

Whitton Benefice Statement for the Parish Assembly 2018

St Nicholas, Baydon is a warm, welcoming church with an electoral role of 40, an average of 21 people in the congregation on a normal Sunday and an average of 64 adults and 23 children for special services. Sadly the average attendance of children to services other than festivals is just one.

The building is open to every day for the public to have the opportunity to sit and reflect or learn about the history of people associated with the church over the years. The Sunday services are organised with the Whitton Benefice to suit the various traditions in the Church of England with a team service at the start of the month at Baydon or one of the other four churches within our benefice. The other weekly services include Morning Prayer, Traditional Matins, Communion and an informal worship for families to enjoy. We work hard to help people to feel at home in our little church whatever their denomination or where they come from.

Over the year we have had 4 baptisms (Thomas Hazlewood, Edward Withers, Jemima Payne and Libby Grove), one marriage (Cameo Pike and Mathew Knight) and a funeral (Cliff Cowles).

The commemoration of the beginning of the First World War has been marked with a well-attended Remembrance Sunday service with the involvement of Servicemen and women, the Brownies and members of the British Legion. The centenary of the deaths of the villagers are being remembered with their details and the village life at the time, such as the Remount Depot at Russley Park.

Members of the church are actively involved with village life – especially with the school. Over the year we have secured community contacts throughout Baydon to distribute information. We have also set up the 100 club which is drawn on a monthly basis and we also look beyond, collecting for the Food Bank in Swindon, for Christian Aid and we sponsor an African child for her education.

Old buildings require constant attention as the weather and age causes damage and repair needs. A team from the church have worked tirelessly over the past year fund raising and we would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who supported our events over the year - Harvest supper and dough competition, Isaac Newton talk and craft stalls, annual fete, Strawberry teas in Newton's walk and more recently the talk by Tim Williams in Marlborough town hall. All these events were a success but further events are already being discussed to continue to keep our bank account viable to pay for a long list of repairs that have become a priority. We have recently set up a building committee which includes several people from outside the church congregation to offer their skills and expertise to review our Quinquennial report and start working on improving the fabric of the church building.

We are truly grateful to the Parish Council who have continued to support us with the maintenance of the church yard and the Tower clock and we are hoping that they will continue to fund the cost of the printing of our fete tickets.

At Baydon St Nicholas church we are a very small team and sometimes the challenges we face seem unsurmountable when we are so small in number but through your continued support and presence in our building we feel really blessed. Come and visit us when you can – you can be assured of a warm welcome. We would be really grateful if you can spare the time to come and tell us what you think about your local church.