

St Swithun's, Hither Green

Annual Report 2020-2021

APCM

April 25th 2021



**Faith, hope and love
in Hither Green**

ST SWITHUN'S APCM 2021 AGENDA

To be held on Sunday 25th April 2021 at 11am in the Church with appropriate distancing measures and via Zoom

THE MEETING OF PARISHIONERS ALSO KNOWN AS THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

AGENDA

1. Chair's opening statement
2. Minutes of the previous annual vestry meeting - October 18th 2020
3. Nominations for churchwardens
(to be submitted before the meeting)
4. Vote – only required if there are more applicants than posts available.
5. Meeting closes

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday October 18th 2020
3. Matters arising from above Minutes
4. *The following represent mandatory agenda items as required by the Church Representation Rules:*
5. The Electoral Roll Officer's Report
6. Report on the Proceedings of the PCC 2020 – 2021: Mother Juliet and PCC Secretary
7. Financial Statement to 31st December 2020
8. Treasurer's report
9. Fabric Report
10. Deanery Synod Representatives' Report

The following are matters of parochial or general church interest:

1. Mother Juliet's report
2. Church Warden's report
3. Safeguarding report
4. St Swithun's Sunday school report
5. Panto Report
6. Foodbank Report

Elections and appointments

Other matters

St Swithun's Parochial Church Council

Annual Vestry Meeting-Sunday 18th October 2020

The meeting commenced at 11:30 and there were 16 attendees, including Mother Juliet Evans (Chair) who opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2019: Checked and approved.
2. Matters Arising: None
3. Church Warden:
Diane Keen unanimously elected for another term as Church Warden.

Meeting closed at 11:35

St Swithun's Parochial Church Council

Annual Parochial Council Meeting-Sunday 18th October 2020

. The meeting commenced at 11:36

1. Apologies: Karen Watson, Maureen Blackwood and Catherine Thomas.
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2019: Checked and approved.
3. Matters Arising: None

Reports: The following reports were presented and discussed.

4. Electoral Roll: Diane Keen advised that there are 109 members.
5. Report on the Proceedings of the PCC 2019-2020: Report presented and accepted. Mother Juliet thanked Angela Nelson for her role as secretary.
6. Financial Statement to 31st December 2019: Report presented and accepted. Nick Cooper advised that the church finance is currently in a stable position. Mother Juliet thanked Nick Cooper for his role as Treasurer.

Richard Evans proposed to adopt accounts.

Proposed by Richard Evans and seconded by Diane Keen.

Unanimous decision by all present.

7. Treasurer's Report: Report presented and accepted. Mother Juliet thanked Nick Cooper for preparing report.
8. Fabric Report: Report presented and accepted. Mother Juliet thanked Diane for preparing report.
9. Deanery Synod Report: Report presented and accepted. Patricia Francis, Carl Carter, and Diane Keen thanked for their roles as Deanery Synod Reps.
10. Mother Juliet Evans's Report: Report presented and accepted. Mother Juliet focused on Barbara Noel who passed away in February 2020 and recognised her contribution to the church and involvement.
11. Church Warden's Report: Report presented and accepted. Diane Keen thanked for her role as Churchwarden.

12. Hall Manager's Report: Report presented and accepted.
Sean Hopkins thanked for his role as hall manager.
13. Safeguarding Report: Report presented and accepted.
Olivia Daley and Patricia Francis thanked for their roles as Safeguarding Officers.
14. Report on Sunday School: Report presented and accepted.
Izzy Warren thanked for her role as Sunday School Lead and preparing report.
15. Traidcraft Report: Report presented and accepted.
Martin Passande thanked for his report.
16. Election of 4 representatives of the laity to PCC: Pamela Blackwood, Olivia Daley, Rosamund Kissi-Debrah and Karen Watson
17. Appointment of Sidespeople: Current Welcomers to continue in their role.
18. Appointment of Deanery Synod Reps: Patricia Francis and Diane Keen.
19. Appointment of Church Warden: Diane Keen.
20. AOB: Mother Juliet proposed that St Swithun's have two Licensed Readers on a permanent basis - Richard Evans and Leon Clarke.

Proposed by Mother Juliet and seconded by Angela Nelson
Unanimous decision by all present.

Meeting concluded at 11:58 in memory of Barbara Noel.

MANDATORY REPORTS

Electoral Roll Officer's Report

What can be said of this particular year that has not already been uttered? Not much, yet despite not being allowed into church for most of it, we managed to increase our number so the figure on the roll has risen to 113. I know that most of our congregation have registered for this and I ask that anyone whose name is not on the roll to sign the necessary form so that we can show our church family is growing.

Diane Keen, Interim Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC is made up of Licensed Clergy: Mother Juliet Evans and Frances Nestor, elected lay representatives: Olivia Daley, Karen Watson, Maureen Blackwood, Pamela Blackwood, Claire Cooper, Enita Smart, Rosamund Kissi-Debrah, and Sean Hopkins.

Elected lay representatives of Deanery Synod: Patricia Frances and Diane Keen.

Churchwarden: Diane Keen

Treasurer: Nick Cooper

Licensed Readers: Richard Evans and Leon Clarke

Secretary: Angela Nelson

Claire Cooper has reached the end of her term as a lay representative. The PCC met twice, 25th November 2020 inside the church and 4th March 2021 via zoom. The main topic of discussion involved the setting up of a nursery in the hall which would bring in regular income for the church.

The PCC welcomed Pamela Blackwood who was elected on 18th October 2020 as a representative of the laity.

It is with deep regret we lost a member of the St Swithun's Church family, Carl Carter who passed away in February 2021. Carl had been part of the St Swithun's family for many years and during his time had been involved in many activities within the church, he was a lay representative of the Deanery Synod up to October 2020 and the Lead for the Welcomers'. Carl will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Angela Nelson, PCC Secretary

Finance State of Affairs – 31st December 2020

ST SWITHUNS CHURCH

General Fund Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31 December 2020

<u>31-Dec-19</u>		<u>31-Dec-20</u>		
Net		Net	Receipts	Payments
£				
GENERAL INCOME				
Giving				
4,758.47	Open Giving including weddings and funerals	2,874.81	2,874.81	
6,816.23	Planned giving envelopes	6,443.00	6,443.00	
8,201.96	Gift Aid envelopes	5,221.40	5,221.40	
13,784.00	Gift Aid Standing Orders	14,950.00	14,950.00	
9,144.91	Tax Recovered on givings	1,189.56	1,189.56	
42,705.57	Total Giving Income	30,678.77	30,678.77	
OTHER INCOME				
9,181.72	Donations and grants	1,773.35	1,773.35	
704.57	Fund raising general activities	0.00	0.00	
2,836.17	Sundry income	61.28	61.28	

1,516.00	Fees	2,825.00	2825.00	
0.00	Bank Interest	0.00		
1,154.66	Restricted	-300.00	0.00	-300.00
15,393.12	Total Other Income	4,359.63	4,659.63	-300.00
58,098.69	TOTAL INCOME	35,038.40	35,338.40	-300.00

GENERAL EXPENDITURE

-9,000.00	Parish Support Fund	-12,000.00		-12,000.00
-650.00	Payment towards quota arrears	0.00		0.00
0.00	Loan Repayment	-600.00		-600.00
-470.74	Altar supplies	-866.42		-866.42
-6,044.62	Music	-2,050.00		-2,050.00
-1,623.31	Organ and piano maintenance	-259.51		-259.51
0.00	Vicar's expenses	0.00		0.00
-1,383.54	Office expenses	-1,698.74		-1,698.74
-1,087.05	Other expenses	-163.44	0	-163.44
-20,259.26	Total general expenditure	-17,638.11	0.00	-17,638.11

37,839.43	GENERAL SURPLUS	17,400.29	35,338.40	-17,938.11
	TRADING			
33.65	Traidcraft	162.86	341.00	-178.14
	Church events	1,246.17	1246.17	0.00
-5,890.15	Hall, Vestry & Kitchen Lettings	3,461.06	4,900.00	-1,438.94
-10,345.53	Salaries	-9,165.31	2633.63	-11,798.94
-5,511.04	Building maintenance, admin & gardening	-10,409.30		-10,409.30
-9,997.79	Gas/Electricity/Water	-3,874.61		-3,874.61
-6,920.90	Insurance	-6,899.22		-6,899.22
-38,631.76	DEFICIT ON TRADING	-25,478.35	9,120.80	-34,599.15
-792.33	NET PROFIT FOR THE YEAR	-8,078.06	44,459.20	-52,537.26

ST SWITHUN'S CHURCH

Movement on funds for the year ended 31st December 2020

Type	Fund	01/01/20 20	Receipts	Payments	31/12/20 20
General	Parish activities	10,481.67	36,925.57	38,999.38	8,407.86
General	Hall and events	2,427.66	7,533.63	13,237.88	-
General	General Fund	3,364.00			3,364.00
Restricted	Children's General Fund	3,186.00			3,186.00
Restricted	Fabric Fund	306.00			306.00
Discretionary	War memorial	120.00			120.00
Discretionary	Golden Oldies/Diamond Days	1,983.00		300.00	1,683.00
Restricted	Building restoration	6,993.00			6,993.00
<u>Special collections:</u>					
Restricted	Christingle - Children's Society	298.00			298.00
Restricted	Kneelers	920.00			920.00
Restricted	Farming Africa (Harvest)	171.00			171.00
		30,250.33	44,459.20	52,537.26	22,172.27

ST SWITHUN'S CHURCH

Statement of Affairs as at 31 December 2020

		FUND
INVESTMENT ASSETS		
Land and hall	364,912	Unrestricted
CASH FUNDS		
CCLA	0.83	Restricted
CCLA	244.52	Restricted
CCLA - Centenary fund	579.38	Restricted
Natwest bank [less o/s cheques]	24,036.22	Restricted
	<u>24,860.95</u>	

LIABILITIES

Diocese of
Southwark:

Long term restoration loan	121,637 *	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2005/2006/20 07	23,447	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2008	3,942	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2009	4,444	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2010	4,787	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2011	4,066	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2012	6,671	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2013	9,598	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2014	10,894	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2015	4,987	Unrestricted
Quota arrears - 2016	5,000	Unrestricted

**TOTAL
LIABILITIES**

199,473

* Previous outstanding loan amount of £364,912 reduced by £121,637 (one-third) per year for three years in exchange for increased Quota payments and transfer to Diocese of land at rear of Vicarage.

Treasurer's Report

As was to be expected in light of the ongoing Pandemic, in the last year our General and Other Income has decreased from £58,099 to £35,038 – an decrease of 40% or £23,060. This does include £1,190 recovered tax from Gift Aid, as well as other Giving and Donations. Most sources of Income have decreased, including an decrease of 12% in all forms of Giving, an decrease of 8% of Regular Giving, and 8% of Gift Aid specifically. Just under three-quarters of the latter are now by Standing Order, an increased on the two-thirds a year ago.

The £1,190 Gift Aid refund was only a partial one, submitted later in the year, so we can anticipate more in 2021, not least because we can now reclaim an additional amount of Tax on *non*-Gift Aid Giving and Donations.

The need to encourage new fundraising initiatives remains an ongoing and vital challenge for the PCC in 2020.

General Expenditure has fallen by 13% or £2,621, but as previously there were significant changes in specific sub-categories. In line with our previous agreement with the Diocese, we again substantially increased our payments to

the Parish Support Fund (Quota) by £3,000, from £9,000 to £12,000.

In contrast, spending on Music, Organ & Piano Maintenance , and Other Expenses combined has decreased by just under £6,300, while spending on Altar Supplies and Office Expenses increased by £711 overall.

Inevitably, income from Hall Hirings has again fallen, from just under £17,000 in 2019 to just under £5,000 in 2019. However, hall expenses (not including salary) were reduced to just under £1,450. Salary was offset by HMRC Furlough Payments, and taking into account the Redundancy payment, Hall Losses were just over £5,700 overall.

Last year's Traidcraft profits increased from just under £34 to £163, although this does not include an outstanding invoice that was not paid until early 2021.

As stated previously, the cause is a worthy one, and it may be considered that supporting it is more important than profiting, anyway.

We have seen a 61% decrease in the cost of Utilities, and there was a very marginal decrease of 0.3% in Insurance costs. As expected, Building Maintenance, Admin, and Gardening expenditure has been substantially increased from £5,511 to £10,409 due to major work being done on the drains.

Naturally thanks should be extended to all those who support the various aspects of the financial management of St Swithun's, as well as those who contribute in various

capacities to the raising of funds from all sources throughout the year.

Nick Cooper, Treasurer

Fabric Report

The year started well.

With the help of Joseph, two pews were repaired. The wood from the base had fallen off over the years and put in a box so we retrieved the short panels and put them back.

I bought some more wood so we could repair not only more pews but also the floor of the balcony which was originally the choir loft.

Then the pandemic took hold and we had to close the church. No one was allowed in not even key holders. So, deal with what could be done.

The repair list was long so, as this next job was something I could not do, I called in the experts to clear the rainwear. Near the front door, there is a downpipe and as your eyes follow it up to the roof, you see a box-like structure at the top of it. This is called a hopper, a place where two different pipes meet. This was blocked and people had a shower before they entered the Church. Job done.

Something else needed attention - the drains. Now, as you may or may not know, the repair of these had been delayed for some considerable time (about 15 years) and had to be done now. Someone had filled the pipes with concrete so instead of the water flowing away, we flooded. During some of the wettest days of the year, the men removed a section of the driveway, dug through the rich Kent clay (getting covered in it themselves) and replaced the heavy pipes. They even put in a new section by the Crypt door where, as some of us know, you had to wade through a deep puddle to get to the heating system. They filled in the hole and topped it off with concrete, but they had to come back and redo that part as the torrential rain caused a bit of sinkage. Three long, wet days to complete with a further day to repour the concrete.

The Hall roof has also had some maintenance. Tiles removed and replaced; gutter sealed at the join with a replacement bracket on the end section. Hopper halfway up the back wall of the Church cleared of debris but we found later the top section of the pipe was full and when the men came back to fix it, they found things in the pipe that shouldn't be there. Now it functions properly! Another part of the church roof needed some tiles reaffixed and the box gulley cleared. Photos taken before and after each job then put in the logbook.

There were some high winds which caused a bit of damage to the support of the iron gate at the Hither Green Lane end of the North path. I've propped the gate up and when the weather clears up a bit, I can deal with the repair work.

Diane Keen, Churchwarden

Deanery Synod Representatives' Report

The Deanery Synod met two times in 2020 – one at St Peter's Church and the other via Zoom – Covid having disrupted the usual meeting program.

At the February meeting in St Peter's, the theme of pilgrimage was discussed – different ways to journey both near and far were laid out for consideration and discussion – such as parish trips to the Camino in Spain, Taizé with young people from Trinity, UK pilgrimage sites such as Canterbury and local prayer walks such as the one we undertook with The Good Shepherd and St Peter's on Ascension Day in the previous year. We were encouraged to undertake pilgrimage in the ways that our parishes could afford with their resources.

At the November meeting the Lay Chair Jennifer Henry was elected – and the Lay Secretary: Laurie Roberts. We also approved the new Deanery Synod Constitution.

The Deanery Synod discussed how the new proposal of a Deanery Leadership team might work – the emphasis being on practical support and collaborative strategising amongst local parishes – for example considering post-covid issues of concern, setting up things like a deanery churchwarden or administrator WhatsApp group, joining forces on things like enquirer’s courses, learning together about such things as Black Lives Matter and Living in Love and Faith.

Diane Keen and Patricia Francis, Deanery Synod Representatives

PARISH REPORTS

Report from the Priest-in-Charge

This has been an incredibly unusual, challenging and yet at times joyful year in St Swithun’s. In March the COVID pandemic took our worship out of the church building and we have worshipped together in Spirit online in various ways. We used audio recordings, booklet deliveries, website resources, live stream via YouTube and Zoom worship and when we have been in the church building we have had heightened precautions in line with government guidance – smaller numbers, shorter services, little or no singing, physical distancing and lots of cleaning.

One of our absolute heroes in this time has been Susan Hutton who delivered booklets far and wide – on foot and on her bike to ensure we could keep in touch with all of our church family, especially those without technology (realising that wifi has become a necessity for most of us in these COVID times).

Our ministry team has been incredible at keeping worship inclusive and engaging – whether online or in person – and I am so grateful to minister with such a wonderful team – thank you Izzy, Frances, Ann, Leon and of course Richard.

Thank you also to Timothy who has been such a loyal support with serving – and George for amazing help doing so many tasks behind the scenes – we are so grateful.

2020 saw not just our church but the whole world having to isolate and do things differently – this has been painful and also at times an opportunity. One of the hardest challenges has been the sadness and suffering affecting our community – (*we all know that Carl has died – it was in the beginning of 2021 but I can't let this report be written without mentioning him in brackets – we will give an extended tribute in next year's report). Our hearts went out to Karen, Adrian, Maureen, Lemar, Paulette, Patrice and their families – who have had to cope with so much grief and difficulty in 2020 (and subsequently). Other members of our church family have had significant difficulty. Neil had a stroke and is now in Brymore House having nursing care. We have had numerous members of our congregation and church family struggling with job loss and other complications such as mental health and isolation issues brought about by the pandemic.

One of the toughest aspects of the year was closing the hall, furloughing, and then making the difficult decision to make Sean redundant – the realisation that the hall was not financially viable with the set-up that we were trying to work with was made more obvious in the complications of not being able to open our doors to hirers.

Sean – we are so grateful for all that you have given to our church family – and we are delighted that you continue to worship with us and support our church family in so many ways.

Despite the hall doors being closed to hirers we have had some hall usage in 2020 – see the brilliant panto report. Also during the pandemic we opened our hall doors to Lewisham Local (and Philippe our neighbour in St Swithun's Road)

who used the hall as a food distribution point when the council and some charitable organisations were in need of space to briefly store and prepare food parcels being distributed to the local community. It was good to know that we were helping the urgent relief efforts in our community. Because of this pandemic year – we couldn't have any socials (in person – we did have zoom coffee and chats), the Cubs and Scouts haven't met, the children's choir and band had to stop early in the year, the Hither Green Community Choir also have only been able to meet intermittently (largely meeting on zoom in 2020) and Diamond Days had to close. Our community has been affected.

Despite so many things and so many people being unable to engage in person – our church family has stayed in touch – in many ways – but we are yet to know the full impact that 2020 will have on our church life in the future. We have had some lovely moments meeting online and connecting and encouraging each other – the Easter Card last year was wonderful and there have been many moments of faith encouragement from many of our lovely church family. The Black Lives Matter movement was an important moment in our community and our church - for many people to be heard – and I hope that we continue to make St Swithun's an inclusive church – a safe space for everyone to worship together.

As with every year - there are so many people to thank – some of you I have already mentioned – but there are so many of you who take responsibility and support and treasure this beautiful church family. Thank you again to Diane for working this year in such complicated circumstances as our churchwarden – thank you to all those who have helped with welcoming and cleaning – Olivia, Claire, Pamela, Elaine – more of you I haven't mentioned – but thank you all. Thank you to Elaine and Grace for keeping our church garden so beautiful. Thank you Phillip and Karen for the music and being creative with what we can work with. Thank you Nick and Alan for keeping our finances accounted and the books kept.

A special thank you to Angela Nelson – who does the most fantastic job as our PCC secretary – thank you for the time and effort you give in this rather arduous task – I am so very grateful for all that you do.

Thank you. Thank you absolutely everyone in this amazing church - there are so many of you I need to thank – and I want you all to know how brilliant you are... I am so grateful for your support and for your love and your faith and hope.

Mother Juliet, Priest in Charge

Church Warden's Report

How to begin? What a year.

A pandemic had broken out called COVID-19 and things were getting worse.

In March, the Diocese of Southwark made the decision that all churches were to close until further notice. No one was to go into the buildings under any circumstances and lockdown began, with many individuals having to stay indoors as their health was at risk.

Did this stop us worshipping?

No! We moved to St Swithun's online, not only for our services but also the Sunday school. For those of us who don't have computers, hard copies were delivered to the door by a dedicated team of volunteers, many thanks to all of you. Of course, the booklets had to be printed and collated, so this work was done by one individual who then had to sanitise the areas they had been working in.

A task force was set up by the Diocese to advise on the situation week by week as things changed and new rules were brought in, although some of these were confusing and contradictory.

Then came the wonderful news – we were being allowed to go back to church!

So we did - on 19th July when we celebrated our Patron's day. It was lovely to see everyone again despite the restrictions. Two services were held to avoid overcrowding and obeying the social distancing rules. No gathering after the service, everyone had to go out the door and chat in the garden as long as they were six feet apart. No tea, coffee or cakes to be provided which was heart breaking as St Swithun's is known for its hospitality, but the main thing was, we were back!

The two-service arrangement ran for a few weeks as we kept up with the ever-changing directives from the Government and then we went back to the usual 1000 start (but still no tea, coffee or cakes).

Our services were running along smoothly, although not all our church family could attend, and then – another lockdown. We did get back to church for the second week of Advent and the planning for the Christmas services went ahead even though there was a rumour that we could be locked out again at any time. Rev Juliet sorted the Christingle, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day events though we knew there may not be the usual crowds due to social distancing and worry about the virus.

We managed to get a couple of Epiphany services done before we were forced into yet another lockdown.

My deepest thanks to all who do their bit to make sure St Swithun's runs smoothly and to Rev Juliet who kept us going despite being ill herself.

Diane Keen, Churchwarden

Safeguarding Report 2020-2021



This annual report provides a summary of Safeguarding activities at St Swithun's Church during the period of April 2020 – March 2021.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic most church services have taken place online via zoom, and all safeguarding safety procedures have been followed. There were no reports of serious safeguarding issues during the year, but there have been some concerns about some of our elderly members during lockdown. Issues such as loneliness, getting their shopping done and cooking have been resolved by the community, family and church members helping out. One elder member is now living in a care home, which now provides a safe environment for him.

St Swithun's Church continues to promote a Safe and Inclusive Church and has welcomed everyone who comes through the church doors, regardless of their sexuality, race, mental state, etc. All members have been observant and proactive in keeping children and adults who may be vulnerable safe.

Safeguarding Children Activity

Since March 2020 there has been no face to face gathering of Sunday school, children have had the opportunity to do some Sunday school activities via email resources.

Key achievements

-Updated version of A Safe Church document has been done, as advised by the Diocese.

-Diocesan Safeguarding Training courses displayed.

Upcoming

To update all Safeguarding documents and posters with details of the new Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (**Hugh Constant**) contact details and the new safeguarding duty line number - **02038746743**

To update DBS records for anyone who has significant contact (through their roles in the Church) with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation.

Olivia Daley, Parish Safeguarding Officer

St Swithun's Sunday School Report

This year has obviously been a very different one for our Sunday School and all of the young people at the church.

Throughout the lockdown period, we have managed to keep a weekly input for the children, through recorded talks and documents published on the St. Swithun's website and through the establishing of a church Whatsapp group aimed mainly at the parents/carers of the young people in our church called 'Rainbows'.

This has been a valuable resource for the grown-ups to interact and a way to show the children that we are all still thinking of them; it has also been a space for information, prayer requests and the sharing of inspirational music or prayers.

We have established 'take home packs' of coloured pencils and a drawing pencil with which the children who do attend service can complete the Sunday School Resources pack in their pew and at home.

These resources packs have activities and notes with a child-friendly version of the Gospel Reading for the children during the service.

At Christmas, with the help of Mother Juliet, we established the 'Stable Advent Calendar' in the Church front garden for the whole community to experience a different part of the Christmas story each day.

Jon created the stable and I developed the resources which were added to generously by Mother Juliet. (Lots of chocolate – much appreciated!) This was a great way to link to the community in a safe, socially distanced way.

We are being sensible about the re-establishment of actual face-to-face Sunday School, but are obviously looking forward to when we can have our young people properly together again!

Izzy Warren, Sunday School Leader

St Swithun's Panto

2020 saw the first 'Hither Green Panto' staged over two evenings in January with different children taking lead parts each night. Approximately 35 children from our community were involved and attended rehearsals twice a week for two months before the performances.

The drama group was created to develop the children's sense of ownership and creativity through theatre and this was mirrored in the script which was based around the local neighbourhood and included links to the locality of Hither Green and things which are special about our area, like our parakeets, the park run and the amazing sense of community here.

Throughout the rehearsals and performances we saw the children grow in self-esteem, confidence and social skills.

Feedback from the children and their carers was fantastic:

'...so much atmosphere and joy sosososo talented!'

'Joyous'

'Triumphant'

'My two are buzzing! Can't wait for tomorrow.'

The Panto was written, directed and staged by Nicole Newton-Williams and Izzy Warren and many members of the community helped with lighting, refreshments, seating, costumes etc. The performances were very well attended and voluntary contributions and takings from interval refreshments came to nearly £1000.

Izzy Warren



Foodbank Report

The global pandemic has hindered the collection of food items in church. St Swithun's congregation were encouraged give cash donation to

Lewisham, Trussell Trust Foodbank. Members have also donated food items to at local supermarkets too.

Lewisham, Trussell Trust Foodbank used food and cash donations to provide help to local people in crisis. They also send food to other nearby foodbanks or partner organisations, for example, homeless projects, to support their work. St Swithun's Church feels humbled to be able to support Lewisham Foodbank in providing food items and cash donations to people in the community.

Olivia Daley, St Swithun's Church Foodbank Coordinator

