**ARCHDEACON’S QUINQUENNIAL VISITATION**

**Archdeaconry BOLTON**

**Deanery RADCLIFFE AND PRESTWICH**

**Church/Parish St Andrew, Radcliffe**

**Date of Visitation 9 November 2017**

**Present at Visitation: Area Dean Rev Canon Alison Hardy**

**Lay Chair Chris Haworth**

**Incumbent Revd Jo Mckee**

**INTRODUCTION**

St Andrew’s describes itself as a lively parish in the north of Radcliffe, representing a charismatic evangelical tradition in which the exercise of spiritual gifts and lay leadership are strongly emphasised. This marks it out from the other parishes in the Deanery which are of a more central or liberal Catholic tradition. St Andrew’s clearly has something distinctive to offer. The need to give generously as part of Christian commitment is taught. St Andrew’s sees itself as an active and sustainable thriving parish with a variety of regular activities including house groups, See and Know Group (mums and toddlers), the Oasis Craft Group, and St Andrew’s Ladies Together (SALT). Church members are active in the wider community in supporting St Andrew’s School, the Footsteps pre school nursery, Christians Against Poverty, Open Doors and Churches Together in Radcliffe.

As part of the Radcliffe and Prestwich Deanery Mission and Pastoral Plan approved by the Diocese in 2013, The parishes in the Northern cluster of the Deanery including St Andrew’s, Christ Church Ainsworth and the Radcliffe team were to become part of a wider team and a Steering group was established to explore a way forward. However, during 2015 it was decided by the Steering Group to move instead, as an interim measure, to a more informal andlooser arrangement with the formation of a Mission Partnership. Work on this development never really got underway it was decided to wait for a new incumbent to be appointed to St Andrew’s. After a vacancy of almost three years Rev Jo McKee was appointed to St Andrew’s in 2016.

**PART ONE: INSPECTIONS**

1. **CHURCH BUILDING**

**General**

St Andrew’s church was designed by John Lowe and built in 1877. It has a Grade 2 listing. Pevsner describes the church as *“an enterprising building. NW tower and spire. The tower starts to go octagonal low down, at clock level. A stair turret wraps around the base and, sheltering in the NE angle, a most unusual polygonal baptistry with its own pyramidal roof. Narrow aisles, wide transepts, polygonal east end. Geometrical tracery”.*

The church building was not visually inspected at the visitation as a Quinquennial Inspection was completed in April 2016 and we relied on the findings of that report which was made available at the visitation. The Architect had identified and prioritised the remedial work required and suggested an estimated cost of £100,000 plus professional fees.

**Ongoing building matters**

A platform at the front of the nave is due to be installed to give greater flexibility of use. This is subject to a faculty being granted. This process has been rather protracted and at the time of the visitation it was not clear what needed to happen next. At the time of the visitation the arch leading to the sanctuary was awaiting redecoration. The date of the lettering was under investigation to ascertain whether faculty permission would be required. At the date of writing this report the painting has been completed. There is a Building Group charged with overseeing these works. Care should be taken that this group remains fully accountable to the PCC at every stage. The items identified by the 2016 quinquennial as needing attention, some of which are urgent should not be lost sight of while the platform issue is being resolved.

There have been no recent break-ins or thefts.

The buildings are insured with Ecclesiastical Insurance.

Disability access to the building is via a portable ramp. The Architect has indicated and the PCC agrees that a permanent solution of re-constructing the path to raise the level should be included in the scope of future works.

1. **DOCUMENTS AND REGISTERS**

The Terrier and Inventory were in good order having been recently updated and included pictures of items listed. The Log Book was up to date as at September 2016

There were gaps in the record of faculties archived in church before the more recent ones. Records at Church House have been checked by the Incumbent and copies of all “missing” faculties have been identified.

There was no evidence of receipts for any registers archived at the Diocese. Marriage registers in the safe date back to 1909.

Banns of Marriage, Baptism and Confirmation registers were up to date. The register of children admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation had not previously been updated but the 2017 cohort was recorded. It was good to see a new Register of Thanksgiving for those who want their child blessed but are not at the stage of making a full commitment to baptism.

The Burial Register dates back to 1908. There are grave records, a churchyard plan and a Register of cremated remains also with a plan. There are still a few spaces available. An area of the churchyard which is not consecrated is earmarked for use to either further mission activities or as a new site for the Footsteps nursery. The PCC should consider a faculty application as a way of regularising the section in which ashes are buried and ensuring that it complies with the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations issued in July 2016

There is no record of weekly collection amounts entered in the Register of Services Collection monies are counted on Sundays by two duty Sidespeople. One person takes cash to the bank on a Monday.

***Recommendations:***

*Once counted the amounts should be recorded in the service register. From here they can be tallied with the amounts banked.*

*Safety and good practice require that banking be done by two people and the time of visits to the bank varied if possible to avoid establishing an observable routine.*

*Enquiries should be made of the Diocesan Archive to identify what records have been deposited there.*

**Other Documents:**

The PCC adheres to the Diocesan Safe Church Policy and the full document will be made available in the vicarage for people to refer to as needed. The Safeguarding policy statements for Children and Young People and Adults at Risk, approved at each APCM, are also displayed on the noticeboard.

There is no written evidence of a recent Fire Risk assessment but Fire Exit signs are clearly visible.

There is no written record but Wardens are responsible for a monthly check of any health and safety issues.

The following up to date documents were set out for inspection: PCC Minute Book, APCM Minute Book, Electoral Roll (there is an Electoral Roll officer), Electrical Inspection Certificate, Lightning Conductor Test Certificate, Central Heating Service Certificate and Service Schedule agreement, Fire Extinguisher Service certificate, Employer’s Liability Insurance certificate, CCLI Licenses and a list of Key Holders. All were found to be in order and up to date.

***Recommendations:***

*A Fire Risk Assessment should be carried out and documented. Regular checks against the assessment should be carried out and recorded with any necessary action documented and recorded.*

*A simple record of when health and safety checks have been carried you should be maintained and any remedial actions recorded.*

**Notice Board:**

The following documents were displayed as required: Safeguarding policies, Employer’s Liability Insurance Certificate, Eucharistic Assistants, and the Table of Parochial Fees.

***Recommendation:*** *A notice naming the* *Safeguarding Officer with a photograph should be displayed.*

1. **CHURCHYARD**

The grass in the churchyard is mown by a local contractor and is kept in very good order. There is a churchyard plan from which gravespaces can be identified. There are only a small number of vacant plots available for burials. The Priest in Charge is aware of the Diocesan regulations for Monuments in Churchyards.

1. **PARSONAGE HOUSE**

The incumbent does not reside in the vicarage but has an office there as does a CAP Debt Management Officer. It is also the base for Local Housing Association meetings and a support group run by Bury Addiction Service. The building is in good order and used regularly by various church groups for meetings and by the Sunday School groups.

1. **OTHER PROPERTY**

‘Footsteps’ is a long established nursery for children under the age of four. It is located adjacent to the Primary School in a building that is now in poor condition. The PCC is the governing body via a sub-committee. There is good accountability and it is making a small profit after payment of running costs, staff wages and pension contributions. There are two full time members of staff on permanent contract and 6 staff on zero hours contracts. Administration of the payroll is contracted out.

Footsteps is an important mission opportunity for the church and since the appointment of the new incumbent stronger links between the nursery and the church have been developed with church visits, attendance at See and Know and Story Time all contributing to a positive relationship. However, the state of the building in which Footsteps is housed and the fact that it is sited next to St Andrews school (on church owned land) which has its own nursery has caused significant pastoral issues. Ideally the church would like to re-locate the nursery into a new building on a plot of land in the churchyard next to the vicarage that is not consecrated. There is a possibility of grant aid for such a project and the PCC is considering how best to proceed with the right kind of building for this well established and fruitful provision.

**PART TWO: VISION, MISSION AND MINISTRY**

At the time of the visitation the Incumbent had been in post just over a year and still feels that the church is in a time of transition in which she is very much getting to grips with what is going on, how things are working and where the important issues for attention lie. It has not been an easy time and supporting the PCC in getting things onto a firm footing and identifying realistic and achievable Mission goals is time consuming but generally positive. Some new people have taken on roles but progress is slow. Some key people have left and others who were perhaps inhibiting growth have been encouraged to move on. There is no doubt that people enjoy coming to St Andrews to worship on Sundays but the difficult issue is that more volunteers are needed to support ministry and mission plans. The incumbent is encouraging the PCC and wider church to engage with the Diocesan MAP process and to deepen their understanding of how ministry needs to be collaborative and broadly based, drawing more people in to take responsibility rather than relying on a small group doing everything.

**GROWING, NURTURING AND SERVING**

Since the arrival of the new incumbent in 2016 Sunday adult attendances have started to increase but it is still the case that many attend sporadically. The figures in the table below are those submitted in the annual October census but discussion at the time of the visitation indicated that they may not be accurate. In October 2017 the recorded figure was 74 adults on average. It is very noticeable that St Andrew’s attracts well over the Diocesan average number of children which reflects renewed and strong good links with St Andrew’s School and Footsteps. New leaders have taken on children and young people’s Sunday. The incumbent is also forging positive links with a local non Church primary school.

The ministry team at St Andrew’s comprises three readers who exercise a strong preaching ministry, an ALM, 8 Licensed Lay Assistants and a Pastoral Visiting team. There is also a small music group. Leadership of children and youth ministry has changed significantly and the new leaders are growing into their new ministries. The church has a good track record of fostering vocation.

The incumbent expresses a clear desire for the church to grow larger and deeper and finding ways to enable this is a key priority. A number of people regularly enjoy the benefits of the deep experiences of residential conferences such as Soul Survivor but these are not accessible to everyone and there is always the danger of a clique developing rather than everyone having the opportunity to be involved in local church based nurture.

There has been some success in opening up the church to a new understanding of its place within the Deanery and St Andrew’s now sends committed representatives to Deanery Synod with a valuable contribution to make. The Readers are also offering to support other parishes in the deanery in vacancy

The previous discussions re forming part of a larger team with the other Radcliffe parishes and Christ Church Ainsworth have clearly foundered and the incumbent and PCC are instead beginning to explore new partnerships based more on church tradition rather than geographical proximity.

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|  | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** |
| **AV Weekly adults** | **75** | **54** | **54** | **91** |
| **Baptisms** |  |  |  |  |
| **Weddings** |  |  |  |  |
| **Church Funerals** |  |  |  |  |

**THE FUTURE**

St Andrew’s is in a time of transition, not just trying to reclaim what has been but being genuinely alive and open to a different future in which links with the community are strengthened and form the basis for numerical growth. It is also clear that St Andrew’s is seeing the value of being more connected with the Deanery and wider Diocese. There may have been in the past a tendency to go it alone, to do things independently, to see the particular tradition is necessarily setting the Church apart but it is clear that this is changing and that relationships of trust and mutual understanding are beginning to grow. There are many signs of healthy church life at St Andrew’s and there is every reason to trust God for growth and development in the future. The church is being very well led by Jo and there is good support from the wardens, Readers, and PCC.

We are very grateful to the Revd Jo McKee and the Wardens for their assistance in good preparation in advance of the Visitation and to Rev Jo McKee for being so generous with her time on the day.

*Rev Alison Hardy – Area Dean of Radcliffe and Prestwich, Mr Chris Haworth Deanery Lay Chair – February 14 2018*