**St Michael The Archangel,**

**Compton Martin**

**Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council**

**for calendar year 2022**

**Annual Vestry Meeting**

to be held at The Old School, Compton Martin

immediately after 10.00am Family Communion Service

on Sunday 21st May 2023

**AGENDA**

**1. Opening Prayer –** Lucy Hemsley

**2. Apologies** for absence

**3. Minutes of last Vestry meeting - attached**

1. **Election of Church Wardens**

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Sunday 21st May 2023**

**AGENDA**

Welcome and Apologies

Minutes of APCM meeting held on 16th May 2022 - attached

Matters arising

1. Treasurer’s Report for year ending 31 December 2022
2. Election of Independent Examiner
3. Churchwardens Report
4. Deanery Synod Report
5. Election of PCC members and Deanery Synod Reps.
6. Election of Sidesmen
7. Reports covering other church activities

**St Michael The Archangel,**

**Compton Martin**

**Annual Report of the PCC for calendar year 2022**

**Background**

St Michael’s has been in a vacancy since Rev Simon Lewis left the parish in July 2022. The PCC has therefore had responsibility of supporting St Michael’s in the promotion of the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, social and financial stability.

The correspondence address is: The Gables, Rectory Lane, Compton Martin, BS40 6JP

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

**Membership**

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC:

Churchwardens: James Bragg, Helen Palmer

Reader: Lucy Hemsley

Representatives on the Deanery Synod: Jean Luckett

Sue Owst (Hon Secretary), Axel Palmer (Hon. Treasurer), John Allen, Julia Halling Brown, Lucy Hemsley, Jon Reynolds, Kate Reynolds

Electoral Roll Officer: Andrew Owst

Standing Committee: Churchwardens, Hon Treasurer and Hon Secretary. The Committee is required by law and empowered to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. It met about a week before each meeting in 2022/2023.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Axel Palmer, Treasurer, reports that income for the year recovered a little from 2021, entirely due to superb fundraising efforts: Jubilee, Dracula and Bridge (there was no fete in 2022).

Expenditure control is especially challenging with the 2021 deficit of £10,000 dramatically depleting operating funds. For th first time in living memory, the Parish has not been able to pay its Parish Share in full but did manage a contribution of £4,000 against a request of £18,000. Despite firm control of electricity and gas usage, the impact of the national price increases has seen costs rocket to £8,800 (from £2,678). Other expenditure under PCC control has been cut back (cleaner costs replaced by volunteers) while Clergy / Benefice central costs have been subject to particular scrutiny.

Treasurer’s Report can be found on the church website ~

<https://www.stmichaelscomptonmartin.co.uk/>

**2.Election of Independent Examiner**

Chris Ball had fulfilled the role of Independent Examiner with customary expertise, and the Treasurer recorded his thanks for his support and helpful suggestions.

**3.Churchwarden’s Report**

Our Rector, Simon Lewis, announced his resignation from the Benefice in June 2022 and left in August 2022. The benefice is now in a vacancy.

The Church Wardens would first like to thank the present PCC for their commitment to St Michael’s as we go forward in a vacancy. We saw your PCC rising strongly to the challenges of the Vacancy.   
We were delighted that Jon and Kate Reynolds, having bravely struggled through two challenging years as Churchwardens, were willing to stay on the PCC and give their continuing support to the PCC where Sue Owst continued brilliantly as PCC Secretary.

Our prime focus has been to get the finances back on an even keel; an incredibly difficult task given the pandemic and falling church numbers.

Our Treasurer, Axel Palmer, has worked hard to identify areas where savings can be made and where difficult decisions have had to be made. Our aim continues to be to increase our church numbers and eventually have the ability to pay our Parish Share in full.

Helen Palmer organised the rota of guest priests for all three churches in the Benefice as well our own services .Lucy Hemsley provided strong support as our Reader.

We have restricted the services we are able to manage to one service per month. This is far from ideal but our resources are spread very thinly and it was decided to put on one service per month and do it well. We also decided to revert back to a more family friendly service which we used to use a few years ago. This has been received well by our worshippers. Our monthly service is the third Sunday of the month and is a Family Communion Service with children’s Activities. There will be discussions in the near future about introducing a second service. However it has been decided we need to reach out into our community to further establish what they would like ~ more focus on young families? Teenagers? We hope with further consultation we can have a second form of service up and running by the end of this year.

We would like to thank Sasja and Pat Patten, Jon and Kate Reynolds, Rebecca, Matilda and Jon Binns, Andrew Owst, John Allen, Dick Hyde, Dave Salmon, Axel Palmer and Lucy Hemsley for reading the lessons and preparing and reading the intersessions. The Churchwardens are very grateful for your support.

We had to take the difficult decision to stop paying our cleaner and ask for volunteers to go onto a cleaning rota. We now have 14 volunteers on the cleaning rota who work in pairs to clean the church once a week. A huge thank you to you all for your dedication and excellent work. The church always looks clean and welcoming.

Julia Halling-Brown and team have managed to keep the church looking welcoming with fresh flowers in vases. Thank you to Julia and her team for doing this essential work.

We have had several fundraising activities this year. Our first was an invitation to James Hornsby to come back to St Michael’s to perform his one man show of Dracula.

We also held our Peggy Bragg Bridge Lunch in October 2022.

We also started a 200 Club in September. We are hoping our existing ticket holders will continue in September for another year and our aim will be to sell more tickets to reach our 200 limit.

Although we have not had bells rung at all our Sunday services this year, we are most grateful to Rodney Gay for his commitment in this work and in welcoming guest Ringers and encouraging the team ringers. The bell ringers continue to practice every Friday evening.

Music continues to be an important aspect of our church life. We would like to thank Rachel Branston for continuing to support St Michael’s as the Benefice Musical Director. We are fortunate to have Rachel and the Benefice choir come to our monthly services and enhance our singing. We would also like to thank Jean Luckett who continues to play at St Michael’s and readily stands in when Rachel is unable to play.

Our 9 lessons and Carols continues to be a very popular service in our church calendar and we were able to re establish the Compton Martin Irregulars to come and sing once again. Thank you to all of you who joined in.

**Presentation by Camila Ruz about Eco Hub**

Camila detailed the progress made so far by the Eco Hub. Future plans need to be discussed with the wider community to ensure progress. A plan of the churchyard has been prepared with suggestions to improve biodiversity. Michael Walton has produced an accurate plan of the churchyard. The map and details are in the Old School to be viewed by parishioners who are being asked for their comments.

The PCC are all very excited by the work that has already been done and for the work to be carried out in the future.

We would like to thank Camila and Jean Luckett for all the work they are doing to help St Michael’s to become more aware of the nature we have in the church yard and how to care and encourage it to spread.

**Church Attendance**

There were 41 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll at the end of 2022.

Our Easter Day service was attended by 16 children and 58 adults.

Our Christmas Eve Nativity was enjoyed by 24 children and 40 adults and 10 children and 44 adults enjoyed our Christmas day service.

Hallowe’en

The PCC’s decision to light up the church for Hallowe’en was continued.

Lastly we would like to thank Michael Walton and his family for opening and closing the church every day. We are very grateful to be able to keep our church open for everyone to enjoy at any time.

1. **Deanery Synod Report**

**Chew Magna Deanery Synod**

**Chew Magna Deanery Synod Report of 2022 meetings for use at 2023 APCMs**

**Meeting held on Tuesday 25th January 2022** via Zoom

**Lay Dean’s News**

Helen Barnes confirmed that she would be standing down as Lay Dean at Easter.

**Talk and Discussion was led by Charlie Peer (Head of Diocesan Mission and Support and Ministry Development) on Enabling Ministries**

Enabling Ministries is a term used to encourage ministry within communities. Since Covid it had become clear that the church faces challenges and there is a need to think about what the church might look like in the future.

He talked about 3 areas which the Diocese is trying to encourage:

* A Diversity of Lay Ministries

The different ways in which people serve the church eg welcoming people to church, leading children’s activities or assisting with worship.

* Focal Ministry

In a multi-parish benefice with a single priest, local leaders could provide local ministry eg Lay Worship Assistants could work alongside the clergy.

* Focal Ministry in the wider community

Ministry in the community has seen an increase recently in chaplain and pioneer posts with people being called to work with people beyond the parish. He gave the example of working with an art group in a community which had the potential to develop into something further. Ministry is a vocation for both the ordained and the lay.

**Deanery Support for Angela Fraser**

After 18 years working as Schools Chaplain in the Chew Valley, Angela had been made redundant following the recent Diocesan restructuring exercise. Her line-manager had suggested that Angela could work on a self-employed basis for 2 days a week for the next two and a half years. One of those days to be funded by the Deanery.

A letter setting out the details of the proposal had been sent to all PCCs asking each benefice to consider the proposal.

**Meeting held on 14th March 2022** on Zoom.

An additional meeting was held in March to appoint a new Lay Dean. Graham Sage was unanimously elected to the role of Lay Dean by the House of Laity.

**On Wednesday 6th July** - 20 members of synod (including guests) visited Wells cathedral.

We were first welcomed to the cathedral and served tea and coffee in the café.

From there we went into the cathedral for Choral Evensong and sat in the quire for the service. The service was sung by a visiting choir from Ohio.

Following the service we divided into groups for our tour of the cathedral. The tour was very informative and interesting and enjoyed by all.

**Meeting held on Monday 10th October at St Andrew’s, Blagdon**

**Area Dean News**

Stephen confirmed there were a number of retirements/vacancies in the Deanery:

Simon Lewis left in August,

Daile Wilshere retired in September,

Mark Cregan would be retiring in October

and Mike Burke would be retiring in January 2023.

**Angela Fraser (schools chaplain) and Mike Haslam (Diocesan Chaplaincy Development Adviser)**

Angela visits 7 schools in the deanery, usually visiting each of them once a month. She thanked synod for their generosity in supporting her work and gave examples of her recent work in the schools.

Mike Haslam told synod he was seeking volunteers who are interested in working with children to help with chaplaincy to work with small groups, mentoring or pastoral care in primary or secondary schools. Training would be provided.

**Draft Deanery Plan for Clergy Deployment**

The main part of the evening was devoted to discussion of the draft plan for clergy deployment, which had been put forward by the DMPG in September and copied to all. The plan had been devised following the Diocese’s proposal to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy posts from 178 to 150 (owing to financial constraints). The Chew Magna deanery has been allocated 7 posts, a reduction of 2. There was a need to work together to achieve the best plan for the deanery.

Synod divided into 4 groups who were asked to consider: ‘What is the best way forward?’

And ‘What might be the best plan for the future in order to lose the required 2 posts?’

A number of themes came out of the discussions which included:

* Cuts are detrimental to growth
* Need to re-assess the best centres for mission in the future eg re-enhancing the position of Bishop Sutton
* There is a need for more readers in the deanery
* A desire to look at the flexibility of church buildings for other uses
* Leadership is a key to success
* Opportunities for parishes to find different groupings to work together
* Opportunities to partner with other churches within parishes
* Need to encourage lay leaders
* An overarching need for mission.

Stephen M’Caw confirmed that the DMPG would draw up a revised plan based on the themes which were of most importance to us eg mission and leadership. The revised plan would be discussed at the January 2023 synod meeting when it was hoped a decision on the way forward would be made.

**Jean Luckett**

1. **Election of Deanery Synod Representatives and PCC members**
2. **Election of Sidesmen**
3. **Reports covering other church activities.**
4. **AOB**

**Other Reports**

**Altar Guild**

At the beginning of the Year, the restrictions due to Covid meant that the communion bread and wine had to be given to the communicants on glass plates, with the wine intincted onto the wafer.

As restrictions eased in September, Guild members, Sue Owst, Rebecca Binns and Kate Reynolds were able to assist at the communion, holding the Common Cup again, with the priest dipping the wafer into the Cup.

**Sue Owst**

**Bell Tower Report**

**Compton Martin Bell Tower** Report for the year ended 31st December 2022

Church support activities

* We ring for regular services whenever possible, although clashing service times in neighbouring parishes can restrict this, as our ringing team cover a number of services each Sunday. We endeavour to ring for weddings and funerals or special services on request when sufficient notice is given to field a team of ringers.
* A well-attended practice (6-12 ringers) continues to be held each Friday evening from 7-9pm. It is a good learning tower with an emphasis on ringer development, under the guidance of our Ringing Master John Murray. We continue to attempt more challenging methods as well as ringing (more tunefully) old favourites. Beginners are especially welcomed – if you or someone you know would like to have a try, please call Rodney Gay 01761 241657.

Highlights and News

* Compton Martin hosted the local DACR Branch AGM this year, and enjoyed a good turnout of visiting ringers. The hire of the Church Rooms for the event was kindly sponsored by an anonymous benefactor.
* We were pleased to ring as a tribute to the Queen for the celebration of her Platinum Jubilee. Later in 2022 we also rang the bells muffled on the occasion of her funeral.

**Rodney Gay**

**Compton Martin Bells Tower Captain.**

**Church Building, Fabric and Ornaments**

**Work carried out to the Buildings and Churchyard during 2022**

A group of volunteers met twice during the year in the Spring and Autumn on a Saturday morning to carry out various tasks to maintain the Church, Old School Room and churchyard. These included:

* The clearing of gutters, gullies and downpipes and the open areas adjoining the church. Michael Walton kindly cleaned the gutters to the Old School Room and open area adjoining his land.
* Trimming and weeding to the ornamental box hedges.
* Checking of gravestones for stability.
* Cleaning of brass work, internal window sills and ledges, and the staircase to the tower.

A faulty electric heater was replaced in the Old School Room with a new similar unit.

The cutting of the grass in the Church Yard was carried out regularly through the summer months by contractor.

**Andrew Owst**

**Thank Cake it’s Friday**

Thank Cake is now well established, taking place on the first Friday of the month. Some of the participants in this social opportunity are not people who usually attend St Michael’s, but we are brought together through our fondness for a cuppa and a chat and home baked cake! We are grateful to the clerk to the Parish Council for advertising the event via the village email.

**Jean Luckett**

**Carpenters Food and Support**

There is a box in the porch for villagers to donate to the food bank. The need for help in 2022 continued to be high - an increase of 28% on 2021, so every packet or tin was of benefit. Some parishioners made financial donations, which were then used to buy e.g. fresh fruit and veg or items that are particularly needed.

The foodbank will also support Compton Martin parishioners who are in a state of crisis, should the need arise.

**Jean Luckett**

**Bat in Churches**

We have been participating in this lottery funded project since it started. In 2022 we took part in the citizen science project of a roost count – recording the number of bats emerging from church at dusk. Thanks to Nigel Milbourne from Blagdon who brought along equipment to spot and hear the four species in and around the churchyard. A small number of villagers also came long to bat watch and this is something we can do more of in 2023.

We also took part in an Art installation project “On a Wing and a Prayer” by Ilene Sterns. This was a very successful project, which involved Ilene combining her photography, sound recordings of our church and bat-related word/phrases provided by parishioners and the children of Ubley School. The launch took place in October on a Saturday afternoon, with activities for children and tea and cake available. Ilene and the Bats in Churches team were delighted with our involvement and the launch. The artwork has since toured various churches also taking part in the Bats in Churches project.

**Jean Luckett**

**Old School**

Julie Weaver continued to be responsible for Old School bookings and the room was again the venue for the Annual Church Workers Drinks Party where we show our appreciation to all those who help behind the scene with the running of the Church.

Thank you Julie for keeping the booking diary.

**ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, COMPTON MARTIN**

**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting**

**& Annual Parochial Church Meeting of**

**The Parish of St Michael the Archangel,**

**Compton Martin**

**DATE Monday 16th May 2022.**

**VENUE The Old School Room, Compton Martin**

**TIME 7.00 – 8.00 pm**

**Minutes of Vestry Meeting at 7pm.**

1. **Welcome:**The Rev’d Simon Lewis, Incumbent, welcomed members of the ecclesiastical parish and civil parish of Compton Martin and The Archdeacon of Bath, with an opening prayer.
2. **Present:**Clive Best, John Binns, James Bragg, Gill Durbin, Brett Halling-Brown, Julia Halling-Brown, Dick Hyde, Gene Joyner, Rev’d Simon Lewis, Jean Luckett, Axel Palmer, Sasja Patten, Patrick Patten, Jonathan Reynolds, Kate Reynolds, Vein Dr Adrian Youings, Archdeacon of Bath. **Apologies:**John Allen, John Hemsley, Lucy Hemsley, Andrew Owst, Sue Owst, Helen Palmer.
3. **Minutes of Vestry Meeting held on Tuesday 18th May 2021**Approved.
4. **Matters arising**None.
5. **Election of Churchwardens**Rev’d Lewis thanked outgoing Churchwardens, Kate Reynolds and Jonathan Reynolds, for their sterling service during the difficult past two years.  
     
   Axel Palmer, on behalf of members of the PCC and village, also thanked Kate and Jonathan Reynolds and made a presentation of a joint retirement gift.   
   Julia Halling-Brown presented an arrangement of flowers.  
     
   Two valid nominations had been received for James Bragg and Helen Palmer and they were elected by acclaim.
6. **Meeting Closed at 7.15pm.**

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting 7.15pm**

1. **Welcome:**The Rev’d Simon Lewis, Incumbent, welcomed members on the church electoral roll of St Michael’s Compton Martin and The Archdeacon of Bath.
2. **Present:**Clive Best, John Binns, James Bragg, Gill Durbin, Brett Halling-Brown, Julia Halling-Brown, Dick Hyde, Gene Joyner, Rev’d Simon Lewis, Jean Luckett, Axel Palmer, Sasja Patten, Patrick Patten, Jonathan Reynolds, Kate Reynolds, Ven Dr Adrian Youings, Archdeacon of Bath. **Apologies:**John Allen, John Hemsley, Lucy Hemsley, Andrew Owst, Sue Owst, Helen Palmer.
3. **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Tuesday 18th May 2021**Approved.
4. **Matters arising**None
5. **Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021**Rev’d Lewis presented the Annual Report and, after affording those present additional time to read the report, invited comments.  
     
   Sasja Patten referred to the Annual Report Section 4(3) (Potential merger of benefice parishes into a single parish) which mentioned consultation ‘with those outside the PCC’ and asked if she had missed such events. Rev’d Lewis responded that this had not happened because the PCC had decided to ‘pause’ such consideration, which Jonathan Reynolds clarified was an option presented to the PCC which it had unanimously accepted.   
     
   Brett Halling-Brown referred to the Annual Report and Financial Statements, Section 7. He said:  
     
   “I have two points that I wish to comment on.  
   Point 1.

I would like to draw attention to the Independent Examiners report in the accounts.

I am concerned regarding the potential breaches of Section 130 and/or 132(1) of the Charities Act, together with Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006.

Trustees of Compton PCC are legally responsible for accounts and transactions and giving due consideration to my wife’s intention to become a Trustee, I would like some reassurances please.

That the treasurer will not pay or remit expenditure unless vouched and/or authorised by the PCC.

That past expenditure, the subject of the Independent examiners report, unvouched, be rectified with a specific period of time agreed.

Point 2.

Expenditure for 2021 exceeds income by a considerable margin and excluding the one off expenditure of £14,328 in 2020, has still increased considerably, mainly Clergy and Benefice expenses.

Considering the likelihood that Income will decrease this year and expenditure increase, I would like the Committee’s view as to how they intend coping financially, given that we only have £3,571 in reserves as at the end of 2021. It is likely that an insolvent position looms and are the committee examining drastic cuts in expenditure to avoid this issue?”  
  
Rev’d Lewis responded that the need to increase income has already been pointed out by the Treasurer.  
  
Dr Axel Palmer, Treasurer [appointed after year end], advised that financial house-keeping was a priority and all items of expenditure were under close scrutiny, the largest being ‘Clergy / Central benefice expenses’ and that, clearly, economies will have to be made. Expenditure will have to be properly authorised by this PCC and evidenced. Brett Halling-Brown asked the basis for benefice expense sharing which Rev’d Lewis / Axel Palmer advised was very long-standing. (Blagdon ½, Compton Martin 1/3, Ubley 1/6). Brett Halling-Brown suggested that there is scope to change the ratios.

Axel Palmer advised that there is little likelihood of the parish becoming insolvent because amounts received from Planned Giving were increasing and there are plans for fundraising. St Michael’s has always paid its Parish Share [£18,124 in 2021] but, at present, there are insufficient resources to do so but it is rightly a priority to pay the proper amount and, when congregations increase, to pay a higher share.

The Archdeacon of Bath took the opportunity to advise the meeting of the difficulties faced financially by the Diocese of Bath and Wells. There is a shortfall in income and savings have been made by redundancies amongst diocesan staff and there is a plan to reduce clergy numbers from 178 to 150, including reductions in Chew Magna Deanery. Adrian Youings suggested that in case of difficulties paying Parish Share the Treasurer should engage with the diocesan finance office, which the Treasurer confirmed had already taken place.

Brett Halling-Brown drew attention to the Accounting Standards currently adopted by the PCC. He suggested that there would be benefit in changing from ‘Receipts and Payments’ to an ‘Accruals’ basis. The Treasurer welcomed the opportunity to engage with Mr Halling-Brown and the Independent Examiner and advise the PCC accordingly.

As fundraising is an important item for the PCC, James Bragg on behalf of the new Churchwardens said:  
  
“Helen and I would like to reassure the PCC that we have agreed to stand as Church Wardens once again to make sure that St Michael’s in Compton Martin has a fully functional PCC ready to tackle the problems that have occurred during the pandemic. Finance being the major problem, as we have no money.

For the first time we are unable to pay our Parish Share in full this year; we will be struggling to pay normal bills incurred by the church and lastly mission has been sadly lacking and our congregation slowly disappearing.

We will continue with the plans which have already been discussed in PCC meetings prior to the APCM and our thanks go to Jon and Kate for all their support.

Our first task is to put in place measures to bring our finances into order. Fundraising is a vital component. We aim to start a ‘200 Club’ to be launched in June.

We have various fundraising events already in the pipeline ~ namely James Hornsby will be returning to entertain us once again and the ever popular Bridge lunch will be happening again this year.

We will also be applying to the Parish Council for money from the Community Infrastructure Levy fund to finish the work we started pre pandemic. This money will be used towards finishing installing a disable toilet and refurbish the other toilet. Once we have redecorated the schoolroom and the new windows are in place, we will be actively marketing the schoolroom as a valuable venue, in the centre of the village, for small groups.

In the application we will be stating that we will be using the school room for our monthly senior lunches, hopefully starting a weekly afternoon friendly bridge club, starting a monthly youth group and a monthly Mums and Babies coffee morning.

All the above needs the support of the residents of Compton Martin. We have no doubt that we will be able to encourage people to volunteer to help with these projects. We already have a weekly cleaning rota starting and we were delighted with the response we received.

All the above, presents an opportunity for mission. Showing that the church is alive and well and ready to engage with the community once again. Where we can, showing that, as Christians, we want to share our love of Jesus to all, whether it is over a cup of tea and cake, playing bridge, enjoying a plate of soup or tidying up after a Mother and Baby session.

There is work to be done and we hope you will all join us in our endeavours.”

1. **Elections:  
   a. PCC Members**

Julia Halling-Brown, Jonathan Reynolds and Kate Reynolds, having been properly nominated were elected by acclaim.  
**b. Deanery Synod**  
There are no nominations for the vacancy.  
**Appointments  
c. Financial Independent Examiner.**  
Christopher Ball had indicated his willingness to continue. **d. Stewards**John Allen, Jon and Rebecca Binns, James Bragg, Dick Hyde, Andrew Owst, Sue Owst, Axel Palmer, Helen Palmer, Patrick Patten, Sasja Patten, Dave Salmon and Karen Salmon having indicated their willingness to serve were appointed.  
**e. Electoral Roll Officer**Andrew Owst having signified his willingness to serve was appointed.

1. **Closing Prayer**Rev’d Lewis thanked everyone for attending and closed with prayer.  
   Meeting closed 7.55pm.