

PARISH OF FINDON, CLAPHAM AND  
PATCHING

# Reports to the 2024 APCM



**Sunday 12th May 2024 – 10.45am**  
**St John the Baptist Church, Findon**

<b>Vicar's Report:</b>	Reverend Helena Buqué
<b>Findon Church Wardens' Report:</b> (St John the Baptist):	Michael Drakeford
<b>Clapham Church Wardens' Report</b> (St Mary the Virgin):	Sian Fletcher and Maggie Somerset
<b>Patching Church Wardens' Report</b> (St John the Divine):	Kath Hutchinson
<b>Belfry Report:</b>	Adrian Riches
<b>Deanery Synod Report:</b>	John Haskey
<b>Electoral Roll Report:</b>	Maggie Somerset
<b>Home Group Report:</b>	Jean Burden
<b>Messy Church</b>	Hilary Langford
<b>Mission and Outreach Report</b> <b>Worship and Praise Services</b>	Graham Langford
<b>Safeguarding Report:</b> (Findon, Clapham and Patching):	Ann Hollyhomes
<b>Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements:</b>	Michael Drakeford

## VICAR'S REPORT

Firstly, thank you as always to Colin, our Associate Vicar, for all the support he gives me in our shared mission here in the three villages. The dedication of our Churchwardens Kath, Maggie and Sian also needs to be gratefully acknowledged, with particular thanks to Michael Drakeford for stepping in to cover the role of Treasurer as well as continuing to cover much of the Findon Warden role, ably supported by John Scadgell. Thankfully, people have come forward to offer their time in this important voluntary role, so after this year's Vestry Meeting, we will have a full complement of Wardens across our three lovely churches. As I wrote recently in Findon News, serving as a Churchwarden is always interesting and can bring a lot of enjoyment, as I know from personal experience! We still desperately need someone with a background in finance to step forward to take on the role of Treasurer. There is Diocesan training available! Please ask friends and neighbours if they know of anyone who might be interested.

The support of Irene Adams as an Authorised Lay Minister, enhanced by the training she has undertaken this year, benefits us all in so many ways, so many thanks to her for all the time she gives to the Parish. What is so often overlooked is that everyone working in any capacity is a volunteer and I am truly grateful to you all. Our churches are clean and tidy, well maintained (except during Advent and Lent!) and weekly worshippers are assured of a warm welcome on arrival and refreshments after the Service. Thank you to our Friends Groups in Findon and in Clapham and Patching for their fundraising, supporting us to maintain our ancient buildings, as well as organising 'Work Parties' at intervals to clear and tidy the churchyards and inside the buildings. We have major roof repairs both at Clapham Church and Findon Spire in the coming year, so please continue to support the fundraising events, having fun as well as raising much needed funds! We are blessed with several regular organists who accompany our worship with skill and sensitivity and Graham Langford continues to encourage a range of musical talent to lead the singing at the Findon monthly Worship and Praise Service, where attendance has been steadily growing. Thank you!

I am grateful for all the time Evelyn gives as Sacristan and Verger, always ensuring everything is ready for Services at Findon Church and ordering consumable supplies for all three churches as needed. Although she has had health issues this past year, she has continued to support us all, quietly and efficiently serving in so many ways. I'm sure you join with me in praying that this coming year will bring her full return to health again. Thank you also to Wendy for her friendly and welcoming presence in the Parish Office, and for her efficiency in dealing with the day-to-day running of the Parish on Monday mornings and Fridays. We welcome Dominic Timm as our Families Worker, starting this month, and look forward to his ideas for engagement with our local families and Primary Schools. His skill and experience as a musician will be much valued.

Numbers attending Worship remain encouraging, we have welcomed many new families and we have had a good number of baptisms recently. The partnership with our two village schools is flourishing, with St John's choir helping to lead our worship on a couple of Sundays as well as taking a leading role in the annual Live Nativity. The pupils of Clapham and Patching School regularly use the church buildings and grounds to enhance their learning as well as their regular Celebration Collective Worship at key points of the academic year. Findon Church is a popular wedding venue, particularly because of the partnership with Findon Place for their Reception afterwards. It is wonderful to have couples wishing to make their vows in the presence of Almighty God in our church buildings with their family and friends. It was a joy to prepare four adults, as well as 12 year old Jake Timm, for confirmation at a joyful Service in St Matthew's

Church with Bishop Ruth in November. I'd like to record my thanks to the retired clergy, particularly Nancy Ford, without whose support the Parish would be unable to continue to provide the current range of Services. The start of a Home Group this year has been of great benefit to those attending, giving us an opportunity to deepen our faith together and grow in friendship. Thank you so much to Jean and John for hosting and developing this. It would be great to have more than one group running as these small groups really help to build a sense of community. My vision is to have a number of smaller groups meeting regularly as this one does, with us all coming together once or twice a year to celebrate and share all we have done. We are blessed with enthusiastic and dedicated bellringers at Findon Church, and it is so lovely to hear the bells every week as they practise, as well as on alternate Sunday mornings and at many of our weddings. Our lovely bell captain, Barbara Harbut, has some health issues and is sadly unable to ring at the moment. We continue to pray for her and the family.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to everyone else who has helped in any way with the day-to-day running, ministry, and mission of our Parish this year, freely giving so much of their time, also my thanks to everyone who supports our churches through their financial offerings. It isn't possible to name everyone individually here, but I value all you do and am very grateful.

Thank you to everyone in the villages for your friendship. It is a joy to live and serve here with you all in this Parish!

Every blessing, Helena  
**Helena Buqué**

#### **FINDON CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT**

The role of church warden at Findon has been vacant during the year. It was necessary for the previous incumbent to reverse back to the role of treasurer but unfortunately a volunteer warden was not found for this very significant job.

Those coping with some of the many jobs that keep the church fabric inside the church in order and the work of the running of the church services continue with enthusiasm. Most that know our church well appreciate that our church is important to not only the community that is Findon but also those that visit the church as a place of historic interest, or just curiosity as they walk along the drive to the woodland on the downs.

Our clergy seek to ensure that all three of our churches offer services that are available during the month to satisfy our villages.

We are particularly grateful to Graham Langford who led the very successful Christmas Tree Festival. Graham is also responsible for organizing the new role of family worker. This is to encourage a better interface with schools and encourage more people to attend church. As a paid role, funding is separate from the church accounts.

During the year various parts of the structure of the church have received attention. Our closed churchyard is the responsibility of the local council. During the year Arun District Council attended to parts of the flint walls and replaced rotten wood at the base of this structure. We will need to determine the impact of the change of council.

The damaged panels in the porch doors were replaced by glass, allowing light to enter the area and encouraging visitors to enter the building. The cost was £3,500. Following a recommendation at the last quinquennial the 80 metal bars at the windows were de-rusted and painted. The external window protectors were either replaced where required and for the first time in many years those at the chancel window were installed. The cost of this totalled £7,277 of which £3,000 was donated by The Friends of John the Baptist.

The recent climate change with so much rain has significantly affected the building. The spire shingles being wood have not provided watertight protection, not least because of holes made by woodpeckers. The dampness has affected the bell ropes and generally the bell chamber. Repairs are likely to cost around £7,000.

The quinquennial is due in 2024. We have asked that particular attention be paid to the state of the guttering and downpipes, which do not appear to be managing to cope with the very wet weather.

**Michael Drakeford**

### **CLAPHAM CHURCH WARDENS' REPORT**

We are pleased to report that we have had another busy year welcoming worshippers into our beautiful church. Numbers of worshippers remain stable for the twice monthly services. There have been three baptisms, one wedding and two interments of ashes. We are delighted that our regular organist, Paul Hunter & his fiancée, Abbie, have chosen Clapham for their wedding in June.

We extend our thanks to Helena and Colin who lead our worship. Also, to those who assist with services, especially Dan Banting and John Haskey.

We are also most grateful for the help of several Clapham residents who support us in caring for the building and the churchyard with regular cleaning and grass cutting. A team of volunteers provide and display flowers throughout the year. This helps to show visitors and worshippers that the building is a valued and cared for part of the village.

The work undertaken by The Friends of Clapham & Patching Churches is very much appreciated. The wardens organise twice yearly clear-up mornings and volunteers from all three villages contribute to outside maintenance such as removal of ivy, strimming and weeding and inside polishing and cleaning. Special thanks to Mr Kemp-Potter who provides his time, own mower, fuel and tools for these events. The Friends have also held a Treasure Hunt and a Bluebell Walk from Clapham church.

### School

Clapham & Patching School use the church each term for services. In June 2023 Bishop Ruth came to officiate at the 150th Anniversary Service. The church was full, with pupils past and present. The children also celebrate Easter, Harvest, Christmas, and the end of summer term at the church, to which families are warmly welcomed and the services are well supported.

The automatic lock on the south door allows visitors to see this special place. From the many comments in the Visitor's Book, it is much appreciated.

The monetary donations remain constant.

### Visit from U3A

A local history group from the Worthing U3A came to visit the church and were given a welcome by Maggie and a talk by Dan Banting on the Shelley family memorials. They also admired the William Morris tiles and other interesting artefacts within our church, and made a donation to the fabric fund.

### Book of Remembrance

Karen Milner, a resident of the village, is entering the details and commemorations of those departed, if relatives so wish.

The family of Joan and Jack Redding - past residents of Clapham - wished to provide a new bench for the churchyard. This has been placed by the south door.

### Church fabric

In October 2023, Julian Vallis, Vallis & Hall Conservation Architects, RIBA SCA AABC, undertook the Quinquennial Inspection of the church. This includes exterior and interior fabric, fittings, and churchyard. The 80-page document was received in January 2024. The findings are divided into seven categories. The first requires immediate attention, and second and third are recommendations to be carried out within one to two years. Others are before the next inspection, or maintenance.

The main findings concerned the condition of the tiling on the north facing roof. Whilst no water ingress is evident, the poor condition of the tiles means that the lifespan of the underlying felt, and battens is being reduced. There is a slippage of tile fragments which are a safety risk and block gutters. This was deemed category 2.

The bell tower roof has had sporadic water ingress, with pools of water on the vestry floor. One bell rope has rotted due to the wet. The source being the weathering around the king post. A recent inspection revealed that there is much dry rot and woodworm in the timbers. These will need to be replaced.

It was hoped that the repairs and north roof could be done as one project in 2025. However, we are advised that the damage to the bell tower timbers should be addressed as soon as possible. We are obtaining a report and quotes for the work. We will attempt an insurance claim. Funding will otherwise come from grant applications, money remaining from the stonework fundraising in 2020 and local fund-raising activities i.e Raise the Roof Concert, September 6th. The Friends will also be approached to help.

Other areas of concern highlighted in the report as category 2, were the Lych Gate, church store, flint walls, some external stonework and roof join.

We have addressed some minor issues and are in the process of dealing with those that do not require large sums of money or time. The metal work on the inside of the windows has been painted, breathable mats replace old ones. The annual maintenance of the organ, fire hydrants, electrics and gutters took place last year.

The excellent stewardship of the church was noted.

The road leading up to the church is becoming increasingly potholed and uneven. Through liaison with Peter Kemp-Potter it is hoped that we can apply for some resurfacing work to this. The South Down Rangers have also been approached, but no reply received to date.

We are continuing to close the gate in the evening, at the bottom of Church Road. This has proved to be successful in deterring the use of the parking area overnight and very little rubbish is now evident. Three local residents have paid for the installation of a dog waste bin in the car park area. This has greatly reduced the number of unsightly dog bags which were removed by the churchwardens.

The Terrier and Inventory have been checked.

**Sian Fletcher and Maggie Somerset, Joint Church Wardens**

### **PATCHING CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT**

Thanks are extended to Revd. Helena Buqué, Revd. Colin Cox and Revd. Nancy Ford who continue to lead worship and to support the parish community.

The Friends of Clapham and Patching Churches (The Friends) play an important role in maintaining the fabric of the church. The Friends are paying for materials needed to build and replace the dilapidated church gates, on which work undertaken voluntarily, has begun. The broken lock of the aumbry safe was also mended by a volunteer. A memorial plaque will shortly be positioned by the tree that was donated by the Friends, to commemorate the late Queen's platinum jubilee.

The PCC have paid for cleaning and repair of guttering, repair of a damaged organ pipe and repair of a section of roof.

The Friends contribute to the 'maintenance and beautification' of the church by holding fund raising events to pay for works and by holding work parties to keep the church clean and the church yard tidy.

Thanks are extended to everyone who supports the work of the church, visiting clergy, musicians, choir, readers, intercessors, flower arrangers, sacristans, lay ministers and sidespersons. Thank you to John Best for maintaining the electrical installations and to John and Bryan Sayers for mowing and strimming the church yard.

The staff and pupils of Clapham and Patching School attended the church for their school leavers' service in July and their Nativity service. Both services were well attended and to everyone's delight we were joined by sheep from East Clayton for the Nativity service.

**Kath Hutchinson**

### **BELFRY REPORT**

Another year has passed – we still enjoy our practices and Sunday service ringing with the Angmering ringers.

We have been missing Barbara dreadfully while she has been poorly and hope to welcome her back to practice evenings soon. Unfortunately, this has meant that we haven't been able to take on new recruits due to the lack of trained teachers, but we have now moved on to the position where some of the team from Angmering are competent at teaching. We are planning a Findon Church Open Morning on Saturday 22nd June where we hope to inspire interest in people from Findon.

We have carried out the annual maintenance schedule at both Findon and Angmering and not found any significant problems with the bells – the spire at Findon is another matter; damage mainly caused by woodpeckers making holes in the shingles has let in rainwater and insects. We had problems with bees in the Autumn of 2023 and are now experiencing a deluge of ladybirds. We hope the new dehumidifier will alleviate the worst of the problems caused by damp and that the internal walls of the tower can be repaired and decorated if/when some warmer weather arrives.

After much discussion and negotiation with the Rectory at Angmering, we have now agreed that regular evenings for practice are much better for everyone involved. This means that our practice evening is now every Tuesday at Findon and every Thursday at Angmering.

We have had bellringing visitors from a number of other Churches in West Sussex, and they have all been very appreciative of the facilities at St John's – a Church with bell ropes at ground floor is a huge luxury as narrow stone spiral staircases that are found in most other Churches aren't everyone's cup of tea.

So.....if anyone is interested in learning to be a bellringer, it is an excellent social hobby with no musical skill involved. If you can raise your arms above your head, you can ring bells! Please get in touch with me, on telephone number 07771 678741, or have a word with Helena who will send details on to me.

**Adrian Riches**

#### **DEANERY SYNOD COMBINED REPORT**

There have been no Worthing Deanery Synod meetings since the last one held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. A report on that meeting was presented to the PCC on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023. A copy of that report is below.

It has been decided that the Worthing Deanery Synod meetings will be held less frequently; the next will be held on Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> May and Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September.

#### Deanery Synod meeting, St Stephen's Church, 19 October 2023 "Open The Book" from The Bible Society

Stephanie, from The Bible Society, introduced "Open The Book", the subject of her talk. "Open The Book" is a mission tool for churches in which bible stories are told and acted out imaginatively to children in schools. Nowadays, a number of children have never heard some bible stories and the aim is to inspire them with the power of storytelling so that the stories become familiar and memorable. Often bible stories are told during assemblies, for between 10 and 15 minutes, followed by prayers. More generally, children - and adults as well - are



more likely to remember passages and stories which involve the emotions, rather than purely factual accounts.

One particularly effective way of stories being told is to ask the children to perform certain actions with given words – for example, when reading the story of Christ calming the storm when in the boat, different actions could be given to the words: disciple; boat; wind; and waves. Often children start by performing all the actions but tail off doing so because they have become so involved and entranced by the story.

“Open The Book” has been running for 25 years and is encouraged and approved by Ofsted. By participating in school assemblies and other periods, “Open The Book” naturally introduces children to their local vicar who becomes familiar to them. The support of the local church is crucial to the success of an “Open The Book” initiative. Usually a “Team” of parishioners from one or more local churches is convened and training given. A book is available containing assembly materials and general ideas for storytelling. See: [Get Started - Bible Society](#)

**John Haskey**

## **ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT**

### **The Electoral Roll of the Parish of Findon, Clapham and Patching:**

Members of the Findon Part of the Roll	112
Members of the Clapham Part of the Roll	17
Members of the Patching Part of the Roll	17

**Maggie Somerset**

## **HOME GROUP**

Homegroup started in September 2023, with a discussion of what shape we would like the group to take. There are two main elements; we explore a Bible passage or theme together, and then get to know each other better over some refreshments. Meetings are alternate Monday evenings and last about 2 hours. We have fourteen members, and meetings are very informal. Homegroup has provided the forum for last year’s Advent course and this year’s Lent course. We are now doing a course run by the Bible Society on ‘The Bible’.

**Jean Burden**

## **MESSY CHURCH**

We continue to meet, as we have done for the last 13/14 years, on the first Tuesday of each month (except for those months when the schools are on holiday) at the Village Hall at 3.30pm.

It is still well attended (numbers can fluctuate when there are after school events). Children cannot be dropped off to be collected later; at least one parent/carer must come with them, and younger siblings are also very welcome.

Each session is based around a bible theme starting with craft activities connected to that theme and are supervised and guided by volunteer members from our Churches. This is followed by a short talk, song, and prayer. While that is taking place the hall is laid out for a shared meal, cooked by a separate team of volunteer helpers. Parents returning from work sometimes join us, it's a welcome night off from cooking at home.

Extra help is always welcomed and needed. It is a valuable part of our outreach and is a very sociable opportunity to meet the children and their families in our neighbourhood. If you think you would like to be involved and help, please contact the Rectory or Hilary Langford 07899 990748 for further information.

**Hilary Langford**

### **MISSION AND OUTREACH (WORSHIP AND PRAISE) REPORT**

We have been meeting monthly on a regular basis to see how we can broaden our outreach to members of our church and to the wider community. The last few meetings have been held at the home of Mike and Rachel Hartnett with between 8 and 12 people attending.

Various ideas have been put into practice and there has been a very successful start to the new home group held at the home of John and Jean Burden, meeting every other Monday.

Very encouraging numbers have been attending certain services, starting back at the Christmas Tree Festival where over 60 attended on Sunday 3rd Dec, and this was followed up with over 80 at the Nine Lessons and Carols; then 251 attending the Christingle service on Christmas Eve. At the first Sunday in March, when St John the Baptist Church school choir led the singing, we had 92, this was followed at the Palm Sunday service when a number of families walked from the Rectory following Leo the Donkey, joining a congregation of over 70. On Easter Sunday, with three village school children being baptised, there were 20 children in a congregation of 82. Another 76 people attended the service on Sunday 7th April when we had Cornerstone and another Baptism.

Since the beginning of this year, we have been advertising for a Family Worker and with several people showing interest in the position, Dominic Timm has been appointed from May 1st 2024. Funding was secured for the year, and we are currently waiting to hear about funding for years two and three. With the numbers holding well at Lambstails, Messy Church and in attendances at certain services, it is a wonderful time for a Family Worker to be employed. This position will include working in our two church schools running clubs and various events throughout the year. Please pray for this appointment and if you are able to help at any events for young people - with refreshments or being an extra helper, please do come forward. Information of what is to take place will be well advertised.

With higher numbers at church, it has meant some people have found it difficult to see the screen and therefore the PCC have agreed that a monitor on a stand can be put in place in the North Isle. It will be wheeled from the vestry when required. A very big thank you, to Mike and Rachel, for kindly donating the 55" monitor.

Another subject that has been covered at Mission and Outreach is lay preaching. In the future we will require more help at services as Irene has been doing over this last year or so. If this is something you would like to know more about, please speak with Helena, Colin or Irene.

Stronger links with the schools has resulted in several children coming forward for Baptism from St John the Baptist School, Findon

If there is anything you would like to have discussed at the Mission and Outreach or would like to attend a meeting, please contact Graham Langford.

Groups and school musicians have been booked out for the remainder of 2024 for the first Sunday in the month services at Findon. On Sunday 2nd June we have the Salvation Army band from Worthing. The Graham Kendrick concert on Saturday 15th June 2024 is having a lot of interest with 126 tickets sold as at 19<sup>th</sup> April.

We want to continue promoting our church services and events, so if you are good with social media, we would love to hear from you.

A big thank you to Wendy in the Rectory office for all the support she has given over the last year.

**Graham Langford**

## **SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

1. The Parish is working in line with the Church of England safeguarding policy, and a brief outline or mission statement is placed on the church noticeboards in each of the churches. An emergency e-mail address is displayed for all to use who may have a safeguarding concern. All cases are treated with confidentiality, and there is a direct line to the safeguarding officer. There have been two emails via this process throughout the year.
2. The safeguarding officer retains the role of DBS Recruiter, and the application process via the Diocese agency (Thirtyoneeighty.com) has been slightly amended so that applications may be processed more speedily. The safeguarding officer is currently in the process of renewing DBS checks through the 'bulk' system now available through the agency. A new member of the church community, who will work as a family worker, has been recruited and checked through the system. This worker will also undertake safeguarding training at beginners and foundation levels. This is in line with SQP safe practice.
3. In line with Diocese Safeguarding policy, the SQP (Simple Quality Protects) files and policy documents are available as guidance to all those working within the parish. The application of the SQP systems are to be audited by the Diocese Safeguarding team this May, where the Safeguarding Officer will meet up with the team at St Richards Church in Maybridge.
4. There is a new round of safeguarding training available via the Diocese website and changes in its approach should now be complied with. A new round of safeguarding training has been undertaken by the safeguarding officer. New church wardens will also be required to

undertake all levels of training (online) outside of the lead recruiter training. This is in line with the duty placed on us by the diocese.

5. An additional role within the safeguarding remit is the reporting of serious incidents to the Charities Commission. This process involves having a number of officers of each of our churches ready to contact and report any incident within the church or church grounds to a special team within the Charities Commission. A team of four formed a group of individuals who would work to contact the safeguarding officer immediately a suspected 'serious incident' had happened. Irene Adams, Kath Hutchinson, Jean Burden and Ann Hollyhomes form the basis of this emergency team. The reporting process of what could be considered a serious incident was agreed with the help of a training pack and the process for reporting and recording incidents agreed. Records of incidents are held by the safeguarding office. One case has been reported. Sian Fletcher to join team so that a representative can report any issues relating to Clapham.

6. Safeguarding training has been received by the church wardens of the three churches but is still ongoing and readily available via the Diocese website. At present the safeguarding officer is retraining by carrying out a second round of Lead Recruiter training.

7. Concern has been raised as to the vulnerability and potential problems in attending churches in darkness hours, and the policy document issued by Ecclesiastical Insurance offers advice which will be tabled for discussion at a forthcoming PCC.

**Ann Hollyhomes**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

These are on display in all three Churches