit Account and Current Account interest. Together these investments delivered £439.

#### **5.2.3 Payments**

The major payments from Unrestricted Funds fall into five categories: Administration and Office Costs; St Thomas à Becket's Operating Costs; St Matthew's Operating Costs; Charitable Donations; and Parish Share. Operating Costs fall into four sub-categories: Utilities (gas, water & electricity); Insurance; Maintenance & Repair; and Cleaning.

**Administration** came to £8,167, which includes payments to our part-time Administrator and costs associated with running (and setting up) the office.

**St Thomas a Becket's Operating Costs** – in 2016 were £2,429 - all from Unrestricted Funds.

**St Matthew's Operating Costs** – in 2016 were £21,089 - all from Unrestricted Funds.

**Charitable Donations** – The PCC donated £7,913 to various charitable organisations – the Bath Soup Run, War Child, The Children's Society, support for our mission partner, Tegan Lloyd Williams in Nepal, and Grow for Life.

**Parish Share** – The 2016 Parish Share of £37,600 was paid in full and has now been paid in full for five consecutive years.

### **5.3 Restricted Funds**

Restricted Funds are those donations that are given to the PCC with a restriction imposed upon the purpose for which the funds can be used.

At the start of 2016, the PCC held three Restricted Funds:

**St Thomas à Becket Restoration Fund - £21,752.** This fund started the year at £20,871. It is PCC policy, agreed in 2007, to maintain a minimum reserve of £20,000 for restoration work on St Thomas' church in a restricted fund.

**St Matthew's Organ Fund - £1,841.** This fund is to provide for the upkeep of the organ at St Matthew's.

**Widcombe United Charities - £2,926.** The Vicar and Churchwardens of St Thomas à Becket's and St Matthew's churches are trustees of a separate charity, the Widcombe United Charities, which is a consolidation of a number of historic endowment charities dating back to the 19th Century for the relief of poverty of the elderly of the parish. This fund has been brought into the PCC's general accounts.

During 2016 three new Restricted Funds were established:

**St Thomas à Becket Organ Fund - £16,353.** This fund was set up following receipt of a substantial gift from the family of a late congregant of St Thomas à Becket to contribute to the replacement of the current organ.

**St Matthew's Regeneration Fund - £37,837.** This fund was set up following the launch of a project to raise capital towards the cost of re-roofing St Matthew's together with its internal re-ordering.

**Grow for Life - £1,950.** This fund was set up to support a gardening project in the Parish designed to provide pastoral and educational support for individuals struggling with health issues.

## **6. Plans for the Future**

The main focus for 2017 is to redevelop and upgrade St Matthew's Church building firstly to make it watertight and warm and secondly to make it more accessible and welcoming. It is being used more and more now, so this work is paramount to provide modern and appropriate facilities for today's activities.

This will also provide more opportunities for the existing growing congregation and promote its desire to develop an outreach programme, which will provide Christian guidance, support and discipleship in the community. It will also provide a welcoming hub to local residents, group and businesses.

In addition to the developments at St Matthew's, discussions are still underway for the possibility of a new organ at St Thomas à Becket Church.

We are delighted that from July 2017, our new curate, Jenny Buckler will be working alongside Tim and the team across the parish with Tim's new role as a training incumbent. We greatly look forward to welcoming her in due course.