

Report for Parish Pastoral Council

Area of Activity	Report on Ecumenism for Parish Council CTH Annual General Meeting held on 17/11/2016 St. Mark's Church	
Activity since last PPC meeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reports were received on last year's work and everyone was thanked. Liz Bundy stepped down as Chair. Her efforts were warmly appreciated. It was noted that she had managed to visit every church in CTH during the year. Nathan Barry has stepped down as Treasurer and Chris Blackman kindly produced the accounts for us. It was noted that not all the Churches had sent in their financial contributions and they have been sent reminders.- A lively session was held by Mary Deller and Leigh Smith of Hope UK on their drug education program. They seem to work well with PHASE in our local schools.		
Appointments for 2017		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair – Rev Dr Jane Mainwaring (St. Mark's)• Secretary – John Richardson (St. Mark's)• Independent Examiner – Paul Smith (Letchworth Roman Catholic Church)• Faith and Learning Officer – Helen Richardson (St. Mark's)• Mission and Outreach Officer – Kathy Jones (New Testament Church of God)• Local Community Officer – Trish Bonnett (Our Lady's)• Justice and Peace Officer – Steph Dias (Our Lady's)• Publicity Officers – Donald and Leigh Smith (Built on Faith Apostolic Church)• CTH nominations to PHASE Trustees - Rev Andrew Henton Pusey (Walsworth Road), John Maguire (Tilehouse Street) and Michael Taylor (St. Mary's)• Hopefully the posts of Vice Chair and Treasurer will be filled at the Feb meeting		
Events		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next CTH event is Carols in the Market Place on Sunday 11 December. As the Hitchin Initiative are organising a lantern procession we will start at the later time of 4.30pm. Father Tom and Rev Andrew Henton Pusey will lead the carols accompanied by the Town Band.• The same weekend will see the Holy Saviour Christmas Tree Festival and we will provide a Prayer Tree through Christchurch.• The week of Prayer for Christian Unity will involve Pulpit Exchanges on 15th and 22nd Jan, a united service at Tilehouse Street Baptist Church at 6.30pm on 22nd and a Taize service at St. Mark's at 6.30 on 29th Jan. To mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's act of protest that began the Reformation the Theme will be 'Crossing Barriers'.		
CTH dates and venues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monday 6th Feb –Our Lady's• Tuesday 23rd May – St. Faith's• Wednesday 20th Sept – Friends' Meeting House• Thursday 16th Nov – Walsworth Road		
<p>On December 11th Carols in the Market Place took place. This was preceded by a lantern procession organised by Hitchin Initiative. This worked quite well and led by Rev Michael Roden from St Mary's it moved seamlessly into the Carol singing. Father Tom and Rev Andrew Henton Pusey led the prayers and carols.</p> <p>The Holy Saviour Christmas Festival went well as it has done in previous years.</p>		
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed		
Objectives set	Who	
<p>It was suggested by John Richardson that we should all look at how CTH works and how things might be improved.</p> <p>In many ways we are in good heart –we enjoy excellent inter-church relationships and have a good reputation in the town and over the past few years we have fostered important initiatives (PHASE, Street Angels, Foodbank). The request is to use our prayers and thinking to consider where we can go on from here.</p>		

Area of Activity – Finance Report

Activity since last PPC meeting

Parish Accounts for 2015

The Parish Accounts for 2015 were published in the Newsletter and on the Notice Board. There were no questions or comments.

Parish Accounts for 2016

Work has started on producing the Annual Financial Return for 2016. The Return is due at the Diocese by the beginning of February. Details will be shared with the Council when available.

Parish Budget for 2017

Work on producing the Parish Budget for 2017 and outturn years has been delayed by other commitments but should be completed shortly. Results will be shared with the Council.

Parish Audit

The Parish Audit took place on 29/30 November 2016. The Auditor was very complimentary about the way the Parish is organised and run and, overall, we were judged to be “Compliant”. Scores of 100% were received in the areas of Organisation; Financial Management; Planned Giving & Gift Aid; Health & Safety; and Safeguarding. Well done to all concerned. The Auditor will return at the end of February to follow-up on observations raised.

Gift Aid

The Parish Gift Aid return for the Financial Year ending April 2016 has been completed and submitted to the Diocese using the new OPAS Gift Aid software package. A tax rebate of around £21,000 is anticipated.

Grove Road House Project

Following resolution of the remaining price and build issues, we were at long last able to submit a bid for additional financial approval for the Grove Road House project. Approval was given by the Finance Board of the Diocese at their meeting in November. Work is scheduled to start on 9 January 2017 and will last 12-16 weeks. Many thanks to John Scott, John Chamberlain, Trish and Suzanna for all their work in vacating the House and moving to temporary alternative accommodation.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity Health and Safety

Activity since last PPC meeting

The Internal Diocesan Audit and Precision Annual H&S Inspection were carried out in late Nov / early Dec last year. The Diocesan auditor was **very impressed with the standards of H&S**. Precision’s inspector summarised in his report that **“The standards of Safety within the Parish have improved significantly since the last visit.”** The Fire Risk Assessment reported highlighted that the **“Parish has shown that there have been significant improvements and the standards are particularly high in this Parish”**. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to John S, John C and Trish for all their **significant** time and efforts made to achieve these improvements.

Despite this, a significant list of further improvements needed were outlined in this year’s report for which we will continue our focus and efforts over the next year.

Precision Annual PAT testing – 9th January 17

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Fire evacuation training and drills.	
Objectives set	Who
<u>From last report:</u>	
Update folders / action reports ahead of upcoming inspections / audits – DONE	Richard
Review last year's action plan for any actions that can be resolved ahead of the upcoming inspections – DONE	Richard / Trish
Update policies for stretchers and fire / smoke alarms – DONE	Trish
<u>New in this report</u>	
Complete Fire Pack	Richard
Update H&S reports folder in office with latest reports	Richard

Liturgy Report for January 2017 PPC

Nativity Service by the children on Christmas Eve excellent but considerably fewer people attended.

Christmas Eve mass @ 21.00 was successful. More Families present, full but not packed; at least as many as last year at the later time.

Masses on Christmas Day: saw considerably more people present than last year.

MCs and Servers: The number of regular servers is not very large and apart for a small core of regular servers, other servers are irregular. With regard to MC's, the need has grown considerably. William Warren after years of selfless dedication and service has had to step down from being the Lead MC for health reasons. The recently appointed Sacristan, Wanda Neeves, has recently undergone hospital treatment and illness which has meant less involvement and presence to continue to reorganise the sacristy and help provide service during the weekday masses. Recently Stef Diaz has offered to become an MC and we look forward to her presence on the sanctuary.

At the St Stephen's Day celebration a couple of Altar servers received their medals. Mary Hollingdale would have been presented with her silver medal but was unwell on the day.

1st January: Congregational presence very poor.

A cantor for 08.30 masses on Sundays except the first Sunday of the month.

Appeal for help in all areas including Choir, church cleaning, readers, Technical support, Music Group, Children's liturgy, Eucharistic Ministers, other Volunteers, to be made at all masses on Weekend 14th/15th January.

Exchange Pulpits for Unity Week (18th – 25th Jan); Fr Tom @ St Mary's 09.30 Sunday 15th Jan. Janet Graham preaches at 10.30 Children's Mass on 22nd January.

Unity Service this year @ Tilehouse St Baptist Church 18.30 on 22nd January.

Request for Picture of Divine Mercy to be put in the Church. Suggested place in the Sacred Heart Parish. Open to discussion.

Parish will be visited by the Superior General of the Assumptionists week of 6th March

Bishop to visit Parish: All day on Sunday 12th March and Saturday Evening of 18th March.

Opportunities to meet the Bishop in hall 16.00 on 12th March also after 18.00 Mass on 18th March.

Request for Parish to have Mass books for general use of Congregation.

New Chapel to be built behind Our Lady's Alcove large enough to have weekday masses there.

Area of Activity LiveSimply - Ann Milner	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
.No formal meeting has taken place since the last PPC meeting. Coffee Mornings have been booked for 2017 Laudato Si: International seminar via internet attended by one of the Laudato Si animators.	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Reaching Out to local 'Eco' Groups: Some contact made during the Laudato Si Event on 24 th September but further contact needed. 100 livesimply Ideas Review: to be continued at next meeting due 14 January 2017 Parish Wild Flower Garden: Small wooden fence to be erected around the area, being funded by livesimply group	
Objectives set	Who
Keep monitoring the energy usage of the parish over the next year.	DME
Discuss the marking of UN World Environment Day (5h June 2017) at Eucharistic Service with Trish	AMM
Plan a series of Climate Justice & Social Justice events starting February 2017	DME/ AMM /LS Team
Identify when local litter pick events will take place	PJ
Research office equipment timers	JS
Design & produce plaque for Wild Flower Garden	AMM/DW
Make contact with other local 'Eco' groups to share ideas etc.	AMM
Investigate feasibility of encouraging participation in Woodland Trust scheme	AMM
Continue review of 100 livesimply Ideas	LS Team
Find sustainable (preferably local) source for small wooden fence for Wild Flower Garden and arrange purchase.	AMM

Area of Activity Maintenance
Activity since last PPC meeting
<p><u>Summary</u> Another bumper crop of resolved jobs. There has been more to do to cope with the Health&Safety Inspection (13 Dec) and to prepare for the building works for the new Pastoral Centre and Christopher House redevelopment. Much, much time has been put in by many contributors , whom I've tried to credit accurately here.</p> <p><u>Activity since report of November 2016</u></p> <p><u>H&S report (13/12) correction tasks (all JVC) :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove trip hazard ScoutHut kitchen door floor area. - Replaced SHut front door inner handle with one that is easier to grip. - Ensure light sockets in the Hall M&T toy cupboards are 'dead' and not accessible to fingers. - Painted white the top of the step between House and Sacristy corridor. - move scout hut fire extinguisher H&S <p><u>GRH "Christopher House" related tasks :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2812_1/ All GRH curtains washed and stored at home (FMC Frances Chamberlain) - 2712_1/ rescue b-b-repeater to Pastoral Office (JS) - 2012_1/ Moved Fr M to main house (JVC, FMC, JS). - from 1412/ Cleared GRH - well in excess of 40 man hrs (Trish,Susanna,JVC,FMC,DavidW,AnnMilner,PJ,JS). - 1412_1/ Moved office equipment and furniture of TB and SH (JVC, FMC). <p><u>General fix-and-repair :</u> 2812_1/ Modification of shelving in Fairtrade/Gardening Grp cupboard. (JVC)</p>

2812_2/ Cleared Scouts bread dough from Hall toilet sinks... Too difficult for cleaners (JVC)
 2812_3/ Cleared hard water deposits from Hall toilet sink taps – all pretty well blocked (JVC)
 2712_3/ Owen's electrically operated projection screen above the stage cupboards. (JVC)
 2712_1/ new dual-flush syphon for our favorite loo (JS)
 2412_1/ another linked smoke alarm in the boiler room (JS & PJ)
 1512_1/ curtain rail in scout hut(JS)
 1412_1/ new lock for car-park display notice board (JVC)
 1112_1/ hypothecate parking space3 for Fr.M (JS)
 1112_2/ Enabled the closure of Hall kitchen hatch from both sides. (JVC)
 1012_1/ change battery in hall clock (Philippe)
 1012_2/ non-slip rigid panels to slippery slope (JS & PJ)
 1012_3/ fix extreme malfunction of welcome light (JVC)
 0812_1/ fit Carpet Tiles to AdminOffice (JVC)
 0812_2/ Cheryl's office curtains washed (FMC Frances Chamberlain)
 0612_1/ Paint AdminOffice - fix desk (JVC & JS)
 0612_2/ manage AdminOffice fetch and carry (JVC)
 0612_3/ remove fire/biohazard from under organ pedals (JS & JVC)
 2811_1/ Scout Hut main entrance step now painted white. (JVC)
 2811_2/ Steps to porch main entrance to Church now painted white. (JVC)
 2811_3/ UnJam door to MotherAndToddler cupboard (JVC)
 2811_4/ get spare 2 and 4 pin small Dlights (JS)
 2611_1/ 2 pin D-type lamp in the Hall tea bar (JVC)
 2511_1/ 10W LED lightbulb for temporary office (JS)
 2111_1/ replace busted toilet in Parish House (JS)
 2111_2/ ScoutProof towel rail in eponymous hut (JS)
 2111_3/ change fluorescent tube in hall kitchen (JVC)
 2011_1/ obtain 3 cupboards for storage in office(s) (JVC)
 2011_2/ erected new admin office desk (JVC)
 2011_3/ obtain lock for existing office 3 drawer units (JVC)
 1811_1/ clean-up & make safe after ParishHouse ToiletDamage (JVC)
 1811_2/ light outside scout hut (JVC's PIR?)
 1811_3/ investigate light fixed to scout hut - report to Roger (JVC)
 1811_4/ projector screen to H&Safe place in ServSacristy lighting cupboard (JVC)
 1711_1/ busted table in UCR (JS)
 1711_2/ visibility tape for H&S - sacristy corridor steps (JS)
 1711_3/ muck-out hall-kitchen-extractor (JVC)
 1611_1/ scouthut back door stickS - unsafe... (JVC)
 1511_1/ rawlplug for Fr.E curtain rail (JS)
 1212_1/ paint Fr.Euloge's room (PJ , David Wilson , JS)
 1212_2/ Altar Candlestick coming apart (JVC)
 1212_3/ Hoovered out the heaters in the Church. (JVC)
 1111_1/ extensive work - network connections temporary office (JVC)
 1011_1/ alarm batteries in hall kitchen and parish house kitchen (JVC)
 0711_1/ front door bell repeater in parish office (JVC)
 0711_2/ bookends for parish office shelves (JVC)

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Outstanding Maintenance Snags

Wheelbarrow/lawnmower store for Fr.Tom < JVC - in process >
 New locks for parish house (front/back/kitchen doors)
 Flat tyre on wheelbarrow
 PIR for hall "back door" light
 Try and establish what is tripping a heater circuit breaker in ScoutHut.
 (Oliver is aware that JVC's doing this.)
 Couple of small holes in car park... w' Tony.
 Correct outstanding Precision H&S Report items..many now done—listed above.

Objectives set

Who

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Area of Activity Outreach	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>Other tasks</p> <p>Liturgy A leaflet has been devised to raise awareness of the need for volunteers in many areas of liturgy (as well as other areas of need in the parish) This will be distributed the weekend of 14/15 January when Fr Tom will appeal at the end of the Masses (nb TB to cover the 8.30 Mass as Fr Tom is preaching at another church in the pulpit exchange.</p> <p>In Memorial service, Advent service and carol service prepared and delivered</p> <p>Health and Safety The Health and safety work continued until the inspection on Dec 13th . The adviser was able to remove most of the items in the previous report. We still need to make arrangements for the fire training to be done in the deanery (we hope to host it) and then need to have a practice evacuation. Some small items of work are still required and JC and JS have continued to work hard to address these. We achieved 100% in the Diocesan audit in this area.</p> <p>Safeguarding This work is still ongoing also. The Diocese are still insisting on lots of unnecessary paperwork and I will address this eventually. However we achieved 100% in the Diocesan audit in this area.</p> <p>Links with Our Lady's school Numbers have still continued and the group is a lovely one. Dates for school Masses have been agreed with the Head. The school did its Christmas nativity in the parish.</p> <p>Move The move has taken up a lot of time and is now complete. The house has been emptied mainly by JC and JS. All items are being stored in the scout hall.</p> <p>Marriage Preparation Prepared materials for this event and supported the event on the day as Susanna away.</p> <p>Baptism preparation Prepared Sacramental Passports.</p> <p>Side Chapel project It has been agreed to build a side chapel funded by a member of the parish. Initial meetings have taken place with the local planner and an architect. The initial sketches are now being considered and a meeting with the Diocese is planned for 17 January.</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Need to continue with the Proclaim 15 projects.	
Objectives completed from last report	Who
1. Health and Safety documents completed by end of November 2. Safeguarding DBS checks completed by end of November	Completed by 13 Dec Completed by end Nov
Objectives set	Who
Discuss with Diocese the need for all the Diocesan safeguarding paperwork.	TB TB

Focus on recruiting volunteers in many areas of liturgy and church support.	
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Area of Activity

Sacramental Preparation

Activity since last PPC meeting

Reconciliation

The third and final session before reception of the sacrament was held on 10th December. My incursions into the territory of Young Pilgrims have proved to be most fruitful; I know most of the children on the programme quite well and we have formed good relationships. The general atmosphere is conducive to talking about spiritual things. Parents and children engaged well with the content of the session. The children will receive the sacrament itself on January 14th, after 10am Mass. While preparing materials for this session I became aware of the need for a spiral binder; it would be a useful addition to parish office equipment. I would like to research this and, with permission, buy one.

RCIA

The constitution of the group has changed yet again and I am more or less starting again with three new people! It certainly looks like we won't have any baptisms at the Easter Vigil – I don't think anyone will be ready by then. We need to change the day RCIA is held on (for the third time!), which has meant that Catherine Muncaster, who was a catechist, can't help any longer. Zoe Lavery, who was also helping, has now had young Ambrose, so she has her hands full.

Baptism

I have run two more baptism courses – there is a healthy take-up for these. I meet some lovely parents and babies. Feedback is good. At the end of the course, I ask parents to write a card to their child, saying why they are having them baptised and saying what they hope for them. The idea is that they can distill their thoughts and also have a lasting memento for the day, which reminds them of their intentions in keeping the promises they make. I would like to commission someone to design and produce a really nice card template for our future digital use (I have been unable to find anything decent on the internet.) I have found someone who has produced some lovely samples of work - and we will be able to claim a family discount!

Marriage

Jon and Lucy Bonnett ran another very successful marriage preparation course, with updated content which reflected some of their learning on the diocesan course on Amoris Laetitia. We are still drawing people from all over London and North Hertfordshire. It seems that that the one day approach is very popular. As we make a charge for this course, which is split between the parish and the facilitators, we do quite well out of this.

Confirmation

The sessions of the new programme are going well, although twice we have had low numbers because of school trips. See below: 'issues to be addressed'.

A Visit

I had a visit from Ausra Cane (aka The Diocese) to talk about my work. She is happy with my approach and was most impressed with our parish for the ways in which we have engaged with the Proclaim and Amoris Laetitia initiatives. We are a 'model parish'!

We talked about running small groups for adult faith formation and I am in the process of assessing whether we want to roll out some of the Alpha small groups: 'Parenting Children' and 'Parenting Teenagers'. I would like to buy (or possibly beg) some materials so that I can make a full assessment of quality and fitness for our purposes. I have already made some enquiries and have an offer from one couple to run the 'Parenting Children' in the future, if I think it will suit us. I intend to do some research about how much take-up there would be for either course.

Heartfelt gratitude

This report would not be complete without thanking John Chamberlain and John Scott for their tireless and good humoured help in moving Trish and me out of GRH into our current office. I am humbled by such service; the attention to trying to make us comfortable did much to assuage the agony of the whole enterprise. Thank you very much indeed and we owe you at least a pint for your monumental trouble! Thanks also to David Wilson and Philippe James who were both seen carting around huge piles of whatever it is we kept in that house.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

1. Liaise with John Henry Newman School to find dates of school trips and avoid overlap next year.
2. I would like to try and help give some momentum to the Amoris Laetitia ideas we had a while back, so that we have some activity coming out of the reading and reflection we have done on this important document. We had some ideas about this so I will speak to Christine Laubin, who has been reflecting on it.
3. I believe that the Pope's agenda of mercy has the power to thaw out some hitherto frozen areas of the church: namely, Catholics who have been keeping their distance from one or more sacraments. I think we have an opportunity - a duty - here to build on the culture of acceptance and welcome that Pope Francis has begun to nurture; we need to seize the moment. What can we be doing? Thoughts welcome!

Objectives set

Who

Area of Activity Website

Activity since last PPC meeting

Continuing to update as an when required.

Area of Activity YOUTH

Activity since last PPC meeting

Youth Ministry had 2 meetings: on 21/11/16 and 05/12/16, where further action plan was discussed and confirmed.

Following events took place since the last PPC meeting:

1. Children's Mass – 27/11/2016 - Fr Eulogie carried out liturgy with the children in front of the altar. It was very successful and we had a very enthusiastic response from children.

2. Funday Sunday – 18/12/16 - 44 children attended which are 4 more than the last one in November. Feedback was that no one knew about the Funday (although it was in last weeks' newsletter). Even so, to have that many children without prior knowledge shows how committed our families are to our parish which is very encouraging.

3. Christmas Eve Nativity Rehearsals – Youth Mission team helped out with pre-school children during rehearsals. They took places on: Thurs 15 Dec 4-5:30, 16 Fri 16th Dec 4-5:30, Friday 23 Dec 10am-12pm

Upcoming Youth Ministry events in our parish:

1. The next **Youth Ministry** team meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 4th January at 7pm in the Doris Harris room. This will be to discuss the Epiphany Funday on the 8th January during the 10:30 mass

2. Sunday 8th January - Funday Epiphany Party

It will be part of the 10:30 mass. The Funday will include the liturgy, fun & games and a brief, fun nativity.

3. Safeguarding/child protection training for churches will be hosted by Phase and is run by CCPAS. There are proposed dates: the 4th or the 18th March 2017.

Upcoming Westminster Youth Ministry events:

1. The Summit 3 February Get-together

Westminster Youth Ministry is hosting a youth event aimed at those aged 14-18, to take place on the Friday 3 February. The event will be a chance for young people in the diocese to socialise, share a meal together, learn more about their faith and be introduced to a deeper level of prayer and adoration.

2. Flame 2017 - 11 March Conference

Flame 2017 is the largest National Catholic Youth event of the year, taking place in the SSE Wembley Arena on **Saturday 11 March 2017**.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

1.Spreading the news about Youth Ministry events will improve as we do have email addresses for parents and so in the new year we will start emailing the parents on the list (who have given their permission to use their email address) to let them know about each event the week before. It also means to email OLS.

2. Flame 17 - we need to advertise this event. It was suggested that we add the attached poster to the newsletter as soon as possible and say that there are 20 places on the bus and it is a first come first served basis.

Objectives set

Who

To confirm with Phase dates for Safeguarding/child protection training for Youth Ministry volunteers in our parish