

**“Seven whole days not one in seven”**

**Inspiring people through worship and word to live out God’s love in their daily lives**



**The Parochial Church Council of Horne, St Mary the Virgin**  
**The Annual Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**  
**for 2024-2025**

**Worship in Church**

2024 was marked by the continuation of the interregnum in the Windmill United Benefice (the Benefice), following Nicholas’ retirement on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Benefice clergy Charles Sargent and Steve Bishop continued working diligently to maintain regular weekly worship in all three Benefice churches up until October 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 when Alan became the incumbent. During the remaining interregnum Steve and Charles continued to preside and preach at most of our Holy Communion services with just a few services for which wardens needed to find visiting clergy. Wardens were delighted to welcome Revd David Weightman who visited us on loan from Oxted Team Ministry. David very much enjoyed worshipping with us here at St Mary’s and we were delighted to welcome him. The wardens are immensely grateful for the ministries of Charles and Steve, their extraordinary guidance and support in worship as we journeyed through the interregnum. On the few Sunday occasions when no clergy were available, wardens Andrew Goudie and Sue Wates led services of Morning Worship and Family Service with Band.

With support from Southwark diocese the Benefice conducted the clergy recruitment process and wardens were delighted to announce in all three churches on Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup>, the successful conclusion and appointment of the Revd Alan Bayes as new Rector to the Benefice.

Alan and his wife Rachel settled into the Rectory in August 2024 and Alan enthusiastically set about getting to know the people and buildings of the Benefice. Alan was licensed by the Ven Moira Astin at a private service on Sunday September 1<sup>st</sup> that permitted him to carry out some duties in the Benefice before becoming incumbent at a wonderful Installation & Induction Service held on Monday September 30<sup>th</sup> 2024 at St Bartholomew, Burstow.

We were delighted to welcome Alan to lead his first service at St Mary the Virgin on Sunday October 6<sup>th</sup> 2024 when he led our Family Service with Band.

Wardens have enjoyed the different styles and various themes of the talks and sermons that Alan, Charles and Steve have given as they share their thoughts and knowledge with us ... they have been uplifting and have provided much food for thought.

Wardens are grateful to Peter Nye who has continued to provide a weekly online service using the sound library, sermons recorded by Alan, Charles and Steve and readings recorded and provided digitally by parishioners.

Andrew and Sue thank Ginette and Peter Nye for the gift and spiritual inspiration of the music and singing that so enriches our worship in this church and the other Churches of the Windmill Benefice. However, there is so much more that they do in addition to directing the choir and enriching our worship with music in church, including leading the Windmill Songmen, giving wonderful organ recitals, tutoring and supporting those preparing for RSCM Awards, mentoring our young choristers as they develop into amazing singers ... they really do go the extra mile and then some! Please read Ginette’s Music Report to gain some insight into the full scope of their generous involvement.”

**Interregnum**

The interregnum road is full of potholes and bumps and many helped to smooth the way to make our journey easier. Wardens thank those who stepped up to take on some of the many administrative tasks that Judith Calver used to undertake. However, there are some tasks that are being looked after on a temporary basis and Alan will be looking for people to take on those tasks for the long term.

The wardens thank Lauma Kazuša and David Spruce who made an excellent job of editing and driving forward the publication of The Windmill United Benefice Profile, an essential Benefice document that was critical to the clergy recruitment process.

David Spruce also stepped forward to organise the Lent Course 2024 for the Benefice and he, Andrew Goudie and Helen Longhurst volunteered to lead some of the Lent Course sessions.

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The committed ministry of so many enabled much of our church life to continue smoothly during the interregnum. ... it is much appreciated and they have the wardens’ grateful thanks.

#### **Duties in Church**

The wardens thank David Spruce for his work to allocate people to the various key duties in our Church each month. Sometimes, it can be difficult to find enough people who are available so if you feel called to take part in one or more of the rota duties please tell Andrew, Sue or David. Ongoing training & guidance is available for readers, organising refreshments, intercessors (leading prayers), minister of Communion (offering the Chalice) and sides people. These are valued roles and you are very welcome to join the duties team. In 2024, we were delighted to welcome Edward Mallorie (sidesperson), Laura Frost (sidesperson and refreshments), John Jaekel (minister of Communion) Steve Longhurst (minister of Communion) and Helen Longhurst (minister of Communion and intercessor).

#### **The Church and Churchyard**

Following the Quinquennial Inspection in June 2020, the work identified in the Architect’s Report remains to be addressed as funding is an issue. Lauma Kazuša, appointed treasurer in June 2024, provided the PCC with a repairs cost estimate in January 2025.

Routine maintenance and inspections at St Mary the Virgin, Horne have been carried out; for example, fire extinguisher and lightning conductor checks, the boiler serviced, oil tank checked, and gutters, downpipes and drains checked and cleared. All remedial work identified has been carried out.

The wardens are grateful to Bozi and Julie Mohacek for continuing their work to maintain the grass and hedges in the churchyard and for generally keeping an eye on things.

Thank you to the regular strimming team for their dedication to keeping things tidy in places that the mowers cannot reach. New team members are always welcome so if you think that you can join the team to help with strimming and/or mowing, please have a word with the wardens or David Spruce. Thank you to the many others who come along unseen to work in the churchyard as and when they are able. We notice when you’ve been and it’s much appreciated.

Our church interior cleaning regime is important as it not only ensures that St Mary’s looks as good as possible but also is a way of regularly inspecting the fabric of St Mary’s to identify items that might need attention and damage that needs repair. Thank you to Suzanne Robinson for organising the cleaning rota and leading the cleaning team. Thank you to the cleaning team who keep the church looking clean and cared for.

Wardens thank Lauma Kazuša who coordinates the flower arrangers at St Mary the Virgin and continues to promote an awareness of important environmental issues when providing flowers in church. At St Mary the Virgin, we discourage the use of floral foam in arrangements as it is harmful to people, flora, fauna and the environment. See link below for more information.

[Not mourning Oasis glory: the environmental impact of church flowers \(churchtimes.co.uk\)](https://www.churchtimes.co.uk)

To celebrate Christmas 2024, Lauma added a wonderful at height Epiphany Star to her display of flying Christmas Angels. Lauma also arranged a new installation for the Christmas Crib under the Altar. It was lovely and looks absolutely stunning when illuminated after dark as anyone who attended the Benefice Christmas Eve Midnight Mass held at St Mary, Horne, will have seen.

Wardens also thank Lauma for making the beautiful new linen altar cloth that has been in place since Christmas 2024.

#### **Horne Parochial School Building**

Wardens arranged routine safety inspections and repairs as required. An electrical safety inspection resulted in expensive remedial work, however, there has been little else that required attention this year.

The eco energy project was completed in 2024 and we look forward to the final step of linking up our solar power generation with the national grid so we can generate some income to offset the church heating costs.

Andrew Goudie and Sue Wates

Joint Churchwardens - St Mary the Virgin, Horne