

archdeacons'

visitation news

Spring 2015 - issue 12

A churchwarden's prayer?

If someone asks you what the role of a churchwarden is, I wonder what you reply?...

Do you mention risk assessments, blocked drains, fundraising events, quinquennial inspections, vestments, child protection policies, gluten-free wafers, altar frontals, undertakers, keeping the church open and welcoming, faculty applications, insurance and much, much more? I'm sure each one of you will have dealt with most of these things – or if you are a new churchwarden, you may be wondering what on earth you have let yourself in for.

I was interested to see that Wikipedia says a churchwarden is a 'part-time volunteer' in the life of the church. I wonder how accurate either part of that phrase is for many of you? Churchwardens in this diocese dedicate a huge number of hours, faithfully and generously, to the life and service of our churches. You are often our unsung heroes, with a ministry which is as effective as it is hidden. Thank you for all that you do.



Padstow Churchwarden Sue is a member of the church's 'Holy Dusters'

One of the few things that are mentioned in church law about the role of the churchwarden is that of 'maintain(ing) order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during times of divine service'. I have never seen a churchwarden



Churchwardens Sue and Linda from St Petroc's, Padstow, who organise the Crib exhibition

having to exercise this responsibility – except perhaps in a crowded pet service. Although in this context the churchwarden's wand didn't prove to be very helpful!

Churchwardens are also able to lead morning or evening prayer on a Sunday if a priest should ever fail to turn up (This does sometimes happen – I confess to once arriving an hour late for a service, because I had the wrong time in my diary). It is a shame that this is the only reference to prayer in the role of a churchwarden that I have been able to find. I would have thought that in all the responsibilities you hold, prayer is vitally important so that you maintain a right perspective in your role and seek God's help and guidance in all that you do. Psalm 127 was one of those set for morning prayer today (as I write), reminding us that "unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain". I would encourage you to establish your ministry as churchwarden in a setting of prayer, looking to God for the strength, inspiration, hope and patience that you will need.

Continues overleaf...



St Petroc's Bodmin

Key Events in 2015

Waymark event with author Ian Adams, St Petroc's Bodmin

■ 27 June

Diocesan Synods

■ 2 May, 26 September and 7 November

Autumn roadshows

■ 23 September, 29 September and 6, 8, 12 and 13 October

For full details, see our website, www.trurodiocese.org.uk, the e-bulletin or our social media site on **Facebook** (Truro Diocese) or **Twitter** (@Diotruro).

Produced and printed by

Ecclesiastical

Continued from front page...

Churchwardens are also those to whom, when the priest is not available, people will come with concerns or problems, good news and celebrations. It is good to remember these people in your prayers regularly, as well as those in your community known to be in need. I hope that you would also see it as your responsibility to pray for your priest(s), your lay ministers and PCC (as I equally hope that they will pray for you).

The diocesan 'Simple Pattern for Daily Prayer' which is based around a monthly cycle of psalms (thanks to an idea from Fr George Guiver of the Community of the Resurrection) is a pattern which would be ideal for churchwardens to use – either on their own or together with those alongside whom they serve. It can be found on the

diocesan website at: www.trurodiocese.org.uk/vision-strategy/personal-discipleship/ or copies can be obtained from Shelley Porter at Archdeacon's House (01208 892811). I know of some churchwardens who seek to say a brief prayer in church each time they go there to fulfil a practical task. If you don't have time to use the 'Simple Pattern' above, then perhaps the following prayer might be useful for you:

*Eternal and ever-loving God,
I thank you for the history which is held by this building, for those who have worshipped you here down the centuries, for their faithfulness and their willingness to bear witness to you.
I pray for the life of the church here today; for our priest, our other ministers and our PCC.
May we each be open to the prompting of your Holy Spirit as we serve you and serve our communities in seeking to discover your*

kingdom and grow your church. May the future of this church be your future, and may we be as faithful and as willing to share your Good News as were those who came before us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Audrey

The Venerable Audrey Elkington
Archdeacon of Bodmin

A checklist for your churchwarden...

Surprisingly for a role that's so ubiquitous in the life of the Anglican Church, churchwardens do not feature heavily in art or literature...

Vicars are commonplace; vergers ten a penny – think Dad's Army and The Vicar of Dibley – but the humble churchwarden is hard to come by. This seems odd considering that churchwardens bear much of the burden of running and maintaining a church, being responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the parish. Perhaps the sheer volume of activities in which they engage makes them unsuitable characters for works of popular fiction?

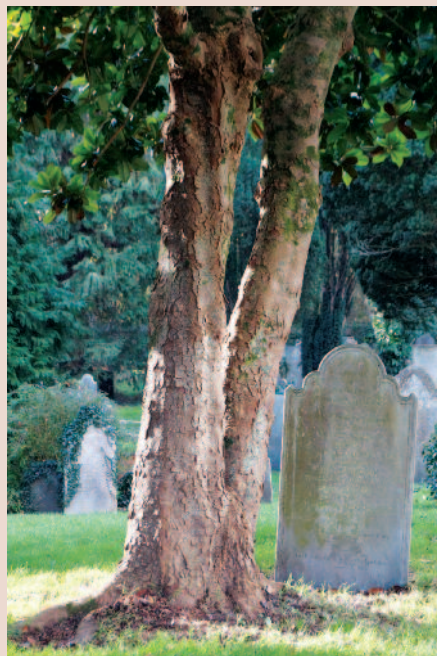
In truth, churchwardens have one of the most varied of roles in the church community. According to one diocese, the churchwarden's enemies are numerous and varied: rising damp, blocked drains and gutters, poor ventilation, faulty wiring, insecure windows and doors, unserviced boilers, slipped slate and crumbling stonework. Quite a list to be going on with.

Although duties differ from parish to parish, the following list of questions, compiled with the help of experts at leading church insurer Ecclesiastical, offers some general guidance on key tasks and responsibilities of these valuable volunteers.

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no', then speak to your churchwarden about what needs to be done.

The church, churchyard and their fabric

1. At the last annual meeting of the PCC, was a report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church presented?



2. (i) Are any essential works for the church building, as noted on the last quinquennial report, in hand or planned?
(ii) Are there proper arrangements in place for routine maintenance and the regular clearance of gutters and downpipes to prevent blockages?
(iii) Are arrangements in hand for proper maintenance of the churchyard?

Presentation and care of church records

3. (i) Are your service book records and registers for burials, baptisms and marriages up-to-date?
(ii) Are you satisfied that all church registers, records and books are in satisfactory condition and properly stored or deposited within the archives?
4. (i) Are you satisfied that external and internal noticeboards are in good order and up-to-date?
(ii) Is the current Table of Parochial Fees displayed clearly in the church?
(iii) Is the Churchyard Directive displayed prominently and publicly?
5. Are you satisfied with arrangements for the care and cleaning of the church's interior, church linen and other ornaments and vessels?
6. Do you have up-to-date church guidebooks available and, if appropriate, are they available in other languages?
7. Is there a logbook for your church and is it up-to-date?
8. Is there a plan of your churchyard and is it up-to-date?

Finances

9. Is all your church insurance up-to-date and does it give you appropriate cover?

Other matters

10. (i) Has your PCC discussed the Equality Act and Health & Safety issues, and has an audit been carried out?
(ii) Do you have a policy and a person(s) with responsibility for the issues?

A guide to the role of the churchwarden is available from the diocese. In addition, there are a number of books available commercially.

Allchurches Trust aims to raise giving to record levels

This January, insurer Ecclesiastical announced it had donated over £23m in 2014 to its charitable owner Allchurches Trust (ATL), a huge sum by any standard. But what is ATL and how does it use its resources to promote the Christian faith?

The charity, founded in 1972, is chaired by Sir Philip Mawer, former Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and previously Secretary General of the General Synod of the Church of England. A career public servant, he remains closely involved with the work of the Church and its clergy.

According to Sir Philip, ATL's role is to support churches and other worthy causes linked to the Christian faith through a programme of financial grants.

Over the last decade, it has donated over

£75m to projects as diverse as church building refurbishments and repairs, creating new facilities for people in need – even helping Anglicans in New Zealand establish a temporary cathedral following the devastating Christchurch earthquake.

In 2014 alone, ATL distributed grants of £9.7m, which went to a wide range of churches, dioceses and cathedrals throughout the British Isles. "ATL's mission is to promote and support the Christian religion," Sir Philip explains. "In broad terms, it does this by contributing financially to

charitable organisations and churches. Every month, we receive over 100 applications for grants, which are considered carefully by our trustees.

"Although the majority of our support goes to the Church of England, grants are also made in response to applications from ecumenical partner churches, church schools and charities. We particularly welcome applications from less well-off parishes and for projects which will benefit mission and help local communities."

Grants to parishes from ATL range in size depending on the scale of the project to be undertaken.

The prospects for ATL's activities are very positive based on Ecclesiastical's commitment to donate £50m during 2014-2016. "This is a hugely commendable ambition," Sir Philip notes. "What this means is that, given Ecclesiastical's solid financial performance and favourable conditions in the insurance market, we hope to be able to increase our giving to the Church to record levels over the coming three years."

For more information or to apply for a grant, visit ATL's website at www.allchurchestrust.co.uk, where full details are available.

St Giles Dell Centre, Ashtead, Surrey

Ashtead is about 15 miles from London, close to the M25 motorway. Faced with an old wooden church hall now well past its sell by date, members of the congregation have set about fundraising for new facilities.

Designs for the new Dell Centre include meeting rooms, a professional kitchen and a host of other facilities which the congregation envisage being used by the whole community. Pre- and after-school clubs, social gatherings, fitness, dance and art classes are all on their agenda, alongside mentoring job seekers, community support and activities for the elderly.

St Aidan's Church, Stobhill, Morpeth

St Aidan's is a modern church located in a deprived area on the outskirts of the market town of Morpeth, Northumberland.

With an outdated hall, the church was desperately in need of more community space. An exciting project was devised, resulting in the sale of the old church hall and the proceeds funding an extension to the church for community use. The new building will house a crèche, holiday clubs, a luncheon club and meeting rooms, and it can also be used to provide extra seating capacity for larger services, concerts and other events in the church.



Home insurance prize draw

Just call us for a quote or let us have your home insurance renewal date and we will enter you into a prize draw to win an iPad for you or your church. You can enter the draw by calling **0800 917 3345** and quote **IPAD15** or go on line at www.ecclesiastical.com/ipad

Top Tip...

If you are planning to support your community, for example, through providing a night shelter, food bank or parish nursing, there are important regulatory issues you need to be aware of. We can help you with free advice to make sure you comply with the regulatory requirements.



Independent Financial Advice

Do you need help with your finances? **Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services** can offer you totally independent financial advice on investments, retirement and protection. They can also help parishes who have funds to invest with their investment strategy. *Please note, the value of investments can fall as well as rise and past performance is not a guide to future performance.*

For more information call: **0800 107 0190** or email getadvice@ecclesiastical.com

Keeping up to date

We hope you are familiar with our Church Matters website which has a wide range of information, guidance and tools you can use to help you look after your church.

All our risk management guidance notes are collected together and sorted into the key categories of security, health and safety, fire, and storms and bad weather. Many customers also now get updates by email – just let us have your email address if you, too, would like to be updated in this way. For further information:

Our website:

www.ecclesiastical.com/church

Customer services:

call **0845 777 3322** or email churches@ecclesiastical.com

Claims:

call **0845 603 8381 (24-hour service)** or email faithclaims@ecclesiastical.com

Our customer service lines are normally open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, except for bank holidays. However, claims can be registered at any time during the day or night.

Did you know?

Here we highlight two features of your Parishguard policy that you may not be aware of.

Consequential loss

Consequential loss cover is included in your Parishguard policy to help offset loss of income if your church has to close for repairs following insured damage that Ecclesiastical is covering under the Property section of your Parishguard policy. You may be able to claim up to £100,000 over a four-year period for loss of income from your normal church activities, such as service collections, income from hirers not being able to use the building and costs such as hiring alternate premises.

Money cover

The prospect of having money stolen by a church official or a volunteer is never an easy one for a church to contemplate, but sadly this is a risk that needs to be addressed.



In the last year there have been a number of court cases involving theft from church funds. For example, in 2014, a deputy church treasurer in the Wirral was found guilty of systematically stealing collection money for over a decade, amounting to almost £20,000.

The good news is that our Parishguard policy offers some protection against the risk of misappropriation. However, in order to meet the conditions of the policy and ensure that a claim can be defended, you will need to provide specific information and make certain that important checks are carried out. For example, regular reconciliations should be carried out of bank statements, cash-in-hand and petty cash, and these checks should be conducted by someone not usually responsible for money, so that thefts cannot be concealed during the reconciliation. **Our website has more information about how to limit the risk of internal fraud.**



Are you in full command of your faculties?

No, I'm not enquiring about the state of your mental and physical powers, but whether you're up to date with the latest developments around repair and alteration to church buildings, writes the Venerable Bill Stuart-White, Archdeacon of Cornwall.



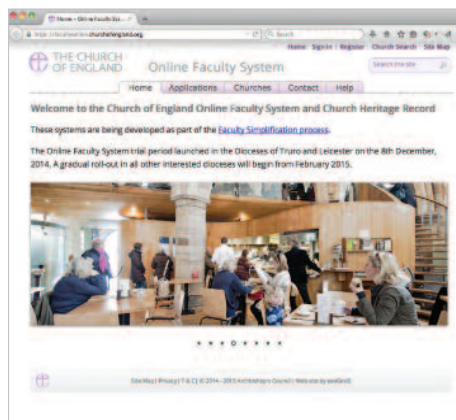
The faculty system may not be every churchwarden's favourite thing, but it is a necessary safeguard to ensure that work done to our churches is of good quality and that alterations are

appropriate. We are all aware the process can be a little cumbersome – but we bring you good news.

As of 8 December 2014, Truro was one of two dioceses acting as 'pilots' for the Church's new online faculty system, which has now been rolled out more widely. The national Church is seeking to modernise and streamline the process and has been working hard to make it available online. This may take a little getting used to, but will prove much simpler, more efficient and less time-consuming in the long run.

Every parish needs to register two users (who may or may not be the churchwardens) who are able to make applications online and follow their progress through every step.

The online faculty system can be found at <http://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/home> and a link is provided from the



Screen shot of online faculty system



Building works, St Bartholomew's Church Lostwithiel

diocesan website. Help with accessing and using the system will be provided by our wonderful DAC Secretary, Sue Thorold, who can also provide a parish 'user guide'.

At the moment the online system can only be used for works that require faculty, but late in 2015 or early in 2016 it will be opened up to minor works and temporary licences for which permission may be granted by your archdeacon. Two lists (imaginatively entitled List A and List B) are being drawn up which will clearly define which works the archdeacons may authorise. Watch out for details in due course.

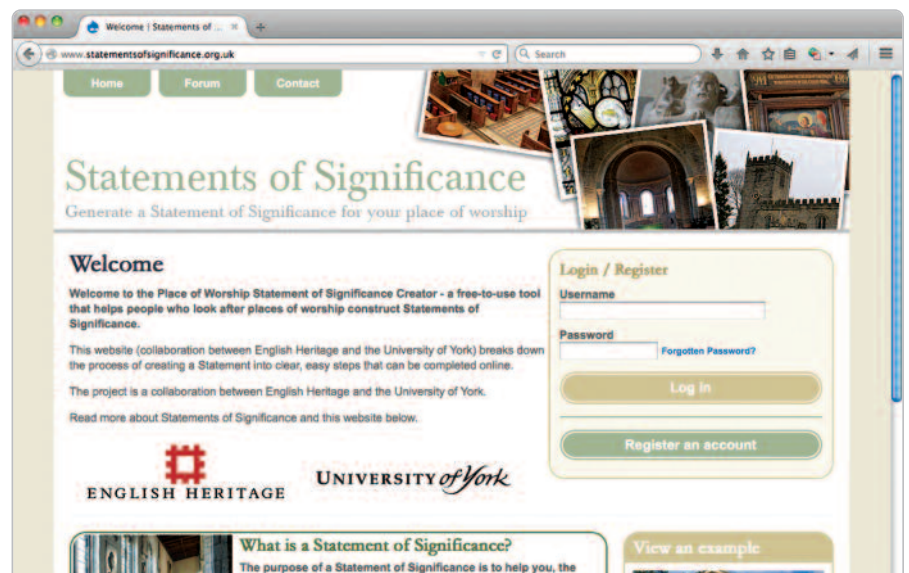
Online help in writing 'Statements of Significance'

A Statement of Significance is a detailed description of the development of a church building and its life, and is a required document for any faculty application. A collaboration between English Heritage and the University of York has resulted in the establishment of a website on Statements of Significance (www.statementsofsignificance.org.uk) intended to help congregations produce them. The website breaks down the process step by step and provides an online tool with which to enter the relevant information.

A Statement of Significance is a factual document, making an objective and informed assessment of the relative merits or 'significance' of aspects or features. These can be physical features or aspects of social or historical significance, such as famous people associated with the building, memorials or events that happened nearby. A Statement of Significance

will help congregations understand and care for their buildings and make informed decisions about any proposed changes. It is also a 'live' document that

should be kept up to date, reflecting not only recent changes or additions but also new discoveries about the building's past.



Bringing the community into your church

The Diocese of Truro joined the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) early in 2015. An initial trial involving three parishes was planned with a view to then rolling it out.

The PGS is a centrally-run, professional system that offers a simple way for people to make regular donations. The PGS enables people to donate to any parish registered with the scheme, and any parish within the diocese is eligible.

Donations are made by direct debit and can be monthly, quarterly or annual. One of the great advantages is that the PGS pre-pays the Gift Aid (if appropriate) before paying the whole amount to the parish.

Through your generous commitment there will be many benefits to the parish. The PGS means the income of the church is less prone to fluctuation when people are away. A steady income makes budgeting and planning easier. Parishioners who join are given the option to increase their contribution annually in line with inflation, which maintains the value of their gift.

For parishioners there are also benefits: they can choose how much they would like to give, regardless of how much they have in their purse or pocket at a service. It is a not-for-profit organisation and the direct debit scheme is the only one of its kind backed by guarantee – so your money is safe. Donors can also choose to remain anonymous.

If you are interested in finding out more or joining the scheme, contact pgs@truro.anglican.org or telephone **01872 360039**.

Churches are a vital part of the UK's national heritage, central to the communities in which they stand. But limiting church use to purely religious purposes is becoming an increasingly outmoded concept as trustees and the clergy seek to increase visitor numbers and make their churches as useful as possible to everyone in the community.

So whether a church is in an urban or rural setting, what can its trustees do to open its doors to local people and turn it into a valuable community space? A good place to start is the *ChurchCare* website (www.churchcare.co.uk), the Church of England's resource for churches across the county. ChurchCare offers guidance on opening up churches and gives examples of the type of uses to which they can be put.

Community shops

In 2010, the Church of England joined forces with Methodists and the United Reform Church to launch new guidance for churches hosting shops within their buildings. Called *Guidelines and Best Practice for the Provision of Community Shops in Churches and Chapels*, the document gives examples of churches that had welcomed shops and explains how they set about the work. St Mary's in Cloughton, Yorkshire, for example, hosts the village's Post Office while St Giles's in Langford, Essex (www.stgileslangford.org.uk) has its own wonderfully-named community shop, *Heavenly Supplies*, which stocks groceries, tinned goods, locally-sourced meats and delicious preserves.



St Mary's Church, Penzance hosts a holiday club for children every summer and puts on a production at the end of the holidays – the last one being 'Fantastic Mr Fox'

Childcare and education

With such a strong tradition of providing education, it should not come as a surprise that many churches become a home to play groups and schools. St Cuthbert's in Copnor, near Portsmouth, split its

original building into three, one of which now houses a pre-school and an annexe of Portsmouth College (www.stcuthbertscentrecopnor.btck.co.uk). In Newcastle, when the council was looking for a site for a new centre to provide free access to computers for residents, the Rev Colin Gough offered the use of his church, St Mary the Virgin in Stannington, which had just undergone a major refurbishment. Now six computers are available in the church's Tower Room, thus giving the church a much higher profile in its village.

Health and fitness

Getting fit and reducing obesity is a major preoccupation of society at large today so churches can offer an ideal space for setting up an exercise facility and reaching out to people who might not usually cross a church's threshold. When the only gymnasium closed in Dulverton on Exmoor, Devon, people were dismayed. But the Rev John Thorogood of All Saints came to the rescue, allowing a 'pop-up gym' to open in the church with circuit classes running five times a week. An example of a more permanent structure is the Marylebone Health Centre, housed in the refurbished crypt of St Marylebone Parish Church in North London. Other churches host drop-in centres for people with a range of medical conditions.

Planning and finances

The possibilities for creating a community space in church, it seems, are huge. The ideas given here are just the tip of the iceberg. But what do churches need to think about in practical terms? If trustees decide that physical changes are needed to make their church more accessible to the community, a number of steps must be taken. First, a *Statement of Significance* must be prepared followed by a *Statement of Needs*. Once these statements are ready, an approach must be made to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). If the DAC is happy with the proposal, then the church can commission an architect to begin work on the plans.

Kevin Thomas from insurer Ecclesiastical says that his company is used to dealing with churches in the process of opening up their buildings and does its level best to accommodate the changes. "We know only too well that it's about maximising community resources and we do our best to work with the church concerned," says Kevin. "We also know that these community spaces can significantly boost a church's income as groups pay for the use of the space."

If you would like information on insurance issues arising from opening up a church to its local community, contact Ecclesiastical on **0845 777 3322**.

Whilst Ecclesiastical has used reasonable endeavours to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct at the time of publication, please note: (a) the information is not intended to constitute a definitive or complete statement of the law on any subject, (b) the information may over the course of time become incorrect or out of date; and (c) neither Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc. nor its subsidiaries can accept any responsibility or liability for action taken or losses suffered as a result of reliance placed on the information provided in this newsletter.