

# Sandal Magna Annual Report

## 2023

### Home, Hope, Hands



#### Vicar's Report by Revd. Hannah Smith

2023 was my first full year as Vicar of Sandal Magna Parish. I began the year by moving house into the new Vicarage – I am extremely grateful for my home here and for those who helped me move in so smoothly.

We started the year together by looking at generosity and I was blown away by those of you who decided to give more to the Parish – we did not encounter the deficit we had predicted. We also thought about the importance of listening to each other and to God.



Holy Week and Easter have always been very important times for me in my faith so I introduced the idea of a pilgrimage – a number of different ways of engaging with Holy Week in different styles in different venues throughout the week. This was great – and our Passover meal at the Spring was particularly memorable.

It was wonderful to see the love of the community for the Spring this year as they fundraised successfully for a new kitchen. Thank you to all who gave and to the team for all their hard work.

Throughout the year, one of my focuses was to encourage the growth of our 11am service at St. Helen's which is the service that had suffered the most through Covid and the interregnum. It has been great to see that service grow in numbers – both new faces and folks returning who have been away for a while.

We christened my new Vicarage with a parish BBQ and the weather was kind and it was fantastic to welcome so many of you to my new home here. As the year progressed, we saw the Old Vicarage sold. I realise that the Old Vicarage had many special memories for many in the parish and we pray that the new owners settle in well.

We had some new arrivals this year. Our new head at Sandal Castle School, Caroline Butterworth started in September and it has been great to see her settle in and get things moving. We have seen the school come more regularly back into St. Helen's which has been fantastic – and I've had opportunities to lead Collective Worship in school too. (continued over page)

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Vicar's Report by Revd. Hannah Smith - continued

We also appointed Phil Asquith as the youth worker connected to St. Helen's as part of the Every Good Works Project in the autumn. This project has seen youth workers appointed here and at St. Catherine's Belle Vue and St. George's Lupset. Phil started at the very beginning of January 2024 and it's great to have him on board.

We also announced the exciting news that Lizzy Brothwood would be joining us in June 2024 as our curate. Lizzy's husband Matt will be the curate at St. Catherine's and we look forward to welcoming them and their two children to Wakefield.

We also said some sad goodbyes this year – we saw a number of significant people from the parish go to be with Jesus – particularly remembering Paul Brough, John Saville, David Parkin, John Payling, Nancy Heap, David Oughtibridge, Crijnie Butterfield and Sylvia Reed. It was a privilege to take these funerals and to remember the immense good brought to the parish from these faithful lives.

This reminds me to say a massive thank you to all who serve so faithfully in so many areas of church life. I won't try and name the people or even the areas of ministry and mission that are served by you as I will forget someone, but please know I am very grateful – and I know that God sees our service for him, and it is appreciated by many.

During the year, I spent quite a lot of time thinking about long term vision. We had a staff and PCC away day in June where we spoke and prayed about this. I also spent time on my long retreat in prayer around this. I was very excited at the start of 2024 to talk about Home, Hope and Hands and I pray that this vision will have an impact on the life of our church and community for many years to come.

The end of 2023 saw a flurry of Christmas services. Myself and the Asquiths were all very ill with a virus but we struggled through and saw packed churches for a number of services – it was excellent to welcome so many people to hear about Jesus and the wonderful news of his birth.

My first full year at Sandal Magna has been a deep source of joy and I am excited to see what God has done and am expectant at what God will do in the years to come. We know whatever we face he is faithful and that our richest treasure is always found in him.

Please continue in praying with me that we see continue to follow Jesus faithfully and see his kingdom come in this place in large and small ways in the future.

With every blessing,

*Hannah*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Fabric Report

I am very grateful to all who have invested time and money in managing our buildings and land over the past year.

This year it has been a real encouragement to welcome the formation of the Strategic Building Support Team “SBS” for short. The team comprises of Myself, Mark, Andy, and Dom. Our raison d'être is to stop making reactionary fixes to our buildings and instead make interventions that focus on enhancing the ministry of our church. My prayer is that the SBS team will drive change that will see our buildings become more actively used for ministry. If you have any ideas how you feel our objectives could be met, please convey them to any member of the team.

In February 2020 the General Synod agreed a Motion to call upon all parts of the Church of England to work to achieve year-on-year reductions in emissions and urgently examine what would be required to reach net zero emissions by 2030.

For our large estate of buildings to meet the net zero target we need start to plan to move away from burning fossil fuels and focus on more sustainable forms of energy.



Over the next few years, we will be drawing up an exciting plan to decarbonise our buildings. To enact this plan, we will need to massively increase our fund-raising efforts and administration support to allow us to achieve the necessary planning and meet the faculty requirements. If you feel that you have the necessary skills to help achieve the net zero vision, please make yourself known to any members of the SBS team.

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# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Fabric Report continued

### St Helen's:

- The sale of the Vicarage has brought new challenges to parking, storage and the digital sign; which was sold as part of the estate.
- On the upside we have seen the removal of a large tree that was causing the rear of the church to be kept in the shade.
- The font area has been rewired and is now fully functional.
- The Kitchen Shutter motor and control unit has been replaced. This comes after many years where Allen Crossman kept going long past its sell buy date.
- The roofs at St Helens have been sorted, huge thanks to Taylor Roofing.
- After years of asking we finally managed to get permission to install the self-winder on the tower clock, in memory of John and Paul. If you get the chance, it is well worth a visit up the tower to admire the 120-year-old Potts clock craftsmanship blended in with a self-winding electric motor.



As of writing this report I have not received planning permission for the erection of the garden shed at the back of the church from the council. I do not believe we should be waiting much longer. The shed is critically important to protect our gardening volunteers. The shed replaces storage space previously used in the vicarage garage.

The replacement of the digital sign is still ongoing, this has been complicated by the land being included in the sale of the vicarage and the planning department at the council who are proving to be particularly difficult to deal with.

I am very grateful to the tree of life committee who have helped to orchestrate vast improvements to the Tree of Life, and to Mark and "Heppy" who completed much of the ground works.

Following the collapse of a few large tree branches in our grounds we have had a Tree management survey completed, I am told nothing of immediate concern has shown up, however, I still do not have the completed management report.

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# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Fabric Report continued

Outstanding issues still to be addressed are the removal of stained plaster on the office chimney breast, sound system improvements, fixes to stain glass windows, and restoration of the shared dry-stone wall next to Sandal Hall Mews.



### St Paul's:

I would like to make a special shout out to Andy Owen for his help in supporting St Paul's over the past year.

Key improvements are:

- The building is now equipped with super-fast broadband.
- A pane of glass that has been broken for many years has been fixed.

- Taylor roofing will do some roof maintenance for free.

The building is now showing signs of wear and requires a lot of general maintenance. Future works include, a few new windows, soffets, and some electrical work.

### The Spring:

Thanks to our wonderful staff and volunteers the Spring continues to thrive and bless the local community.

- There is now a wonderful new Kitchen at the Spring, this was designed by Cath and Jackie, and installed with the help from Ant, Simon and not forgetting Chris and John who have been amazing.
- The storeroom and the sorting room have been improved.
- The emergency lighting has been upgraded.
- A new sound system is almost up and running.



### Concluding remarks:

There is always work to be done and I am very grateful for everyone who has helped in maintaining our estate of buildings over the last year: roofers (Taylor Roofing and Simon Ives), plumbers (Ant and Ian), heating engineers (Will and Dave), electricians (Unique electrical), Clock specialists (Tom, Eric and Terry) and a special thanks to all the unpaid volunteers who make the ministry of our church possible. If you know of anyone who you think would be willing to help from either a voluntary or professional capacity, please pass me their number.



*Craig Orr (Churchwarden)*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report

## Sandal Magna Parochial Church Council (PCC) Report



A Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the executive committee of a Church of England parish and consists of clergy and churchwardens of the parish, together with representatives of the laity. It is responsible for the financial affairs of the church parish and the maintenance of its assets, such as churches and church halls. It also assists the clergy in the management of church affairs in the parish, promoting the mission of the church.

Your PCC met on six occasions during the year 2023. The APCM was held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023. All meetings began prayerfully and concluded with the saying of The Grace. Reverend Hannah managed and chaired each meeting leading the PCC to consider issues related to the mission and management of the Church. The treasurer led us in considering the budget and proposed financial decisions for the church.



There are 20 members of your PCC who work hard to grapple with documentation, and legislation to ensure the business of the Church is safe and efficient. Individuals take responsibility for the roles of: Treasurer, Health and Safety, Maintenance of the Building, Safeguarding, Secretary. Roles and action groups are appointed as the need arises.

We are thankful to Phil Asquith who served this year on the PCC, leaving to take up his position as youth leader within our Church.

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# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## PCC Report continued

### The PCC received reports from:

Financial team, Mike Keeton -Deanery Synod representative; progress on the sale of the vicarage, the rotary concert: policies including safeguarding, health and safety and financial controls; legal agreement for access to Spring path by a neighbour; works on the Tree of Life; Christmas services; renewal of contract with Portobello Community Forum; SMIB Strategic Mission Investment Board's opportunity to reach young people in the parish subsequently leading to 3 appointments for youth work in our area; Giving; Gifts; Bell ropes; Open Book Initiative, Payaz; all things connected with the church buildings repairs and improvements; links with the school, Pop UK and services held together with the school in church; the Vision Day; Spring Kitchen; Staffing needs.

### The PCC authorised:

New named members of The Standing Committee  
New financial Controls Policy  
Agreed staff pay rises

Appointed a new inspecting architect

Extensive works on the Tree of Life

Improvements to the fabric of the churches

### The PCC approved:

The audited annual accounts for 2023

The Budget for 2023.

Licensing of new Eucharistic Lay Ministers

A plethora of Health & Safety Policies



Your PCC works hard to serve the church & be responsible overseers of the parish finances and welcomes your prayers for decisions made on your behalf. May God be with you in all your activities and give you His blessings.

*Lynne Finn PCC Secretary*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Safeguarding Report

The care and protection of everyone involved in our Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of our Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all. During the past year we have continued to develop our safeguarding processes. Currently we are working through the Diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard which allows us to monitor our safeguarding procedures and ensure that we, as a parish, are compliant with Diocesan requirements. Our parish process continues to ensure that each ministry has an identified lead with responsibility for that area of work, this allows for greater transparency, communication and clarity of purpose.

Ministry leads continue to support me in helping all workers, both paid and voluntary to complete a signed volunteer agreement and personal declaration and where necessary have a DBS check. Thank you, your support is important and really appreciated. We had our first Safeguarding Sunday event in November last year. This gave me the opportunity to talk about what safeguarding means and how we all can work towards having a safe, caring and inclusive parish where everyone can feel valued.

We have some exciting developments in our Safeguarding training programme. We will in the coming months be offering group safeguarding training through the Diocesan training portal to various ministries within the parish. We are starting our programme with The Spring as part of their development days. Those that are happy to complete the training independently will of course have access to the training portal also. Safer recruitment is also an area which we will be reviewing and developing appropriate training opportunities.

The newly formed youth group Hot Chocolate is now up and running and the attendance numbers are growing week on week. My thanks to Phil Asquith for his diligent work ensuring all his volunteers have submitted all the necessary paperwork. It's very reassuring to see such great work with our young people of the parish.

We are well underway with re-opening our Sunday School and Laura has successfully recruited a number of new volunteers. During the coming year we will continue to work through each of our parish ministries to ensure all workers and volunteers are compliant with Diocesan requirements. With the support of Hannah and ministry leads, I will continue to offer support and training, and develop procedures and protocols that help to keep our parish and those who are part of it, safe and well.

*Gerard Kiely-Jones*

*Parish Safeguarding Officer*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Deanery Synod Report



Meeting at Wakefield Cathedral 27/6/23. The speaker was Revd Philip Hobday, Canon Missioner. The subject was 'the role of the Cathedral.' There were group discussions . Conclusion: the Cathedral is a visible presence in the city, a place for civic services, ordinations, local and national commemorations, concerts, visitors and school groups.

Meeting at St Helen's ,Sandal 8/11/23. The speakers were Nick and Vivienne Drayton, 'Christians Against Poverty' (CAP) organisers. They spoke on the aims and objectives of that organisation and its achievements in helping people who have debt problems. Their talk was illustrated by screened videos. CAP is a charity and depends on contributions to enable them to continue their work.

Meeting at the Treacy Hall (Cathedral) 21/2/24. The speaker was David Greenwood-Haigh on 'Fairtrade'. Fairtrade purchasing gives small producers of tropical food products economic prices. The Diocese encourages parishes to use fairtrade products. The next item by Revd David Gerrard, was on the General Synod's policy 'Living in Love and Faith' and its authorisation ,within limits, of church blessings of couples in civil same-sex marriages.

Detailed reports of these meetings have been published in the parish'Newsletters'.

*Mike Keeton (Deanery Synod Representative)*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Churchyard Report

The team of Allan Crossman, Nigel Brook, Mark Buckley, Julian Finn, Julian Gill, Gill Heap, John Hepworth, Alex Hull, David Ross, and (when fit) Les Wilson, have been joined by Helen Lawrence. They have continued to attend on a Wednesday morning. We sadly lost John Saville during the year.

As usual the team chose a "Christmas Tree" from Woolley Edge Christmas Tree Farm and dressed it in Advent.

The team undertook the regular work, including cutting back the various hedges, as well as removal of fallen branches and leaves and clearing up after storm damage to ash and other trees, as well as looking after The Tree of Life, 16 War Graves and the Pilkington fenced area. As a result, the Churchyard now looks tidy. Many thanks to those parishioners who have commented positively on our work, it is much appreciated. Thanks to a kind legacy we were able to purchase 2 new powered mowers.

The snowdrops and daffodils have been glorious again this year. The primulas are now in flower and we await the flowering of the bluebells.



As the vicarage has now been sold, we are hoping for a prefabricated storage shed to be

placed in the area to the rear of the church near the cellar so we can have easier access to the heavy mowing machines previously stored in the rear of the vicarage garage. We await planning permission from WMDC before we can order it.

*Alex Hull and the team.*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Tree of Life Report

This year the P.C.C. decided that it was time to rejuvenate our T.O.L sculpture where cremated ashes are laid to rest. It is now 8 years since we dedicated this beautiful space and it had become a bit overgrown and needed renovation.

We had a generous legacy left to us by the late Janet Crossman for some handrails to assist people on the steps on the way down to the leaves (these can be seen in the photos). There were also other monies available for us to re-employ Yorkshire Resin to repair all the broken and crumbling edges of the sculpture with a metal retaining band that will last for many years. We have entered into an annual maintenance agreement with them to keep the garden looking its best. It was also decided that the individual leaves that had faded over the years would be re-engraved. The Gardening Team have levelled and reseeded with grass the areas that had subsided and become weed infested; they have done a marvellous job despite the atrocious weather over the winter and are to be congratulated on all their hard work that will make our award-winning cremation sculpture garden fit to continue as a beautiful place for parishioners to be laid to rest.

*Neale Clark*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Choir and Organist Report

***'O sing to the Lord .... Alleluia ....  
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful' Psalm 149***

It is a privilege to accompany the choir leading the singing at the 9.30am services of Holy Communion, Morning Prayer and for special occasions - a choir who sing in four-part harmony (soprano, contralto, tenor and base).

Since my last report, we have sung just over 200 different hymns with approximately 50 repeats - selected to reflect the season of the church year, the readings and theme of the service.



In the opening remarks of previous Annual Reviews, I referred to a year of 'highs and lows', 'ups and downs' and 'a year of change'. This year has been no different with the organ deciding to misbehave for several weeks in June 2023. However, a timely donation allowed for the purchase of a replacement amplifier and its installation in the speaker chamber (see photographs). I am grateful to all those who



helped with fault finding and rebuilding the sound system.

Wednesday mornings are 'organ practice' days when I am joined by three very loyal ladies who do a splendid job in keeping the church clean and tidy. 'Trumpet Voluntary' accompanied by vacuum cleaners has never sounded better! This reminds me of the old radio programme 'Music while you work'. It was an incentive to keep factory workers happy in their role hearing the playing of appropriate songs. I hope my contribution goes some way towards that aim.

*John Arnold (Organist)*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Bell Tower Report



On May 6th we joined the National event to “Ring for the King” to celebrate the crowning of King Charles III (can you see him in our group photo, back row, 4th from right?) To introduce our celebration ring, Robert, age 7 who wants to ring when he is big enough, was helped to chime the date by his big brother Eddie.

We have had some highlights in addition to our regular service ringing!

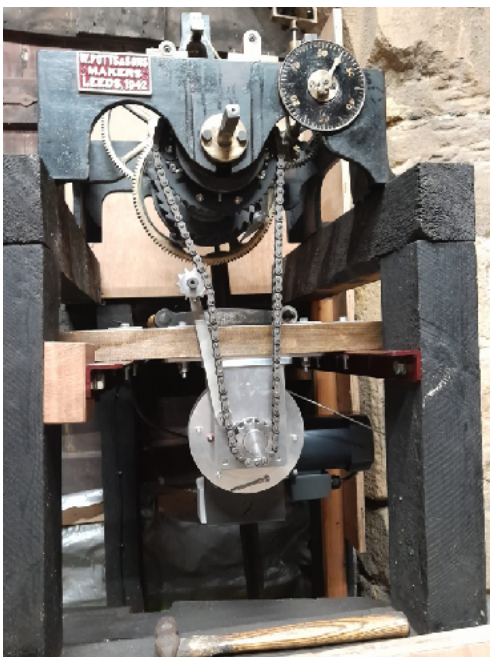
In February we had a group celebration meal at the Wetherby Whaler to welcome Hannah. Also, on 28th our new ropes with green and gold sakis were installed by Jack, Eddie and Shaun.



On October 31st work was, at last, completed on the auto-winding system of our church clock, in memory of John Cutt, a bell-ringer here for 70 years and many years clock-winder, and also Paul Brough, pro-warden. Hurrah! No more manual clock winding twice each week!

We have been joined by Hilary Wood, a new Sandal resident who learned to “Ring for the King” at Wortley, South Yorkshire.

*Margot Cutt*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Report on Music at the 11am Service

The worship group at the 11am Service is growing and transforming as time goes on. We have new people joining to sing and play and it is especially exciting to have some of the young people join us in the various groups, singing and playing.' We are hoping that the number of people who lead elements of the services can also grow as we nurture people from the music group to grow into more leadership roles.

We are also producing a book of 100 songs we will be picking songs from for the 11 am services. There will be printed versions coming as well to use at the less usual services and gatherings where we can't use the screens. We can also introduce some new songs into St Pauls using these songs as well. We are also renewing the screens and sound system in St Helen's later this year which will give us some exciting opportunities to grow this important ministry within the church.

*Phil Asquith*



## Sacristan Report

This year has been spent building up new teams to assist at the Services of Holy Communion at St Helen's and Walton. An appeal was made for anyone interested in serving to come forward and complete a session of training which was run by our Vicar, Hannah Smith. A training presentation was held at St Helen's and there is now an adequate number of parishioners who have completed training and been granted a licence as Communion Assistants. Since September 2023, the pattern of services has increased so that communion is offered every week across the parish. Gluten free wafers

are also available. Many thanks go to all who come early to set the communion table and serve in this way.

*Liv Clark.*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## St. Helen's Women's Fellowship

We are a small group of ladies, meeting on the first Monday of the month, at 10am, in the Emmaus rooms (at the rear of the church) getting together for Fellowship, sometimes having a speaker and always a friendly catch-up over a cuppa and cake ! This year we have, after a (small) fundraising Home Produce Sale, been able to support a couple of charities ; Street Angels and Support Dogs, following their respective speakers enlightening us on their valuable work.

Amongst our other visitors, we have been informed on the Essentials of First Aid, held our traditional Lenten service, 'read' our own Advent themed 'I Wonder What Happened To That Baby' and on a couple of occasions, joined with the Community Games Group.



We have also enjoyed making our small contribution to the efforts of our church 'Flower arrangers' in creating a small display in the porch for Harvest

(Produce then going for use at The Spring Cafe, or to the food bank) and assisting with the Mothering Sunday 'Daffodil Posies'.

So, if you think you might be interested in coming along, do just that and see what we are about ! You'll be sure of a warm welcome, and we would be very happy to see you.

## St Paul's with St Helen's Sandal Magna Mother's Union Report

The branch hold meetings on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:30pm, in the Barnabas rooms at St. Pauls' Walton. Currently there are 17 members in our branch, though many are unable to attend the meetings for health reasons. In addition to branch meetings our branch was also represented at various Episcopal Area and Diocesan events.

*(continued over page)*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## St Paul's with St Helen's Sandal Magna Mother's Union

### 2023

17th April Feedback and business

15th May Speaker Maureen Cummings gave us her talk about Domestic Abuse, Inequality, Poverty, forced marriage, Honour based violence, the Womens' refuge and how there was an increase in cases as a result of the pandemic.

19th June Upcycling craft (Made an angel from a mans tie and doilies).

23rd June A meal out at the White Horse, Sharlston.

17th July Beetle Drive Fundraiser raising £133 for AFIA (Away from it all holidays).

9th August Two members were invited to the Mary Sumner day service at Ryhill, followed by afternoon tea and entertainment.

21st August Afternoon Tea Fundraiser, raising £576 for the MU Summer of hope appeal.

18th September Speaker Sheila Wainwright about her fundraising and robotic ats for dementia sufferers.

22nd September Two members attended the Annual Gathering at York Barbican Centre and the Minster.

16th October Speaker Dick Davis from the City of Sanctuary.

20th November Feedback and business.

11th December Christmas celebration and worship.

### 2024

10th January Wave of prayer. Members did this at home as many had commitments preventing attendance.

15th January: Branch AGM.

19th February: Talk by Debbie Wainwright about Art with a Christian theme.

9th March: Preparation of Flowers for Mothering Sunday.

18th March Mission Aviation Fellowship Speaker.

Thursday 21st March Wakefield Episcopal Area meeting 12pm at St. James, Ryhill.

In addition, some of our members attended the Cathedral for midday prayers on the first Friday of each month, taking our turn in leading the prayers. Midday prayers are sent out by email or printed sheet to branch members enabling each one of us to take part daily.

Pat Schofield is the Diocesan Area members rep and Teddy Foster is the MU Enterprises Rep for the Wakefield Episcopal area.

Throughout the year our faithful members have given their time and monetary donations to support our charitable work in the Branch, UK and Northern Ireland, Overseas, for AFIA, Summer of hope appeal, Hospital Toiletry bags, and lots of knitting and other goods distributed according to local need.

*Catherine Tweedle*





# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## In silence, Contemplative Prayer Report

This group has been meeting in the Barnabas Room once a month on the second Thursday of the month from 2pm-3pm for 2-3 years. I was initially introduced to this way of Silent Guided Prayer about 15 years ago. It is a form of meditation, relaxing & healing.

I was introduced to this method through the Fellowship of Contemplative Prayer a fellowship started in the post WW11 period by an Anglican vicar who began a prayer group to help people suffering from the trauma of the war. About 5 clergy men prayed in this meditative/contemplative way. Members of their congregations wanted to be part of this prayer group & so the FCP grew. Meditation was definitely not a prominent feature of the C/E in 1948/9. Our sessions follow the same FCP format.

\*How the meeting goes The exercises or sessions last one hour divided into three sections of twenty minutes. The leader is the only speaker except in part three. These sessions can be described as 1 Head 2 Heart 3 Hands.

We begin by consciously relaxing physically. Entering silence slowly. Distractions fade; are put aside. We then listen to God's invitation to us in Matthew 11:28 where Jesus reminds us that we find rest in him and then the leader tells us the saying or verse we are contemplating. It is most often a Dominical saying—The "I am" sayings of Jesus are used both from the Old & New Testament. In the 1st Silence of 5—10 minutes we take the saying into our minds---repeating internally like a mantra the words.

After a few words from the leader we carry on into the 2nd silence where we take the saying deep into ourselves ie What is Jesus saying to ME through this word. 2nd silence is from 5--15 minutes. The 3rd 'Silence' we use to channel this saying to those we want to pray for. Only the name of the person or situation is said & then the saying is repeated.\*



There is tea/biscuits after & time for chat if wished. The prayers cover personal & world events. There are a group of approx. 5—8 people each time but anyone is welcome. Below are some comments from people who attend the group.

*Sue Davies*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## In silence, continued

### Comments from In Silence participants

*I have attended the In Silence meetings for 2 years. The purveyance of God's peace can be felt. It feels like God is leading his sheep to the green pastures to be fed & to be refreshed in His living waters. It recalibrates & restores my soul*

*It is very interesting that becoming as relaxed as possible & emptying your mind to take in one part of one verse from the Bible, is easier when being part of a small group than when I am on my own. You forget about those around you & just concentrate on a few very helpful words. Sue always has it prepared well & we are grateful to her.*

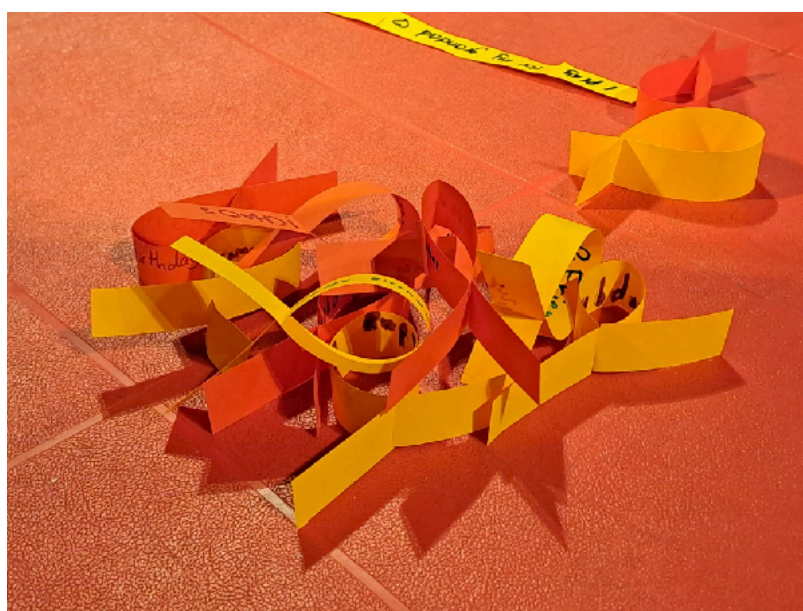
## Shield Report

SHIELD feels as though it has gone from strength to strength this year. It has been great to welcome Phil, Joshua and Jacob to the SHIELD team. Having more leaders allows for more support, discussion and relationship building with the young people. We currently have 13 young people who attend from year 7 to 12. We look forward to new members joining at the end of the summer term who will be moving on to high school in September.

We have fun, food, games, Bible study and prayer. We pray we can continue to enable the young people to explore their own personal faith in Jesus; to know how loved and accepted they are by Him, just as they are; and to support one another to grow in our faith.

The photograph is of the prayers from a recent SHIELD group. We had fish and chips and talked about when Jesus appeared to his disciples on the beach and cooked them fish. The prayers are steps of paper written on and shaped into fish.

*Rachel Chapman (Youth Leader)*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Children's Ministry Report

St Helen's kids' church has experienced an increased growth and engagement over the last year, which is brilliant! Our aim has been to create an interactive environment where children can feel valued and confident to participate actively in their own faith journey. Our wonderful kids' team have made efforts to make everyone feel welcome and have encouraged engaged in interactive prayer, reflection, and discussions.

Every Sunday we have provided activities that have given children the opportunity to pray and wonder about the stories of Jesus. To share their thoughts and ideas freely through open discussions in a supportive environment. From fun games, creative crafts to themed word searches, which results in everyone becoming competitive! Kids' church has a sense of community and has built up fellowship among us all. During the Easter season, we used a "Godly Play" approach, using objects to bring the stories of the resurrection to life. This interactive session helped the children's imagination and deepened their understanding of the Easter message.

Our dedicated team of volunteers play a crucial role in the success of Children's Church. Their commitment, creativity, and passion for working with the children creates a fun nurturing environment for everyone. I am incredibly grateful for their contributions and recognise them as invaluable members of St Helens Children's Ministry. A big thank you to you all!

*Laura Truter*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Every Good Work Youth Project Report

We have started the Hot Chocolate club sat the Portobello Community Centre which runs on a Monday evening and young people are coming and getting involved in the activities there which is good. Some of these young people are people we have come into contact with through the work of the CROSS project in school. I am spending time in Thomas a Becketts on a Thursday and Kettlethorpe on a Friday. This is for the lunchtime clubs at those schools and I am also working with the Cross club to provide RE lessons in the schools and teaching the Gospel from a position of faith rather than simply an academic subject.

Work is also being done outside the Parish at St Swithun's and St George's with new youth clubs starting there since Christmas and lessons in Cathedral High School and City Fields School.



Later on in the year, we will be working with these young people on social action projects and using these 'good works' to exemplify and teach the gospel.

This is an exciting year to really begin engaging with the young people in the parish and area of Wakefield.



Phil Asquith

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Christians Against Poverty Report

Over the past year Nick's ongoing health problems have meant Vivienne has had plenty to do, making visits while Nick mostly works from home.

The abolition of the Debt Relief Order fee in the March budget was very welcome. Four of our clients have become debt free with a DRO, and five others are in the process of doing so. CAP have streamlined the process and the wait for approval of a DRO application is now much shorter. A problem, however, is that, following debt write-off, if one's income is insufficient, debt may well recur, and this situation is all too frequent in the current climate.



Eleven other clients are currently working with us, either following a debt repayment plan or awaiting their own route out of debt, and for a further six the service we offer was not appropriate. Two have started attending church since working with CAP.

The Shield youth group lent their muscle and assembled 22 hampers, to which church members contributed, and which were delivered to clients at Christmas. A CAP Money course was run at the Spring by Cath Moxham, and Vivienne attended. Mick, our Community Links Coordinator, gave talks in other churches to generate support. We spoke at the Deanery Synod meeting held at St. Helen's, which sparked some interest and we hope to recruit a new befriender as a result. Our volunteer befrienders are essential to what we do: we are extremely grateful to them, and try to get together together every few months for lunch, prayer and a bit of training.

*Nick and Vivienne Drayton (CAP Debt Centre Managers)*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## The Spring Report

**Introduction** - Preparing our report for the APCM, always bring us that opportunity to pause and reflect on the year that has passed and I am always so grateful for that – to sit, be still and reflect on what God has done with The Spring and its army of volunteers and staff team over the last 365 days. Too often I find myself onto “the next thing” and don’t have time to enjoy the present so here goes.



The Spring Ready for the Coronation

**Fellowship & Fundraising** – we are always blessed to start the year with our Volunteers Tea Party, a joyous affair in 2023 enjoyed by

over 70 volunteers and a real opportunity to catch up with folk who work on different days and to introduce our new volunteers to one another.

**Knit and Knatter** continues to thrive under the guidance of Liz Parker – and it has been lovely to welcome new members in 2023 and watch friendships bloom and grow.

We also in began in 2023 a regular monthly sing-a-long, hosted by Dr Bob and our very own Peter Maxwell – who as well as spreading joy to so many through song are also raising much needed funds for Wakefield Hospice. Do pop the dates in your diary for this year – its always the last Tuesday of the Month.

On a theme of firsts – Reverend Hannah hosted a Passover Supper for the first time at The Spring on Maundy Thursday, a thoroughly engrossing event which also raised £800 for The Cross Project.

**Our Fundraising** has been constant throughout the year – and this year we have been able to support with regular giving to Christians Against Poverty and The Cross Project. In addition to our regular giving, we have also staged several fundraising events for – Christian Aid Lent Lunches, Macmillan Coffee Morning, Breast Cancer Now, Tearfund, Kaiju Martial Arts, and DEC Ukraine.

**Our Spring Craft Fayre**, which started in 2022, became a whole weekend in 2023 and received great feedback from exhibitors and visitors alike and raised funds towards the Spring - look out for 2024 dates in our Newsletters.

(continued over page)

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## The Spring Report continued

### Our Buildings -

We began the year with a new Wash up area, and whilst we didn't quite run to time the result was amazing – and the transformation well received by everyone. It has been quite the year for makeovers – and our biggest transformation to date was when we installed our new kitchen in September. Whilst it was an extremely stressful period the result was, and continues to be, nothing short of miraculous. Like most builds we did overspend but the result was a kitchen fit for purpose that will see us into our next season and beyond – thank you to everyone who contributed in so many different ways and raised a staggering £ 17, 166.00. A huge thanks to CJ Heaton Joinery for bringing it all together and of course Craig Orr who continues to be such a support in maintaining our Spring Buildings.

### Our Team –

we saw some new faces in 2023 as we welcomed two previous volunteers onto the Kitchen Staff Team, Carol Watson who came on board to



cover for Joyce and Cathy Royle, who has been volunteering in the Shop for several years previously but who joined the Kitchen team following a very busy Summer.

Serving is at the heart of our mission here and we pray that through God's Grace we will continue to do so throughout the coming year.

It just remains for me to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone on my staff team – Margaret Wilson, Jane Nolan, Jackie Gabriel, Jean Watts, Carol Watson and Cathy Royle, my Directors Craig Orr, Brian Pratt and Reverend Hannah and of course, without whom we would cease to be, our beloved and faithful volunteers, all 82 of them!!

*Cath Moxham (Manager at The Spring)*

# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Portobello Community Forum Report

Portobello Community Centre continues to serve as a vibrant hub of activity for its community and surrounding areas. Throughout the year 2024, numerous programs and initiatives have been successfully implemented, fostering community engagement and support. Here's a comprehensive overview of the highlights:

### Staffing:

Sarah Cutts, employed for 17 hours per week, and Laura Truter, working 4 hours per week, continue to play crucial roles in the operation and management of the centre.

### Funded Activities

Thanks to a generous grant of £15k from Wakefield Council Culture Grants, Portobello Community Centre was able to offer a diverse range of activities accessible to members of the Wakefield District at an affordable price.- These activities include Sewcial Sewing Club, Kung Fu, Portobello Toddler Group, Yoga, Sewcial Knitters and Modellers, Zumba, Trinity Modelling Group, Community Meal - cooking on a budget, Evening Sewcial Sewing Club, Henna Design Course, and Dorset Button Making Course.

### Regular Group Meetings:

Various community groups, such as Hot Chocolate Youth Club, Craft and Photography Group, Portobello Drop-In Alcoholics

Anonymous, Strong Tower Christian Centre, and The African Utd Society, continue to meet regularly, promoting social cohesion and support within the community.



### TLG Make Lunch Club

The TLG Holiday Lunch Club, held during every school holiday, has witnessed increasing popularity, with families returning each holiday for a hot meal and engaging activities.

### Portobello Gala

Despite adverse weather conditions, the 3rd Portobello Gala was successfully held, relocating to the Community Centre and Rainbow Hub. The event featured stalls run by Portobello Community Groups, along with

entertainment such as animals, drummers, and music. The presence of local leaders, including the Mayor, MP, and Councillors, highlighted the significance of the event, and the resilience of the community was evident. *(continued on next page)*



# Sandal Magna Annual Report



## Portobello Community Forum Report continued

### Funding

The centre successfully obtained various grants, including funding for Sarah's Me & Menopause training, Nova & Prosper Core Funding for a new boiler, lighting and some salary costs, Wakefield Council Culture Grant for activities, Wakefield Council Climate Grant for solar panels and a battery storage, and Wakefield Council Culture Grant for the Sow, Grow & Know Project. These grants have significantly contributed to the enhancement of the centre's facilities and offerings.

### Future Plans

Exciting plans for the upcoming year include expanding activities at the Portobello Gala and applying for Sports England funding to introduce family sports activities, further enriching the community's experience.

### Hardship Fund and Christmas Blessings

The centre's commitment to supporting families in need was demonstrated through the Hardship Fund, which blessed 17 families with over £1,300, and the Christmas Fund, which provided vouchers and utility assistance to a total of 34 families.

### Acknowledgment and Thanks

The dedication and support of volunteers and trustees are acknowledged and appreciated, as they continue to play a pivotal role in the success and operation of Portobello Community Centre. In conclusion, Portobello Community Centre has had a successful year, marked by a diverse range of activities, community support initiatives, and successful funding acquisitions. The centre remains committed to serving its community and looks forward to further growth and development in the coming year.

*Sarah Cutts (Portobello Community Centre Manager)*

