

Parish Safeguarding Officer Report

Since taking over the role as Safeguarding Officer from Carole, I have learnt an enormous amount about a significant area of our church community; one we are all responsible for.....safeguarding.

The development of our Parish Safeguarding Dashboard has allowed Becky and I to collate the required registers, policies etc... onto a central portal which gives the PCC an insight to the progress we are making in this challenging area, and to take ownership as a collective group over safeguarding, not just the PSO and our ministry team.

Completion of various safeguarding courses continues to be an area for development as it is a legal requirement for all PCC Trustees as well as those working with vulnerable adults and children to complete. These are on-line courses; however, we were very fortunate to have the support of Chester Dioceses safeguarding team who came along in January and ran the Basic Awareness training session for us. The date for our group Foundation Course is to be confirmed.

Successful completion and renewal of Leadership, Domestic Abuse, Safer Recruitment and Modern Slavery courses by various individuals is also documented. DBS renewals and new applications have been successfully completed alongside Safeguarding Sunday to further highlight the key messages of Safeguarding. Attending Chester East and Chester Dioceses PSO quarterly meetings has given me the opportunity to work alongside other PSO's who have shared their parish good practices.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has guided and supported me during this process of being St Paul's Parish Safeguarding Officer. I look forward to continuing and developing my role whilst working alongside everyone to safeguard our church and community.

Fiona Vaughan-Thomas
Parish Safeguarding Officer
April 2025

Vicar's Report for 2024

Dear friends,

This report reflects the activities, services and events between the period of January to December 2024.

Having just celebrated Easter, it is wonderful to be reminded of the hope that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers us as we seek to serve him through our mission and ministry here at St Paul's. Springtime gifts us the promise of new beginnings, as we observe the beauty of God's creation burst into colourful song and bloom. In my mind, this is echoed in the life of our church community as we renew our vision and priorities for St Paul's over the forthcoming year.

There are so many people who support the activities and services in our church and I am grateful to everyone who gives their time, effort and energy to the work of God's mission in Sale. On behalf of the PCC, I offer my thanks to Revd Dr's Margaret Jones, Lisa Redfern and Revd Shemil Mathew for their ministry. We are grateful to our Churchwarden Yvonne Stevenson who ensures that our building is safe and maintained, unlocks and sets up for Sunday service as well as keeping an eye on our Electoral Roll. I am thankful to Anne Allen and Kevin Drury for all they offer through music and worship. Our treasurer, Joe Blaney is a great asset ensuring that our finances are in good order and providing us with full sets of accounts. My thanks go to our Safeguarding Officer, Fiona Vaughan-Thomas who has helped us through the new safeguarding dashboard and has taken on additional training and admin so that we can offer a safe and supportive environment for all that come to worship or take part in activities here. Thanks to our pastoral-worker, PCC secretary, Karen Salisbury who despite ill health and significant period of hospitalisation has persevered with admin tasks and continues to make sure the magazine happens, article contributions are always welcomed from our groups (by the 16th of the month!), as well as thanks to Yvonne Kerridge, our other pastoral worker who has filled in co-leading as well as undertaking pastoral visits.

Thank you to Laura Jackson and Wiggle the Bible Bookworm for their help in planning and delivering All Age Worship (and our new Sunday school 2025). Rodney Hadwen remains faithful in ensuring our website and our 'Church Near You page' stays updated. I am immensely grateful to the contributions of all our PCC members for their wisdom, insights and contributions as we have sought God's will and direction in our church's activities this year. I take this opportunity to thank every single person who has supported all our worship events and church activities: for Clive Bancroft on welcoming duties and all those who assist with refreshments, flower arrangers, those who offer lifts, clean and tidy the church - inside and out and all others who help in any way. Our worship is not accidental or incidental, it is at the heart of all we do. And what you see on the surface of any act of worship at St Paul's is the result of a mix of people working and planning and praying: sidespeople and welcomers, flower arrangers, cleaners, churchwarden, pastoral workers, clergy, all age planning group, musicians, choir, Director of Music, intercessors and readers. Our thanks to all of them. May God continue to bless you abundantly in your ministries.

Reflecting on 2024, there is much to be thankful to God for. On Sundays, we have a regular core congregation of between 30-40 people and it has been great to see new people join occasionally or more regularly. During the summer I was able to undertake a 3-month sabbatical as I had reached my 20th anniversary of ordination as a priest. I

was able to undertake some further research into 'Entrepreneurial mission', a trip overseas to visit former colleagues in Sri Lanka and learn about the Estates Development project run by the Anglican Church of Ceylon which is a literacy and educational development project helping children of tea-plantation workers. During this time, I was also able to undertake Emergency First Aid at Work training and offer volunteer chaplaincy help at the Royal Cheshire Show, Greenbelt Arts Festival and a regular placement at NHS WWL as a hospital chaplain. A few weeks after my return, I suddenly found myself in hospital having emergency surgery. Thankfully, all is well, and after a period of sick leave I was back in time for Christmas services. It was somewhat unfortunate that we had Church Warden, PCC Secretary and Vicar all on the sick-list at the same time – and a salutary reminder that none of us are indispensable and that the more people that know where things are stored, kept, administered and can offer help – even if it's a one-off occasion, the better. Do you know how to put up the hymn numbers? Where the orders of service are kept? The basics such as turning on and off the lights and sound-system or how to live-stream from Facebook? Could you help with changing notice-boards (screwdriver is required)!

Life events at St Paul's (funerals, baptisms and weddings), although comparatively low in numbers, remain an important part of our ministry. This year we have been saddened by the deaths of a notable number of church

members including two ladies by the same name, Barbara Barnes. When I first arrived in post I did wonder if there had been a typo on the Electoral-Roll. Both Barbara's passed in 2024, one at the beginning of the year and one at the end of the year and it was good to meet their family and friends. We also gave thanks for the life of Rosemary Hughes, who sat at the front of church and loved reading for us. Rosemary had an eventful life serving as a Wren and in her latter years undertaking further studies as an active participant of U3A here in Sale. We mourned to, the loss of John Clisset our former Director of Music, Organist and Chorister who as mentioned in the music report gave so much to St Paul's. It was also a shock for many to learn of the passing of Fr Tom Ryan who was assisting us during my sabbatical. Fr Tom was a larger-than-life character and despite his recent diagnosis and subsequent life-changing surgery, was determined to make the most of his remaining time in priestly ministry. Chester Cathedral was packed with mourners, many from the legal community, an amazing send-off for a man who had been left abandoned as an orphan. A final mention must go to Harry Thomas, again who unexpectedly passed away in December whilst out shopping with his wife Diane. Harry was Churchwarden at St Paul's and handy-man, Mr Fix-it who was very much missed when he and Diane retired to Prestwich to be closer to family. Harry had a strong faith and continued to love and serve Jesus at his new church by volunteering at the church-run café.

Our schools work remains fairly limited, invitations to Springfield School Choir to join us in services were taken up. This year we did trial 'Experience Easter' which brought 90 Year 2 children in to church to participate in the story of Holy Week through story and action. We had great positive feedback from staff and pupils and we hope this will help to strengthen our relationship between ourselves and the school community as well as fulfil National Curriculum obligations. Sadly, we took the decision to stop running a Forest Church session. Despite the well-planned and thoughtfully led programme by Revd Lisa, we just weren't getting enough people attending to make it sustainable.

We decided to do something different for Lent, using material Sunday by Sunday, 'Preparing the Way' with guest preacher, Revd Alison Cox from St Anne's.

St Paul's worshippers continue to give generously to the charities we support including: The Children's Society, Christian Aid and Trafford Food-bank. St Paul's also makes a yearly contribution to the running of our local Christians Against Poverty (CAP) group and we were pleased to have Debbie Walters, our local manager with us in December to talk about her work.

A big spring-clean took place in March and a number of volunteers helped with clearing out the first floor of the tower and the upper choir vestry. There's still more to do, folks are reminded to remove any personal possessions and/or label them so they can be returned.

Highlights of last year included the return of Heritage Day with our tea-room and in church an informative timeline of boards showing historical events, old photos and a wedding display including dress and photos kindly donated by those who were married at St Paul's. We were again joined by friends including Sale Brass Community Band, Girl-Guiding helpers and volunteers. The Christmas Tree festival incorporated the Santa's Grotto and this brought in additional families who commented how lovely it was to be in the church building and how peaceful it was. Craft activities were again available to everyone and proved popular with children leaving clutching their handicrafts. Local musical groups came along to play including Sale Salvation Army Junior Band, James Goodwin Ladies Choir and Sale Brass Community Band.

During the year I have also met with the new Chair of Sale Festival Steven Hodgkinson, who like me, is keen to use St Paul's more as a venue during the festival season. We were delighted to welcome Sale Festival attendees at concerts and we will do again this year.

Looking ahead, there are many signs of hope and I am optimistic about all that the Lord will gift us in 2025. Things that I am looking forward to in the coming year include:-

- Progressing our Growth Action Plan priorities – many thanks to those who have filled in questionnaires.
- To continue exploring opportunities to network with local businesses, churches, schools and charities.

- Seeking ways in which to connect further with families and young people in Sale.
- Enabling church goers to grow in their discipleship and feel confident in sharing their faith with others.

Will you join me in praying for our community this year as we endeavour to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

Yours in faith,

Becky Mathew Vicar of St Paul's Sale

Church Accounts

Karen Salisbury was able to hand over the accounts to our new Treasurer - Joe Blaney early in 2024 and he has been able to attend training sessions with the Diocese and Sharon Taylor-Booth, Assistant Accountant at the Diocese has continued her assistance and support.

Pastoral Worker Report (Yvonne Kerridge) – 2024

Most pastoral care happens informally and often unseen and is described as any caring action that accepts the person for whom they are, listening to a person's needs, joys or sorrows and in which a spiritual dimension is recognised. This is with the belief that the path to any caring ministry is not purely as a result of our own efforts but as a response to God's love for us.

As well as training, assessment and authorisation to lead services and conduct funerals, I have been trained in a variety of pastoral areas including visiting and I continue working with others in this shared ministry. I would, personally, like to thank our church members who carry on supporting others in so many ways. Under my licence, using safer pastoral practice, I have been supporting people in prayer and in whatever other ways have presented themselves. I regularly keep in contact and visit five church members who have been unable to worship in church, some with Communion and some who have been bereaved. I have also been involved in ministry at the end of life and had the privilege of ministering following a pure cremation. I have been gaining more experience in funeral ministry which I hope to continue this year. I have also trained to be a parent mentor for a mental health charity.

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”

Matt.25.40.

Yours in Christ Yvonne Kerridge

Pastoral Worker Report (Karen Salisbury)

2024 started off by looking like it was going to be another very busy year once again with the Royal Air Force Air Cadets (RAFAC). We have been very fortunate in being able to recruit a few new chaplains across the Wing - our latest being a Prison Chaplain Imam - seemingly a first for the Wing and I believe the Corps.

February saw me leading the Service for what is referred to as ATC Sunday over in Ashton Under Lyne again - I still did not attempt to climb up the 3 tier pulpit even knowing the Cadets and all the Staff have a variety of First Aid qualifications - they did not need me giving them the need to put their training into practice!

I attended the RAF Cosford Airshow still trying to acquire a couple of aircraft as usual but the niggling occasional mild pain I had had for a couple of months at that point was very firmly in evidence by about 3.30pm and it could not be classed as mild by that point - taking me over 3 times longer than the cadets to get back to the coach.

The following Sunday - Father's Day on my way into the park to visit Sale Festival, was when the pain suddenly hit me, rendering me unable to move, stuck on a park bench for over 3 hours - this was definitely not in any of my plans! Vicki had been away for the weekend glamping near York and made it back the same time as an ambulance arrived, they were impressed with the handover she gave them on

the way in but with it being her job (including starring in an episode of '24 Hours in A&E' earlier in the year), it wasn't surprising!

So after 4 weeks in hospital - I was eventually allowed home albeit with a lot of restrictions and 8 different painkillers to take every day - needless to say they are all varying in times and amounts - am looking forward to being able to get rid of having to take them once I have had the much needed and awaited surgery.

Eventually, I was able to get the doctors to agree that I could return to work, still with lots of restrictions, including only being able to work from home and initially a couple of hours a day, which I have managed to build up to almost a full day most days, but never expecting it to still be the case mid 2025!

Again, I was on the Chaplains Course in Beckett House, it was a bit of a 'try it and see' but with fabulous support from the Corps Chaplain, Regional and Wing Chaplains , I managed to get through most of the programme - didn't make the early morning services though (as it took me quite a while to get ready), plus skipped a couple of sessions and had early nights.

Although 2024 was not what I expected it to be, I am very grateful for those members of the PCC standing in for me by taking the Minutes at Meetings.

I have been so grateful and thankful for all the support, calls, cards, flowers, and prayers whilst I haven't been able to be with everyone at St Paul's - it's still fun with the medications/side effects which often wipe me out when I least expect it, making it so that despite my wanting to attend worship, I have not been able to get back to regular worship - it's very much a work in progress!

With every blessing,

Karen

Church Trustees

During 2024 the Trustees made the following payments to the Church from the Mission Hall Fund:-

Roots subscription, Cards & Banner	£304.00
Annual Fee for Storage of Documents - Slater Heelis	£120.00
Donation to Church	£300.00
Christmas Books and Cards	<u>£165.00</u>
Total:	<u>£889.00</u>

The Trustees remain committed to continue funding the Armstrong Organ Bursary in 2025 if required.

Church Website

The hosting and updating of the Church website continues to be via WordPress and the Annual subscription is paid for by the Trustees. The Domain name (stpaulsale.co.uk) is registered with easily.co.uk and is renewable every two years and is next due for renewal in Dec 2025

Any person or organisation wishing to add content to the website are welcome to send photos, posters and any other relevant information to rhaden@mac.com. Rodney Hadwen

Music Report

The choir has continued to lead worship at the Eucharist and as usual we have welcomed other friends at Christmas and Easter. Despite their very busy Christmas schedule, we were delighted to have the Springfield School Choir at the carol service and were able to give them a taste of a more formal choral setting. The introit featured some of the ladies at the West End alternating with the children at the East end of church which was particularly poignant. Just after Christmas we went to Ashlands Care Home again to enjoy some traditional carols with the residents which was much appreciated.

Unfortunately, we had to retire from joining St Joseph's choir at the Cenotaph service as it is now getting a little too much for most of our members. We have been leading the singing for over 20 years since the service moved from

church to the middle of Sale. Choir members also continue to take an active part in providing music at the Christmas Tree Festival and running the wonderful Community Choir every Friday afternoon.

It has been a year of particular milestones: in September, Harry became the fourth member of the choir to enter his 10th decade!! Singing is indeed good for the soul!! We shared a big chocolate cake in the hall in celebration. As organist, John invited Harry and Pauline to join the choir for Christmas one year and both have since enjoyed many decades of singing. At the Harvest Festival we celebrated the many years of devoted service Donald has given to St Paul's as one of the Assistant Organists. At 92 he decided it was time to retire from playing for services and was presented with an engraved silver cup. Donald had been Sub-Organist at Manchester Cathedral just after the war and has a huge repertoire of challenging pieces which he continued practising and adding to- what an inspiration! He was still giving a solo recital at our Sunday afternoon concerts well into his eighties.

Our dear friend John Clisset passed away in February marking the end of an era in the musical life of St Paul's. Chorister, Organist and Director of Music, Community Choir founder and accompanist, Assistant Organist- John lived a long life of exemplary, cheerful and willing service. He was a man of integrity, deep faith, impeccable manners and gentle wit who was deeply loved and respected in the

choir and church community: the large congregation at his meticulously planned funeral service was testimony to the esteem in which he was held by his many friends. It was his dearest wish that the musical life in this church continues to thrive, and we commit ourselves afresh to giving the best we can.

Anne Allen

Men's Society Report

In 2024 the Men's Society only held one meeting - the AGM which was held at the Church Hall and attended by 9 members. We also took part in the Sale Rotary Club bowling match in June. The Christmas tree in Church was paid for and erected by members. The Society bank account has been closed because we were to be charged for keeping it open. The cash (£100.02) is now held by the treasurer but will hopefully pay for the Christmas Tree this year.

An email to members to ascertain interest in keeping the Men's Society going had a very limited response so the future looks bleak.

Rodney Hadwen - Chairman

Babes & Tots Report

Despite our worries over the summer that we might not get enough volunteers to carry on the group in September, St Paul's church members rallied around and have managed to keep the group open.



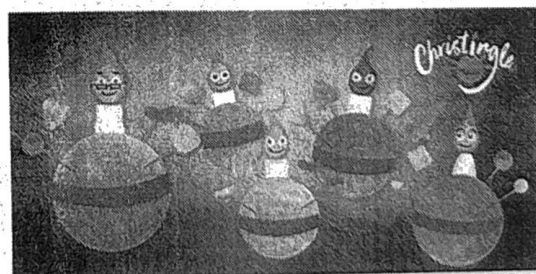
We have an average of 20-30 families most weeks, with a great variety of people which reflects the multi-cultural nature of our locality. Our parents/carers appreciate the group for its openness, kindness of our volunteers and our light-touch approach to helping develop faith awareness and spirituality.

Many thanks again to all our helpers,

Becky Mathew

Children's Society

On Christmas Eve we held our annual Christingle Service. It was a super event, with well over 400 people in Church. We are so grateful to everyone who attended and donated.



We are also extremely grateful to Tesco Sale and their Community Champion, Laura, for donating the oranges.

which meant that all the money collected, could be donated to The Children's Society.

The grand total donated to the Charity for 2024 was £1,303.15.

It is wonderful to be able to support such an amazing charity as it supports children and young people in their aim to **#ProtectEveryChildhood** and offer hope and happiness at a time when it is under threat as never before.

The Children's Society is a national charity working to transform the lives of children and young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. If you would like to know more about the Charity, more information is available via their website www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Finally, my special thanks must go to all of my friends here at St Paul's who tirelessly offer support in counting the monies raised throughout the year and assembling the Christingles so that they are ready for the children on Christmas Eve. I couldn't do it without you all, and am very lucky and grateful for your continued friendship and support.

Sheila Clarke

Local Secretary, The Children's Society

Food Bank

Over this last year the need for Food in our local Food banks has grown steadily, so much so that we regularly run out and have little to give out to those in need.

There are of course other Food Banks in the area who each open on a different day of the week and many members of the public will say openly to us, they don't really need it or there's other places to go, which of course there is as so many of our Churches and congregations are doing their best to help in this dreadful situation but not everyone has transport or cash for bus fares.

Social Services regularly come for food and deliver it too these people but if we run out there is no help.

So thanks are sent to you from the Food bank because without our help our local people in need would all be a lot hungrier.

Thank you all so very much.

Eileen Craven.

The Mustard Tree

Over the last year St. Pauls have donated numerous items to aid the work the Mustard Tree does for the homeless and the poorest people in Greater Manchester.

They feed them, help to cloth them, have various workshops to encourage them and also give help in filling in Applications for work and sending out CV's.

The work they do is extremely hard and often thankless but the rewards out-way this when a man or woman manages to turn their life around, so please continue to help by your monthly donations and David and I will continue to deliver them.

If I happen not to go due to holidays or illness Marlene has offered to deliver.

Thank you all.

Eileen Craven

Please note:-

At the time of preparing this report no other church organisations/individuals had submitted reports or accounts, however, should they be available at the Annual Meetings they will be added to this Report as Addendums.