

## Churchwardens Report 2017/18

This past year has been one of change and transition, as we said goodbye to our long serving Rector Ron Corne, who retired to Winchester in September.

Ron's retirement has given the Diocese the opportunity for change in line with Bishop Tim's desire to place more resources in the urban environment. To that end our Benefice of Broughton with Bossington, Houghton and Mottisfont will merge with the Benefice of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford, to form a new Benefice to named The Mid Test Benefice.

Now that all the churchwardens involved, together with the Acting Area Dean, Revd James Pitkin and the Southern Area Mission and Pastoral Committee have agreed the way forward, we all now have the task of recruiting a new incumbent, which will be a Full Time Stipendiary Post, based in the existing Rectory at Stockbridge.

The recruitment process will hopefully commence in September this year with an appointment made before December 2018.

Worship at All Saints has settled into its new pattern of two services per month and happily attendances are good, with the occasional combined benefice service as well as the major festivals, which are well supported.

We are very pleased that many of our services now have bells rung by our team of bellringers led by Bob Gosse which also enhances our festival services and provides an added attraction for potential wedding parties.

We are delighted that we have six weddings arranged for 2018 and with the blessing of Bishop Tim, Ron Corne has agreed to return to officiate.

Extensive repairs to the plasterwork on the west wall and the new flooring where the bellringers stand was completed and we are pleased with the high standard of work. Our thanks to The Friends for their assistance in paying for these repairs and also thanks to Michael Woodhall for arranging and liaising with the tradesman who carried out the work.

A new sound system, incorporating a loop for the hard of hearing was recently successfully installed and we are most grateful for the donation from the estate of Madoan Holmes which made this possible. Also our thanks to David Livermore for his hard work in sourcing and arranging for the system's installation.

We are now investigating the replacement of our ageing overhead heating and lighting, which becomes more difficult to maintain as time passes. Legislation means that sourcing replacement bulbs and fitting them, using the extending ladder becomes increasingly difficult.

We hope to have proposals to put before the PCC soon. We then will address the matter of funding from our own resources and possible use of the village fund from the voltaic scheme donation.

During our interregnum we are most grateful to our Lay Reader Gina Livermore for her untiring devotion in keeping our Church functioning. Providing pastoral care and support throughout the existing Benefice, meeting bereaved families and assisting with their funerals. Also liaising with brides and grooms with their wedding plans and being available for christenings.

Gina also arranges, via the the Registry, for priests to take our communion services and also takes some services herself, as well as arranging the details of services at All Saints.

We are also blessed with Dawn Williams for providing and arranging music for our services, Jill Harding and her team of flower arrangers, Sheryl Williams for the Cleaning Rota and her band of cleaners, Julie Moldon for cleaning the brass and all who play their part in keeping our Church beautiful and functioning.

We also give our special thanks to Garry Hedley for agreeing to be our Acting Treasurer and providing accurate and comprehensive accounts to the PCC whilst also looking after other Parishes in the Benefice.

We thank the Friends of All Saints for their help in providing funds to assist in the refurbishment of the Church and meeting the cost of heating oil and building insurance.

Our thanks also to Bob Marshal for arranging the updating of our Electoral Roll and to Simon and Kate Selwood for editing and producing our Parish Magazine which provides a colourful and interesting means of keeping in touch with village events.

The Churchyard continues to be well cared for by volunteers led by Michael Woodhall and with the grateful assistance of the Parish Council who provide funds for grass cutting.