

st john's hoxton

“A beacon of hope for Hoxton”



2014 ANNUAL REPORT
(INCLUDING FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

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Introduction

This Annual Report is made by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St John the Baptist with Christ Church Hoxton (St John's Hoxton). It sets out the governance structure of the church, lists council members and administrative officers, and reports on the activities of the reporting year. It also presents statutory financial statements and notes. We have pleasure in presenting this information to the wider public.

Structure, Governance & Management

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. Since 9th December 2009 the PCC has been registered with the Charity Commission as "The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St John the Baptist with Christ Church Hoxton (Diocese of London)" and has the charity registration number 1133109.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All regular attendees at St. John's are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and are able to vote and to stand for election to the PCC.

In accordance with the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, St John's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd Graham Hunter, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church - evangelistic, pastoral, social and ecumenical. It undertakes religious activities for the benefit of the general public by making grants to organisations, by providing service, and by providing buildings, facilities and open space. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church premises of St John's which are registered as a Grade II* listed building.

Related Trust & Companies

St John's Hoxton Management Company Ltd

The St John's Hoxton Management Company Ltd was established in October 2009 as a wholly owned trading subsidiary of the Parochial Church Council of St John the Baptist with Christ Church, Hoxton. It was formed to manage the car parking operations of the church. It is registered with Companies' House, and is identified by the company registration no. 07039922. The company directors are appointed by, and report to, the PCC. The company directors for the duration of 2014 were: Revd Graham Hunter, Mr Ian Shepard and Ms Tanya Whitfield.

The PCC has no other related trusts or companies.

Council Members 2013

Ex Officio Members

Incumbent

Revd Graham Hunter

Churchwardens

Ian Shepard (to 6th June)

Peter Chareka

Bridget Okolo (from 6th June)

Deanery Synod Representatives

Len Dye

Rob Adediran (from 30th March)

Licensed Lay Minister

Carmeta Duberry

Elected Members

(To 30th March)

Rob Adediran

Nathaniel Addo

Andrew Bell

Morag Correa

Rosemary Hammond

Bridget Okolo

Yele Olowe

Monica Osei-Bonsu

(From 30th March)

Nathaniel Addo

Morag Correa

Rosemary Hammond

Yele Olowe

Monica Osei-Bonsu

Anita Masih

Jarre Olajide

Shannon Counsel

Cerys Brundson (Co-opted from 15th September)

Officers / Roles

Electoral Roll

Morag Correa

Children's Advocate

Morag Correa

Secretary

Anita Masih

Treasurer

Yele Olowe (to 9th June)

Cerys Brundson (from 15th September)

Lay Vice-Chair

Rob Adediran

The PCC met 6 times during 2014, including a Vision & Strategy Away Day in July 2014.

Administrative Details

Principal Office

St John's Church
Pitfield St
London
N1 6NP

Bankers

NatWest Plc
Islington Angel Branch
2/3 Upper St
Islington
London
N1 0QF

Independent Examiner

Roderick Hayward
15 Ernle Rd
Wimbledon Common
London
SW20 0HH

Solicitors

Winkworth Sherwood LLP
Minerva House
5 Montague Close
London
SE1 9BB

Ecclesiastical Information

St John's is in the *Hackney Deanery*
in the *Stepney Episcopal Area*
of the *Diocese of London*.

It is identified by the Diocese Code: 05-26

Council Members' Report

The **vision** of the church is:

'to be a beacon of hope for Hoxton'.

We aim to achieve this through our **mission statement**:

*"To worship God with joy,
making Spirit-filled disciples of Christ;
to share the good news of Jesus
with all the people of Hoxton;
and to play our part in the transformation
of the local neighbourhood"*

This **mission statement** can be summarised
as four principal **activities**:

Worship God // Make Disciples
Share Jesus // Transform Hoxton

We follow five strategic parameters to direct our efforts:

- 1) to be a **diverse** church;
- 2) to adopt **distinct** mission programmes;
- 3) to build a **dedicated** team of staff and volunteers;
- 4) to **develop** our buildings to be needs-oriented; and
- 5) to **deploy** leaders and planters to start new congregations and expressions of church.

We hold five key values that we hope will characterise all of our activities:

Welcome; Hospitality; Excellence; Joy; and Hope.

In September 2013, the PCC launched a three-year Mission Action Plan to outline the specific objectives towards which we will apply our financial and human resources. More details of the year's activities and results are outlined below in the general report.

Electoral Roll Report

The electoral roll was revised for the 2014 APCM. It stood at 97 members. The electoral roll was revised during January-March 2014. 6 members were removed, and 22 added. The revised roll eligible to votes at the APCM on 19th April 2015 stands at 113 members.

Morag Correa, Electoral Roll Officer

Deanery Synod Report

On 24th June, we elected Christina Sosanya as the Lay Chair, and formed the Standing Committee of the Synod. We then heard a presentation on the changing face of Hackney, and the importance of the Deanery Synod for enabling wider mission opportunities. We then discussed how our churches are blessings to the local community, and how the local community is a blessing to our churches, and reported back on these blessings

On 6th November we heard a vision presentation from the Lay Chair, which was followed on by a presentation concerning the creation of Anglicans in Hackney, a new initiative to bring lay and clergy from the Deanery together to discuss and pray through our mission opportunities, and that we may learn together. A discussion followed, where we looked at the challenges and opportunities of this initiative. The small groups then reported back, and it was unanimously decided that we would trial Anglicans in Hackney for one year.

In addition, members of the Synod, along with PCC Treasurers and other PCC Church Officers were invited, by the Archdeacon, to a meeting to discuss Common Fund, on the 21st May 2014 at St Paul's West Hackney. We learnt about what the costs of ministry were, and how churches rely upon each other to implement the vision of a church presence in every parish. We then promised to respond to the Finance Committee with our pledges for the next year, once our PCC's had been given the chance to discuss their offers.

Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens' are responsible for ensuring the proper care and maintenance of the church fabric and furnishings. With the Vicar, they oversee the work of the Building & Premises Manager, and ensure that all statutory inspections and maintenance is carried out. Details of works are recorded in the Church Log Book, and their report is contained in the General Report, section f, 'Building & Premises'.

General Report

2014 was a significant year of growth in the life of St John's Church. We have become accustomed to growth in the numbers in our congregation, as well as seeing an increase in the capacity of leaders to take on new areas of mission and ministry.

“Connect Groups

This year has seen the launch of two connect groups. My wife Rosie and I have had the privilege of leading one of them and have built some wonderful friendships whilst exploring new areas of scripture and ministry as a group. It is not always easy to share our lives with each other as we all carry burdens and face daily struggles, but it is so amazing to be able to support one another through prayer, conversation, and simple encouragement. In addition to the two connect groups we have had a number of small groups running in the church including Alpha, parenting courses, lent groups, women's breakfasts and a knitting group! All of these are important ways of growing in discipleship, friendship and accountability. They give the church a depth that cannot be achieved through Sunday meetings alone and are becoming an important part of the fabric of St Johns.

Mission Action Plan

Now in the second year of the MAP we have made a great deal of progress in each of the targets. Some of the headlines include:

- Growing the morning service and building the team to plant an evening congregation in early 2015. (Worship and Services)
- Introducing a new Children's Ministry group and starting developing the volunteer led pastoral groups for 11-16 year olds (Fellowship and Pastoral Care)
- Establishing a Parenting Course and improving the effectiveness of existing outreach ministries like Foodbank and our work with the homeless (Mission and Neighbourhood Outreach)

In addition to these we have been thrilled to secure funding to be able to employ a part-time youth worker from the start of 2015 to serve our young people who we made a special focus for this our first Mission Action Plan. We were successful in fundraising for two short term contracts and look forward to securing more permanent funding for the post as we can already see the impact our volunteer led youth work is having on the young people of the church. Having committed to meeting the needs of our young people through important volunteer led programmes like a youth band, and regular groups for boys and girls aged 11-16 we are excited to see how things continue to grow under the leadership of a dedicated youth worker.”

Rob Adediran, Lay Vice Chair

a. Worship & Services

2014 saw steady growth in our Usual Sunday Attendance (USA). The average attendance on Sundays in October 2012 was 95 adults and children, but in 2013, this had grown to 117 adults and children. The 'October Count' for 2014 recorded an average of 95 adults and 45 children – 140 attendees of our Sunday worship service in total.

Other Services

Tuesday evening prayer continued through the year, with number varying between 2 and 10 people attending. Len Dye and Carmeta Duberry continue to faithfully lead this service. Other leaders are also being developed in this weekly service. Monthly services for the primary school continued, with around 340 pupils, as well as about 40 staff and parents.

Special Services

Easter 2014 saw us participate in the ecumenical Good Friday Walk of Witness. In addition, we observed a three-hour watch service that afternoon. 182 adults and children attended our Easter Sunday celebration.

Our Christmas Carol service was once again a highlight of the year, with around 215 adults and children attending the service. The gallery was used for seating for the first time in many years! Sara Hunter led a choir of 24 singers, and Steve Counsel led a band of 5 in leading the congregation in seasonal worship favourites. 134 people attended services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage & Funerals

The Bishop of Stepney, Rt Revd Adrian Newman, came to conduct a service of Baptism, Confirmation and Commissioning of Ambassadors for Christ in June. 7 Candidates were Confirmed, 2 of these were also Baptised, and 53 were Commissioned.

In total, 13 people were baptised during 2014. In addition, we were thrilled to celebrate 3 weddings, as well as our vicar being involved in presiding at 6 funerals.

Leadership & Preaching

We have seen a number of people from our congregation involved in leading services and preaching through 2014, including Carmeta Duberry, Andrew Large, Steve Counsel and Ruth Cant. Charlene Gordon has been trained to lead Sunday services, and has begun to take on leading duties. It has also been a pleasure to welcome clergy from other churches to provide cover while Revd Graham Hunter has been away. Special thanks go to Revd Andrew Jones for his support. We have had sermon series on '24/7 Christianity' (spring term), 'Letting Go Of...' (Lent), 'Gospel in Life' and 'Summer Psalms' (summer term) and 'Jesus Is Our...' (autumn term). Sermons are usually recorded and made available on our website.

Worship Team

The worship team has continued to develop under Steve Counsel's leadership. The newly installed AV system has improved the clarity of the amplified music, and the addition of a new mixing desk has expanded our capacity. AV operators are now well-trained and we are usually able to have both a sound desk operator and a projector operator each Sunday morning. Louise Medley, who has come as a Worship Central Academy intern for a year, joined us in the autumn term. She has been developing as a worship leader, along with other leaders: Jonty Large, Rob Adediran and Sara Hunter. The team met for training evenings, and a group went to a live Worship Central CD recording.

b. Fellowship & Pastoral Care

Pastoral care continues to be delivered not just by the vicar, but by a committed team of volunteers. The Pastoral Care Team continued to meet monthly, and members call and visit those in particular need. There is a high degree of ad hoc pastoral care given by members of the congregation as well. 6 members of St John's attended the Pastoral Visiting Course during October and November at the Stepney Area Training Centre. Broader church fellowship was supported through the Connect Groups which ran throughout the year, the three Lent groups which met in March and April and the regular Wednesday morning prayer group. 15 members of St John's attended the HTB 'Focus' holiday at the end of July in Camber Sands.

Shared lunches have remained a regular feature of life at St John's, with a shared lunch held at least once per term. A new innovation was the presence of the NHS Community Health team at one of our shared lunches to offer health assessments. A special thank you to Ishta Oku and the other volunteers who co-ordinate these lunches.

Throughout the summer months, a 'Pop Up Café' was run as a fundraising initiative for the playground redevelopment. This provided great opportunities for both fellowship and mission. Another campaign which provided great fellowship opportunities was the 'Toilets in Shoreditch Park' campaign, which saw members of several local churches get together with 'pop up' toilets to campaign for the provision of real toilets in the park.

Alice Howell organised a Women's Breakfast in September, and had 24 women attend for food, fun, worship and prayer. Sara Hunter was the 'guest' speaker!

Young men gathered weekly through the summer for football on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings. Winter and the darkening evenings put an end to this – but we hope to get it going again in spring 2015.

c. Mission & Outreach

As in previous years, members of St John's have been involved in a range of mission projects. Notably, more than 20 volunteers were involved in providing a weekly evening meal for the Hackney Winter Night Shelter hosted by our neighbouring parish, St Anne's Hoxton. Later in the year, a new team of volunteers established a 'Sunday Shelter' afternoon drop-in café for guests of the Hackney Winter Night Shelter. There have been a good number of members volunteering with the Hackney Foodbank, as well as several involved in the Community Organising work of Hackney Citizens.

Hackney Citizens was a critical way in which we participated in mission in the local neighbourhood. Members of St John's campaigned for toilets to be installed in Shoreditch Park with an innovative set of 'pop-up' toilets and a petition. This led to members speaking at a full meeting of Hackney Council, and receiving positive indications that the council will try to resource this valuable facility. Members were also centrally involved in the build up and delivery of the Hackney Mayoral Assembly, which saw over 400 Hackney Residents gather at Stoke Newington Town Hall to grill the Hackney Mayoral candidates. Other campaigns around the living wage and energy bills also had members involved. Towards the end of the year, we conducted a 'Skills and Vision Audit' as a way of learning the things that members are passionate about.

Youth and Children's Ministry has remained a vital part of our outreach. Children's Ministry project included an Easter holiday club, after-school clubs with music workshops at the start of the year, and then a collaborative project with the Ministry of Stories towards the end. Friday Fun has continued, along with our work in the local primary school. On top of this, the Children's Groups on a Sunday have expanded, and the team of volunteers also grew. Youth Ministry has developed through the year, with the continuation and growth of 'Girls' Night In' alongside the addition of 'Boys' Night In' football sessions in the spring and summer. A youth BBQ at the vicarage in July was great fun – though the paddling pool being filled with water provided much of the entertainment.

In the autumn term, it was wonderful to deliver a Parenting Course on weekday evenings. Parents were enabled to attend the course by a team of volunteer babysitters from the church – which was greatly appreciated.

The summer fair was once again a critical event in the life of the church. Over 500 people attended, and it was wonderful to have our worship team leading a set of worship songs from the stage, as well as our children's ministry team leading a sample session for children. Practical support was given by local businesses, and in particular by Hackney Council who provided the stalls for free. A team of volunteers from the church ensured the event ran smoothly. We were grateful for the financial support of the Haberdashers' Company and the Community Development Fund.

Finally, we have become involved in a group named 'Tech City Christians' which seeks to support and encourage Christians working in the Shoreditch area or the tech industry more widely. Meeting in the crypt every 6-8 weeks, the group has prompted us to think carefully about the role of missional communities in reaching people in workplaces.

d. Discipleship & Spiritual Growth

There were a range of ways in which discipleship was resourced through the year. Preparation course were run for baptism and confirmation candidates. Connect groups continue to offer space for discussion, bible study and prayer. The Lent course was based on the story of Les Misérables – using a resource which linked scenes from the recent feature film with the biblical story. 41 members were signed up to these groups, although attendance varied. The teaching series for Sunday sermons provided a strong focus on the difference Christian faith makes in our everyday lives. The autumn series placed a particular focus on the person of Jesus, and how he relates to us in different ways. We also had a special service in July focussing on Mental and Emotional Health. We prepared for this by holding several discussion evenings at the vicarage for members who have experience of, or suffer with, emotional and mental health issues to talk about how the church can respond.

e. Office & Administration

Church Communications

A new interior noticeboard on wheel and with leaflet holders was introduced. The ChurchApp database was expanded to give us the facility for planning rotas with automated reminder emails and text messages.

Staff Development

Our core team remains stable, with Ruth Cant, Adelle Carney, Steve Counsel, Bryn Dye and Bosede Owa all employed by the PCC throughout the year. Bosede Owa left employment as she commenced her degree studies in September. Christine Cummings is our new church cleaner.

Most of the staff team and placement students attended the HTB leadership conference at the Royal Albert Hall in May. We continue to hold a monthly joint staff meeting with the staff teams from St Paul's Shadwell, St Peter's Bethnal Green, All Hallows Bow and St Luke's Millwall. Staff have undertaken various training courses according to their needs. Revd Graham Hunter meets with the key ministry leaders for a supervision meeting on a fortnightly basis.

Stewardship & Book-keeping

Financial records have been much more efficiently managed this year. Our Administrator is now familiar with the book-keeping and donations recording software and quarterly Gift Aid claims are being made. It has become easier to monitor finances and produce accounting reports. The number of regular donors has increased, and we have seen an overall increase in income, from both voluntary donors and also premises rentals.

Our financial position has improved through the year, and we're greatly relieved to have been able to clear our Common Fund arrears to the London Diocese. Our surplus budget allowed us to meet all our financial obligations, and to continue to build our free reserves.

f. Building & Premises

Church Gardens

We are still engaged in an ongoing discussion with Hackney Council concerning responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the church gardens. In the meantime, a volunteer gardening group has been established to meet monthly, and a grant was made for equipment. The major focus of the year was the playground redevelopment project – for which planning permission was finally granted in November. We hope to complete the project during 2015.

Fire Alarm

In response to a fire department inspection in 2013, we made arrangements for the installation of a fire alarm system in 2014. This was carried out towards the beginning of the year, with finances provided by the Diocese as a grant:loan arrangement. Our finances at the end of the year enables us to pay off the loan portion in full so that we carried no debt into 2015. The fire alarm is working well, and has also earned us a reduction in our insurance premium.

Drainage & Plumbing

We continued to experience significant problems with drainage pumps through the year. Repairs and replacement pumps were required for the crypt toilets, as well as another visit to unblock the crypt sink. Rainwater drainage has been vastly improved due to regular leaf-clearing on the roof.

Flooding & Roof Repairs

The major building problems of the year concerned rainwater flooding. The water dispersal systems on the roof were inadequate for the torrential downpours we experienced during 2014. As a consequence, the building suffered several serious floods – one of which brought down a section of the under-gallery ceiling by the south-east entrance. Two insurance claims during the year left us with sufficient funds to carry out the necessary repairs to prevent this happening again in the future.

Other Maintenance and Developments

New toilets were installed in June 2014, which were a welcome addition to our facilities. We're pleased to report that in general it has been a much better year for the building, with less repairs than in some previous years. A number of projects continue in their development stages. Plans for the playground redevelopment and the replacement of the toilets have now been completed. We are now in the fundraising phase, and hope to make progress during 2014 and beyond.

Our Building & Premises Manager, Bryn Dye, and Steve Counsel who assists him have served us brilliantly. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that the roof gullies are kept clear, and that regular maintenance tasks are carried out promptly. We have also held two volunteer work days, with over 40 church members in total helping to keep the church in good condition.

The final thing to report is the commissioning of a Major Redevelopment Feasibility Study to explore the possibility of a residential development in the church grounds, along with a new vicarage, and a new church centre adjoining the north side of the church. The PCC had an initial consideration of the plans in September, and discussions with the Diocese property team and the developer will continue in 2015.

For and on behalf of the PCC

_____ Date: _____

Revd Graham Hunter
Vicar & Chair of Trustees