



St George-in-the-East Church
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'St George-in-the East PCC' charity number 1133761

Diocese of London, Stepney Episcopal Area, Tower Hamlets Deanery

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St George-in-the-East with St Paul

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 December 2009

presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 18 April 2010

FOREWORD

I am pleased to commend this report on the work of the parish of St George-in-the-East with St Paul for the year 2009. This is our first report since our recent registration with the Charity Commission. Hitherto all parish churches have been treated as charities, but without specific registration. We welcome the greater transparency registration produces, but regret that the rules may make our published accounts more complex and harder to understand.

The life of a parish church depends on so many people, whose contributions may be more or less visible. In last year's report, I tried to identify the key players, at the risk of offending those who were omitted. This year I am not taking that risk, and simply thank all who have worked for the good of the parish.

But I need to mention the momentous fact that at the 2009 Vestry Meeting Edith Wyeth stood down as churchwarden after serving in that role for over 50 years (having originally taken it on, in dark times, along with her beloved husband Jimmy, until his sudden and premature death). The *Churchwardens Measure* of 2001 established that six years should normally be the maximum length of service in this role, unless a parish votes otherwise; and in most situations this is a good principle, to prevent vested interests, the dead hand of conservatism, and the demoralising expectation of lifelong office, from taking hold. But I can assure you that none of these have applied here. To have someone who has lived on site for all her adult life, who has seen and unerringly remembers it all and remains in regular pastoral contact with so many, who can give you chapter and verse for pretty well everything and yet keeps an open mind, is a priceless gift to a parish and its incumbent; indeed, it is because of Edith that we are still here.

In Alex Nelson Edith has a worthy successor as warden - committed to the parish for many years, and a champion of our children and young people. Together with her fellow-warden Allan Ramanoop, whose practical devotion knows no bounds, and whose extended family is so much a part of parish life, we are blessed.

Another personal milestone during the year was Olive Wagstaff's 60th anniversary of licensing as an accredited lay worker. For most of that time Olive has lived and served in East London, and was interviewed for a film *East End Lives*, made and shown locally. We congratulate her, and thank her for all she still does for us, and in her hospital work.

I also want to pay tribute to the role that my wife Janina plays in parish life. Jan has a demanding day job as Chief Education Officer of the Church of England, which takes her all over the country. This rules out putting down priestly roots in another parish, even though she deserves better than her husband as her incumbent. But she likes this parish, and they like her, and her regular presiding and preaching are much appreciated.

St George's Gardens were finally formally re-opened on Whitsunday, 31 May 2009, in an enjoyable event organised by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (the Council), with English Heritage in attendance; a tree was planted to mark the occasion. See the next section for further comments.

In the crypt, the North Thames Ministerial Training Course (NTMTC), now part of the College of St Mellitus, continues its work of training ordinands; I now teach a weekly New Testament Greek class and a few other sessions, so have regular contact with the students. Green Gables Montessori Nursery School (Green Gables School) is flourishing, and as noted later is using one of our meeting rooms as a temporary additional classroom. In the tower, where some work has been done (see below on our Quinquennial Inspection (QI)), the bells are regularly rung by visiting bands.

In 2009-10 we are marking the 150th anniversary of the famous Ritualism Riots at St George's with a programme of events. More details - including the recent visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury - are at <www.stgite.org.uk> Our parish website is widely-visited, from all corners of the globe as well as locally, and is proving a valuable resource for mission as well as producing some fascinating contacts; its historical pages are now extensive!

During 2009, David Baverstock, formerly an occupant of one of our flats and member of the congregation, was ordained deacon in St Alban's diocese. We appointed Geoffrey Tattersall QC as our Parish Clerk - an honorary office which provides the 150 members of an ancient Worshipful Company. Geoffrey is a diocesan Chancellor in the north of England, but worships with us when he is staying locally. We were saddened by the death of Jackie Saward in December, a member of the congregation together with her husband Michael, a former residentiary canon of St Paul's; and also (though strictly falling outside the period of this report) of Nora Solomon, widow of the Rector who oversaw the rebuilding of the church; she was 95, and some of us attended her funeral in Worthing.

Alex Solomon ended the booklet about the remodelling of St George-in-the-East with words from Haggai 2.9: *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts*; and this hope continues to inspire us.

Canon Michael Ainsworth
Rector

BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

General

St. George-in-the-East with St Paul is one of four Church of England parishes on or close by The Highway, the road that links the City of London with the Canary Wharf business district on the Isle of Dogs. The area has seen major demographic changes over the last 30 years since the closure of the London Docks.

The original church was built between 1714 and 1729 and was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor. It was one of fifty new churches intended to be built under the Act of 1711. A new parish was created from the ancient parish of Stepney. In the mid 19th century the parish was one of the most deprived in the country and the scene of the ritualist riots mentioned above. In the 20th century, the Church was severely damaged by an incendiary bomb during the Blitz that left standing only the external walls, the tower (of 160 feet), the clergy vestry, the Lady Chapel and four turrets.

The church was rebuilt and reconsecrated in 1964 under a new design by Arthur Bailey. It is smaller than the original church and the remaining space within the original walls has been used to accommodate four residential flats each accessed separately via the four staircase turrets. There is also office accommodation. On entering the building through the main entrance under there is a small open courtyard before entering the modern church. The crypt was redesigned as a hall, complete with stage, kitchen, storage and lavatories. The building is Grade 1 listed, and various monuments, walls and gates around the site are Grade 2 listed.

In 2005 the eastern undercroft was redeveloped as office accommodation and a 25 year licence granted to the Diocese of London, which in turn has sub-licensed to the NTMTC for this period. NTMTC is a non-residential ordination training course for the dioceses of London and Chelmsford, and is now part of the College of St Mellitus. The remainder of the undercroft was refurbished as a nursery in 2006 and is licensed to Green Gables School for a term of 20 years.

In 1877 the churchyard was landscaped as a public garden, now known as St George's Gardens (of which the churchyard forms the greater part), and is maintained by the Council under a 1902 faculty. To the north of the Church adjacent to St George's Gardens is the Churchwardens' Garden which is available to the school, the parish and on a controlled basis to the wider community.

Refurbishment work to St George's Gardens funded by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund ("HLF") was completed in 2009. Plans are being developed and funding explored with a view to restoring the former Nature Study Centre within the gardens in partnership with local stakeholders. The church is supporting the Council and its Park Rangers service care for the gardens by providing office facilities for the dedicated part-time Ranger.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St George-in-the-East with St Paul, also known by its working name of St George-in-the-East PCC (PCC) is a charity and during 2009, as in previous years, was excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. However, in September 2009 the parish in compliance with the new legislative requirements applied successfully for registration with the Charities Commission. This took effect from 26 January 2010 just after the period of this report. Its registered number is 1133761.

The church is situated in local government administrative area of Tower Hamlets immediately to the east of Whitechapel, between Stepney, Shadwell and Wapping at the junction of the Highway with Cannon Street Road. A very small part of the parish falls within the boundaries of the City of London. The parish is part of the Diocese of London within the Church of England.

PCC members who served from 19 April 2009 until the date of this report are as follows:

Ex officio members

Canon Michael Ainsworth*	Rector and Chairman
Allan Ramanoop*	Churchwarden
Alex Nelson*	Churches Together in Stepney & Wapping Representative
Margaret Coulter	Deanery Synod Representative
Richard Powell*	Deanery Synod Representative and Hon. Treasurer

Elected members

Kim Ali	
John Allison	
Susan Crocker*	Secretary
Toni Davey	
Cathy Matthew	
Michael Page	
Annadale Ramanoop	
Edith Wyeth*	Churchwarden Emerita, Stewardship Officer and Vice-Chair

Co-opted members

Terry Bennett	Head Teacher of the Parochial School, St Paul's CE Whitechapel
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Wendy Ramanoop	Electoral Roll Officer	(non PCC member)
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* member of PCC Standing committee

<i>Church Postal Address</i> The Parish Office St George in the East 16 Cannon Street Road London E1 0BH	<i>Principal Bankers</i> HSBC plc 196a Piccadilly London W1V 0DY
<i>Solicitors</i> Lee Bolton & Monier-Williams One The Sanctuary Westminster London SW1P 3JT	<i>Solicitors (2)</i> Winckworth Sherwood 35 Great Peter Street Westminster London SW1P 3LR
<i>Surveyors</i> Biscoe Craig Hall 5-6 Staple Inn High Holborn London WC1V 7QU	<i>Auditor</i> Stephen Pearl & Co 3 Bentalls Close Southend-on-Sea Essex SS2 5PS

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 (as amended) and the Church Representation Rules 2006 (Rules).

The members of the PCC are also managing trustees of the Watney Street Hall Trust and Planet Street Institute Charitable Trust Funds being trusts established to benefit the inhabitants of the parish and neighbouring parishes subject to the terms of their specific trusts. The London Diocesan Fund is the Custodian Trustee.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and the congregation is encouraged to stand for election to the PCC. In this regard, the PCC in welcoming new members is mindful of the need to reflect the diversity of the congregation. Elected members are limited to 9 plus the ex officio members and co-opted members.

The current holder of the benefice, the Rector, is the Rev Canon Michael Ainsworth. He was collated, inducted and installed on 19 July 2007 by the Bishop of Stepney and the Archdeacon of Hackney.

There are two Churchwardens elected at the Annual Vestry meeting (which immediately precedes the Annual Parochial Meeting) at which any person whose name appears on the public electoral roll and resident in the Parish may attend and vote. The Churchwardens are the officers of the Bishop and ex officio members of the PCC.

The PCC has ultimate responsibility for a wide range of matters affecting the parish, including such matters as compliance with health and safety, disability discrimination and child protection. The PCC subscribes to Diocesan policies in this regard, disseminates information received from the Diocese and Deanery accordingly, and encourages its members to attend appropriate training. Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out as a matter of policy in respect of Clergy, Churchwardens, adult Servers and those responsible for the care of children.

At its meetings the PCC receives reports from the Rector, Churchwardens, its officers including the Hon. Treasurer and its committees against which it monitors the achievement of the parish's aims and objectives. Whilst the PCC takes strategic decisions, the Standing committee, a body required under the Rules, meets monthly and is responsible for the business of the PCC in the meantime subject to any directions given by the PCC.

The PCC through quinquennial reports, professional advisers and its contractors, regularly reviews the major risks to which the parish is exposed. The parish as well as seeking to minimise major risks such as accident, fire and vandalism maintains a policy of insurance for general risks with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company.

Day to day management is exercised by (and as appropriate delegated to) the Rector and Churchwardens and officers of the PCC assisted by the Parish Administrator.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Canon Ainsworth, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for maintaining the fabric of the church building and its surroundings.

The PCC sought to achieve these goals in 2009 as follows:

- by continuing the worship and the mission of the church;
- by implementing a revised Mission Action Plan (MAP) originally developed in 2006 for the parish to better fulfil its mission;
- by fostering relations with our licencees Green Gables School and NTMTC;
- by gradually increasing the amount the parish contributes to the London Diocese's Common Fund which pays for the clergy, their training and the running costs of the Church of England in London;
- by supporting the Tower Hamlets Deanery and seeking to increase collaboration amongst parishes in the borough.

In 2010, the PCC will continue to pursue these policies and by reviewing progress on the MAP, will revise and update them as appropriate. A good text for us to take with us into God's future for the parish is Matthew 13.52: *"Jesus said, when a teacher of law has become a learner in the Kingdom of Heaven, he is like a householder who can produce from his store things new and old."*

Amongst the specific activities of the parish are the following:

Regular public worship open to all	Taking of religious assemblies in schools
The provision of sacred space for personal prayer and contemplation	Promotion of Christianity through the staging of events and meetings, and the distribution of literature
Pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved	Promoting the whole mission of the Church through provision of activities for children and other groups
Teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups	Supporting other charities in the UK and overseas

The contributions of volunteers

St George's depends upon the generosity of its congregation in freely providing their time and resources to enable the church to fulfil its mission. They include the volunteers who prepare the church for worship and undertake administrative, catering, cleaning and general maintenance, and run the children's group on Sundays mornings. Without them the work and life of the parish would not be possible.

Charitable donations

The PCC seeks to donate approximately one percent of its annual unrestricted income to other charities. It aims to distribute a significant percentage to locally based

organisations as well as charities working in less developed countries. The PCC considers unsolicited requests for giving as well as identifying causes deserving of help at any one time, for example, disaster relief. In 2009 donations of, in total, approximately £1,750 were made to the following: ALMA, Providence Row, St Joseph's Hospice, Twenty5Ethiopia, Church Army, Médecin sans Frontières and WaterAid. In addition, further donations were received by the parish on behalf of and passed on to the Bishop of London's Lent Appeal (£70), WaterAid (£22), The Children's Society (£70) and Christian Aid (£104). The PCC also purchased Bibles for final year pupils leaving St Paul's school at a cost of £165.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This review of the year's activities seeks to explain the performance achieved against the objectives set, particularly in the MAP.

The Life and Work of the Parish

The PCC revised our 2006-08 MAP for the next three years, 2009-12, recognising the targets we had achieved and refining and extending those on which we are continuing to work. We believe we have set ourselves realistic but challenging targets. One of the four headings is discussed at each PCC meeting, to monitor progress, and some comments are offered below. Although some outcomes (such as attendances and financial figures) can be quantified, other features of the life and work of a parish church (such as pastoral care, and the deepening of individuals' faith) are less susceptible of such analysis.

(1) Growing, pastoring and nurturing the congregation:

- *Build and strengthen the congregation numerically and spiritually*
- *Pastoral care and affirmation of existing congregation*
- *Developing children and young people's provision*
- *Identifying individuals' gifts and callings.*

Sunday and midweek attendance remains fairly static: we are a small, but lively and healthily diverse congregation in terms of age, ethnicity and background. However, as with many inner city churches, these numbers mask the fact that "turnover" is high: about half the congregation is new since the Rector's arrival 2½ years ago, including several couples (one of whom married here in great style), with others (including a few key members) moving away, or in some cases transferring to other churches for family reasons. And as with most churches these days, many "regulars" do not attend every week because of the pressure of other commitments; in our case, we also have a number of worshippers who divide their time between East London and homes elsewhere, both in this country and in various parts of Europe. We have a reputation as a friendly congregation, good at welcoming visitors from all around the world: refreshments after church (often with cakes for those whose birthdays we celebrate in song) are important!

Spiritual growth remains primarily focused on Sundays, when we aim to provide thoughtful preaching. Gathering our members midweek remains difficult, but we seek to affirm and equip them for their various ministries in the world of work (where some are at the "sharp edge"), in their families, in the local community and in their wide range of voluntary activities. The words *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord* commit us to recognising and developing individuals' gifts and callings, which is why we encourage our

members to participate in the many training opportunities already on offer, without feeling the need to re-invent the wheel ourselves.

There is much unobtrusive mutual support, practical and prayerful, for those in trouble or distress. We have had more than our share of family bereavements this year, mostly elsewhere. In terms of local deaths, the Rector is gradually establishing the principle with funeral directors that he should conduct funerals from the parish; on a wider front, he is one of the Anglican members of the ecumenical Churches Funerals Group. We also support those who are celebrating! There were four weddings in church during the year - not a lot compared with years gone by, or churches elsewhere, but more than in recent years; the Rector has also helped to staff the Church of England stall at major wedding fairs. Baptisms are also few in number, but always joyful events.

We remain strongly committed to resourcing children's work, not least because we receive so much from our young people and would be so much the poorer without them. Their "report back" on their activities at the end of the Parish Eucharist, when they display their creations, always delights us. Young people's provision also embraces involvement with our church school, St Paul's Whitechapel, where foundation governors play a key role - see the separate report from the school.

(2) Develop the use of our building as a shared resource for the local community

- *Identify care-taker needs for the church and hall*
- *Develop our vision for the use of our building*
- *Develop a policy to implement the vision*

Ours is a complex site, not least in terms of access to the various parts of the building, which for "outside" users - such as Sotttyen Sen, the secular Bengali School of Performing Arts (music, dance and drama) who rehearse here on Saturdays - currently depends on the Rector for locking and unlocking, which is why the caretaking issue has been identified. We have made progress in upgrading our two meeting rooms at the west end of the church, one of which is currently used during school hours as an additional classroom by Green Gables School, and by ourselves at other times, the other of which (the "panelled room") has recently been redecorated and is used by ourselves and others. Further progress, in terms of wider community use, depends on implementing the findings of our QI report, on which the wardens comment elsewhere, of which the costly and historically-sensitive issue of disabled access to church and crypt is but a part. The Rector is a member of the steering group of Tower Hamlets' Local Area Partnership (LAP4) and we are open to keen to work with them, and with others, in opening our facilities to appropriate users.

(3) Establish a balance between the various needs of the congregation and parish

- *Teaching/education*
- *Social/community*
- *Spiritual*

This heading is about realistically prioritising limited resources of time and energy: an ongoing audit process. Gone are the days when East End social life - events and trips - revolved around church provision, yet gatherings for the congregation, and to engage the local community, remain important. So, for example, while we took the difficult decision not to continue jumble sales despite their significant social role (freeing up the room used for storage for the Gardens Ranger, and our energies for other tasks), we continue

to hold barbecues, harvest socials, pancake parties and the like, using both church and Rectory facilities (and we are blessed in having these). Providing hospitality - refreshments and WCs - for spectators on Marathon Sunday, despite the irksome restrictions the event imposes on us, is important, and in 2009 was hugely successful, as was the Gardens re-opening earlier in the year, organised by the Council. The part-time Ranger, for whom we provide facilities in church, has made excellent community links. In 2009 we also hosted a series of concerts, planned by Elspeth Wilkes (our organist and director of music), Canon Geoffrey White and others - inspired by the restoration of our fine Blüthner grand piano by Geoffrey's son, Christopher, which the PCC decided was a matter of good stewardship. These concerts have been of the highest possible quality, and we persevere in trying to build audiences in a deeply competitive climate. But we recognise that it is the priorities of the gospel that must ultimately shape our activities, and that we must strike the right balance.

(4) Develop our institutional engagement with other faiths and within the local community

- *Make St George's more relevant to our local community*
- *Also for our own information, growth and contribution*

We do well simply to survive in an overwhelmingly Muslim patch: the *Presence and Engagement Network*, whose events we have supported (we were invited to its launch by the Archbishop and local bishops in 2009), lists us among the top ten "other faith presence" parishes in Greater London. In our case, this is more or less limited to one other faith, depriving us of the genuine diversity which other parishes enjoy. We remain aware of the rich Jewish heritage of our parish, now so sadly attenuated. We aim to play our part within the Tower Hamlets Inter-Faith Forum (enthusiastically chaired by our Area Dean), and to keep ourselves well-informed about interfaith issues; we hope to have more to report in this in 2010.

The parish continues to change, with new housing developments: how can we relate to the gated communities of the "City Quarter" at the western end of the parish, for whom nearby City churches can provide well-resourced liturgical and musical variety? How will the re-opening of the East London Line as part of London Overground change the scene? What will 2012 and the Olympics mean for us?

The Rector

Fabric report

The QI or (Quinquennial Inspection) was conducted in 2008 and although the headline recommendations were received in 2009, the full text has yet to be received. However, some work has been carried out during the year on the immediate actions identified in the summary, as well as other urgent repairs, and budgeting for future work is in hand.

Key items of work to the fabric include:

- Electrical inspection - as part of the QI, it was recommended that a full electrical survey would be beneficial. This was carried out and all the circuits and wiring have been checked and mapped; modifications to plugs in the new office area and other recommendations will be put in place in 2010.
- Boilers - we have relied on a temporary solution to removing the overflow from the boilers by pumping water out of the boiler room. This pump caused problems

since the end of 2009; the repairs will hold until a permanent solution can be found.

- Pigeons in the tower - the area in the tower above the soundproofing was cleared and cleaned of pigeons and their mess; netting and gale breakers were replaced to ensure pigeons do not get into that area again.
- The rotunda - this has been cleared of junk.

There has also been put in hand during the year a rationalisation of space:

- The Parish Office moved to the room next to the panelled room.
- The old Parish Office was renamed the “New meeting room” and decorated by Green Gables School, which are hiring it as an additional temporary classroom (the parish has use of it out of school hours).
- The panelled room was cleared in preparation for redecoration.
- Storage space has been utilised in one of the south stairwells.

The following servicing and maintenance to the church building has been carried out:

- Gutters are regularly cleared by Hall & Randall, under the diocesan programme this service is free to us at the moment. This is in addition to other routine inspection of the drains.
- The fire extinguishers are serviced regularly.

There have been issues with the gas boilers cutting out and therefore a loss of heating to the building which have been addressed. We renewed our service contract with Heron Building Services which installed the boilers in 2005.

There have been continuing problems with damp, leaks, lying water, and the lasting effects seen of cars and lorries on the church driveway, which we hope to address in the next 2 years.

Planning for 2010 and beyond: the summary QI report and the electrical survey have allowed us to start planning for the work that is needed to the building including immediate, medium and long term actions; some repairs are to work that was done when the church was rebuilt in the 1960s and other plans are in response to development needs, such as improving access.

Therefore there are plans to investigate disabled access, resurfacing the driveway, and repairs to masonry as well as electrical repairs, patching the roof, fixing leaks and damp patches, repairing roof areas between the flats, repairing the metalwork on the western stairs, and a programme of external metalwork, woodwork and flagpole repair and redecoration. The refurbishment programme to the church flats will also continue.

The fabric report in the 2008 annual report referred to plans to install a gate to the north west of the church, CCTV and lighting. Funding from the Council has been received for this and the gate was installed early in 2010 and the other related work will be carried out in the coming year.

The Churchwardens, Alex Nelson and Allan Ramanoop

The work of the PCC and committees

The PCC and its Standing Committee each met on six occasions during 2009 - on average bi-monthly with other sub committees meeting as required.

Additionally, on 23 February 2009, there was a special PCC meeting arranged. The purpose of this was to include staff from Green Gables to meet and discuss the faculties concerning the security of the churchyard, and the hiring out of the old Parish Office as a classroom. Early in the year the parish's MAP was revised for the period 2009-12. Work on the themes emanating from the MAP has been prioritized at each PCC meeting throughout the year. The MAP tasks remain on-going with the work reflected in the various committees.

The main business over the past year included: consideration over how best to take forward themes from the parish's MAP; financial matters including Common Fund; the opening of St George's Gardens and the move of the parish office to accommodate the additional Green Gables classroom and free up the space for wider use. In particular, the QI and subsequent planning of maintenance issues have been a predominant theme for discussion.

Planning for the anniversary celebrations of the Ritualism riots early in 2010 has also been on the agenda.

PCC Secretary, Susan Crocker

Electoral Roll

In 2007 a new electoral roll was prepared as required by the Rules. In contrast, the 2009 revision was limited to updating the roll with changes that had occurred during the year.

In 2009 the new electoral roll stood at 70 persons aged over 16 (2008: 68). In total, no person came off and 6 new names appeared. The roll corresponds reasonably closely with those who attend the church on a regular or occasional basis. 18 live in the parish; the majority 52 live outside the parish, which is geographically small, though most are in adjacent parishes.

Electoral Roll Officer, Wendy Ramanoop

Report of the school year at St Paul's 2009

St Paul's Whitechapel (VA) is the parish's Church of England primary school situated at Wellclose Square, London E1. The Rector, Fr Michael, and others members of the PCC are School Governors. As is the usual practice the parish presented bibles to school leavers.

The school is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural inner-city school. It has one form of entry with children from Nursery age up to Year 6 (11 years old). There are approximately 210 children on the roll with 13 different home languages; three-quarters of the pupils are Muslims.

St Paul's Primary School is an outward looking institution and proudly so because we have a strong belief that meaningful interaction with the World outside the school can only enhance our pupils' development. The relationship with St. George's is a crucial facet of this although it should not go unmentioned that the school works with a variety of other religious institutions: Christian, Muslim and Jewish. This look back over the last year highlights some of these interactions and gives a flavour of the advantages that this approach confers.

Spring Term

Early in 2009 we held a Garden Event with plans to open up the area to parents, relatives and friends from the local community. The aim of this project was to enable community use of the garden for growing fruit and vegetables. This got an enthusiastic response so that the spring saw seeds being planted and tended to most days of the week.

We were invited to join a History of London project that would see children visit a dozen London landmarks from the Bank of England Museum to the Guildhall. The project, run by the ProArt group and funded by lottery money, included creative workshops, lectures and walking tours and culminated in an exhibition at City Hall in the autumn.

In March a talent show at the school raised money for Comic Relief's Red Nose appeal and we welcomed John Davis, a trustee of the William Davis Foundation, who was keen to see the impact of a donation towards the school's library. As Headteacher I represented the school at the retirement service for Tom Peryer, the LDBS Director of Education, which was held at St Martin's-in-the-Fields. Meanwhile our Year 5 and 6 pupils travelled down to Weymouth for a week's residential stay. They undertook a range of outdoor activities and spent some time with their pen pals from our partner school, Southill Primary School.

We established a link with Canterbury Christ Church University where groups of leaders and aspiring leaders from Kent visit St Paul's as part of their professional development. A group of Sevenoaks Headteachers arrived here in April. Our Year 6 guides showed them around the school. Also in April, our cricket team took part in a tournament at The Oval organised by Lloyd's of London.

Summer Term

On St George's day two classes attended the new St George's Gardens with many returning for the formal opening ceremony that Sunday. The school has good links with Wilton's Music Hall through groups such as the Concordia Foundation. In April the school was treated to a performance of "The Sound of London" with singing workshops in Year 4. Continuing the performance theme, a series of weekly rehearsals in May led to the school choir taking part in "The City Sings: Baroque meets the World" at the Barbican in June.

The busy summer term continued with our annual events including WriteOn week, where children's authors come into school to read and work with children, Founder's Day, Sports Day, our Art Café, this year featuring pupil's photography, and the Deanery Leavers' Service held, this year at St John's, Bethnal Green.

These activities were augmented by Cycling Proficiency courses for older pupils and a Fathers' Day event that saw fifty, dads, uncles and granddads take part in lessons. This event was organised by the Family Learning Collaborative which consists of St Paul's and three other local schools. By July real progress was being made towards securing funding for a major building works. Consultation began with parents, staff and pupils. The school year ended, appropriately, with an end of year assembly and prize giving in St George's

Autumn Term

On our return from the summer break the month of Ramadan had already begun. St Paul's marked the end of Islam's holy month with an Eid al-Fitr celebration which was

well attended and well received. Eid was closely followed by our Harvest Festival at St George's with, as usual, generous donations of food.

During National Schools Film Week in October every class had the opportunity to visit a cinema to see a feature film.

School Governors were kept busy in discussions with the Diocese and their architects on progress towards the commencement of building works planned for spring 2010 and in revising the school's Admissions Policy.

In November the school won Tower Hamlets in Bloom's first prize for our garden whilst our pupils won first prize for their presentation at the Tower Hamlets Book Awards ceremony. By now Christmas was upon us with the usual frenzy of Carol Services, parties, meals, Nativity Play and our final assembly of the year held in St George's on the last day of term.

Terry Bennett, Headteacher

Report from Deanery Synod representatives

The deanery synod in Tower Hamlets comprises both clergy and lay representatives from each of the 18 Church of England parishes in the borough. Amongst other matters, it exercises at deanery level deliberative powers as well as bringing together the views of the parishes in the deanery on common problems. Lay representatives are elected for a three year term, the mandate of the current representatives expiring on 31 May 2010.

David Longbottom (Christ Church, Isle of Dogs) continued as Lay chairman, co-chairing synod with Fr Alan Green, Area Dean. The Synod met regularly during 2009. Reports were received of the deliberations of the Diocesan and General Synods.

Amongst the business considered during the course of the year was work to update and revise the 2004 Deanery Synod Review. It was intended to send out questionnaires to all churches for clergy and laity to assess how their situation had changed since 2004 and to present their vision and challenges for the next few years. Whilst it was hoped that this process would be completed during 2009 it remains work in progress.

Sarah Finn, the Deanery Development Officer, reported on the progress of Deanery projects which included the Area Mission Action Plan and XLP Youth Project & Recruiting Volunteers. During the year she left her post and took up a new role with the Council.

The Deanery was in discussions with the local authority and police around the issue of security in churchyards. The police assessed the needs of each churchyard and the Council made funding available to implement these works. St George-in-the-East received £20,000 as is referred to later in this report. Each PCC in the Deanery involved had an opportunity to approve these works and to submit applications to the Diocesan Advisory Committee where faculties were required.

In October 2009 parishes in the Deanery agreed to increase their Common Fund Contributions (CFC). Overall this worked out at 6.28 percent for the 2010 financial year. This was a significant achievement in the light of the economic downturn and due in large part to significant increases promised by St Anne's Limehouse and Christ Church Spitalfields. In contrast, the average increase across the London Diocese was just under 3 percent. This rise was needed, in part, to fund greater contributions to fund clergy

pensions. A subject for discussion remains the percentage of unrestricted income which each parish should pay towards Common Fund there being significant discrepancies.

Deanery Synod Representatives, Richard Powell and Margaret Coulter

Churches together in Stepney and Wapping

CTSW is an ecumenical grouping of churches which has the aim of encouraging churches in the area to work and socialise together. Fr Peter McGeary of St Mary's Cable Street continued as chair.

The group held several events and services over the year. The AGM had presentations on provision for young people in the area. The Good Friday walk of witness was well attended and CTSW also held a barbeque and an advent service.

CTSW Representatives, Alex Nelson and Edith Wyeth

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Introduction

This review should be read in conjunction with the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet for the year ended 31 December 2009 and the notes therewith. These are available on request from office@sgite.org.uk.

The financial statements have been prepared on the accruals basis and have been the subject of an independent audit.

As is explained in the notes, the accounts are categorised into unrestricted and restricted accounts. The PCC may also designate unrestricted funds for particular purposes.

The restricted funds include Watney Street Hall Trust, £35,956 (2008: £35,416) and Planet Street Institute Trusts, £12,636 (2008: £11,558).

Unrestricted income and expenditure

Unrestricted income increased to £138,995 (2008: £128,021) whilst expenditure reduced slightly to £70,865 (2008: £72,092). The increase was largely due to greater hire fees for the use of the church building, principally, the use of the old Parish Office, now refurbished as an additional classroom for temporary use by Green Gables School. At the same time because of delays in receiving the QI report maintenance work was put on hold leading to lower than expected expenditure.

As in recent years the parish's principal sources of income remain rental from Green Gables School and the London Diocese/NTMTC for their use of the church's crypt and rent for the church's four residential flats. Plans to rationalise the church's office accommodation and to make the space more available to the local community are also beginning to accrue financial benefits.

Giving including Stewardship also constituted a significant part of the parish's income. At £11,060 this compares slightly better than last year (2008: £10,306), but still below the recent past (2007: £12,203; 2006: £12,475; 2005: £13,352). During the year further steps have been taken to increase awareness of the Stewardship scheme and to make giving

easier. There are available anonymous numbered envelopes for regular giving and Stewardship forms can be down loaded from the Parish website: www.stgite.org.uk. Donations of £6,606 (2008 £1,386) were received during the year. This includes the final payment of a legacy left by a daughter of a former treasurer for which we are most grateful.

Major fabric expenditure

With an eighteenth century listed structure and an ageing 1960s interior, the cost of maintaining and improving the fabric of the building poses a significant challenge. Due to delays in receiving a costed QI report, 2009 saw only minor works carried out. Therefore, only modest sums of £1,218 on the church flats and £1,675 on church repairs for routine maintenance were incurred. The latter representing a significant reduction from 2008.

Provisional costs estimates for QI maintenance became available at the end of the year. Works of the utmost urgency were estimated at £12,500, those essential within 18 months at £74,700 and those essential within five years a further £82,950. These sums exclude VAT which may be recoverable in part under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and professional fees. There are included in the first two categories improvements to the security of the church and its curtilage which will be funded by a £20,000 grant of public monies.

It is for this reason that a substantial surplus of income over expenditure has been achieved over the last two years which money (and more) will be needed in 2010 and coming years as discussed above and in the Fabric report.

Common Fund

The parish's CFC paid out of unrestricted funds increased yet again in 2009 to £39,000 (2008: £35,000). This is our contribution to the Diocese of London to pay for the Clergy, their training, pensions and central services. The gross Parish Standard cost for 2009 was £62,410 which meant that the parish received (as it does every year) significant support through Common Fund from other parishes in the Diocese. 2010 will see the parish make further progress toward paying a greater proportion of this cost which will rise to 64,060; our CFC increasing to £43,000, or approximately 31 percent of unrestricted income. It is our policy as circumstances and affordability allows to gradually increase the percentage we pay.

Reserves

It is the PCC's practice to budget for a surplus on unrestricted funds, £66,903 (2009: £55,929), in order to increase its general reserves, now £138,101 (2008: £88,745), to meet the costs of repairs and improvements to the fabric of the building in the long term. However, in the light of the QI programme of works whilst it is intended to run a surplus on regular expenditure in 2010, it is expected that the cost will push the parish into overall deficit for the next three years requiring the use of the reserves.

In addition to its general reserve, the PCC has designated as restricted funds a Wellclose Square depreciation fund out of a proportion of the rental payments from Green Gables School. The objective is to create a redevelopment fund over the course of the 20 year licence period. To this end £22,000 is invested annually in the CBF Church of England

Investment fund, an equity based fund, managed by CCLA. This is currently valued at £57,485 (£36,865.04). Its value has been subject to fluctuation during the period, but the PCC considers that it remains appropriately invested bearing in mind that it is for the long term.

Summary

The parish finances are robust but face heavy demands on them in the next few years due to increases in CFC and to pay for maintenance and improvement works. It is essential, therefore, that income is maximised whilst being consistent with the principles of the church's mission, and that reserves are built up when possible to fund these demands.

Our gratitude and appreciation go to Fiona Lawrence, the parish administrator, for keeping the books and to our auditor, Steven Pearl.

Hon. Parish Treasurer, Richard Powell

The Annual Report and Financial Statements were approved by St George-in-the-East PCC on 1 March 2010.