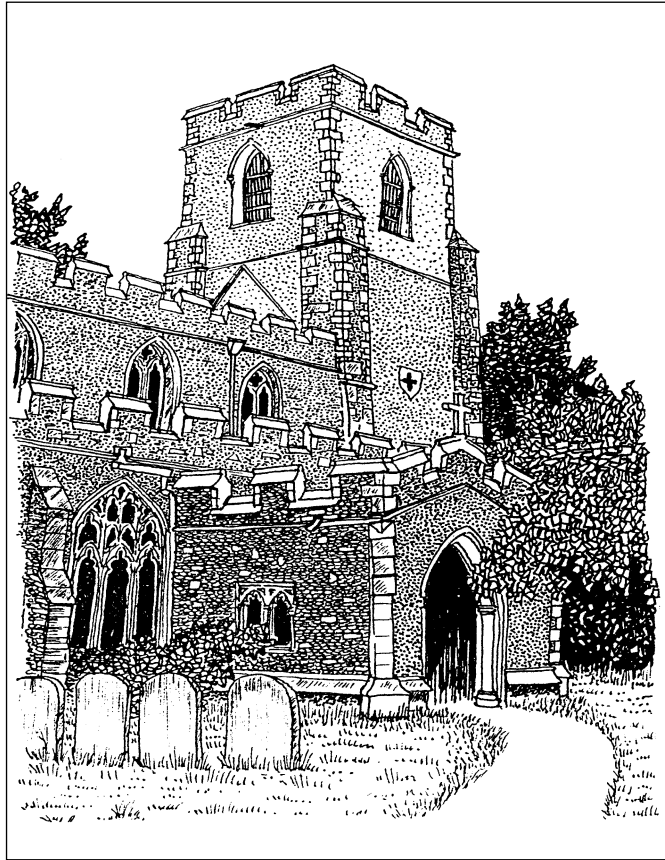


# ALL SAINTS' HARSTON

## REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

10 MAY 2022

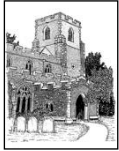


### **Reports**

1. Ministry Report
2. Annual PCC Report
3. Safeguarding Report
4. Fabric Report
5. Financial Report (see also Financial Statements sent separately)
6. Deanery Synod Report
7. Music Group Report
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9. Events

### **Appendices**

- A. Electoral Roll
- B. Sidespersons



## **1. MINISTRY REPORT**

### **Introduction**

Whilst we hoped that the year of 2021 would bring an end to Covid-19, this proved not to be the case. In December of 2020 the UK entered tiered restrictions, schools were closed and a national lockdown began on the 6th January and ended at the beginning of March with gradual resumption of normal life. Church services continued throughout with masks at all times including singing, distancing and hand sanitiser. We continued a priest-only arrangement of intincting wafers in wine for recipients of Holy Communion. No reports of Covid originating in church were received or evident. On June 14th restrictions for weddings and funerals were finally abolished, although social distancing and masks continued in church and in crematoria. The vaccination programme was accelerated, masks tended to be worn everywhere in public and in December the Omicron variant caused compulsory mask wearing once again. However the government were satisfied with levels of vaccination and the generally milder symptoms of the variant so all domestic legal Covid-19 restrictions were lifted on the 24th February 2022. Cases of Covid continue to be prevalent in the local area, but generally mild and church life has continued normally with the use of masks for those who wish to, and ventilation for larger events.

### **Church Services**

We started the 2021 year with some Zoom church services continuing as part of the provision at Harston, but generally we were encouraging people to return to face to face services on Sundays with masks. We ran an extra Sunday evening service on the fourth Sunday at Harston in order not to mix groups of people.

A Benefice Lent group was held via zoom with Revd. Stephen Cherry looking at his Lent Book 'Thy Will Be Done': an exploration of the Lord's Prayer. Stephen joined us for the first and the last session and we had good discussions. During all of Holy Week Rev'd Susan shared a reflection on Zoom based on an art series called In Human Likeness, following Jesus Passion story and relating it to events in our world. Children's bible stories were also provided on Zoom in this week using Godly Play materials. These were popular amongst families attached to our churches, and were also given out to Little Hands nursery and our schools. There was a meditative Good Friday service at Newton as well as our Easter Sunday celebration. It was strange having had to sing with masks for so long.

In Sunday services the Psalms were the content of sermons from Easter Sunday to Pentecost; we followed the lectionary before Easter and in ordinary time, and then in Michaelmas in October Revd Susan shared the insights of a Conference On 'Being Church' by the Heart-Edge churches in London: looking at being with people; how to be congregation; how to engage with culture; and how to navigate commerce within the church and with the community outside. During Advent we explored hope and meaningfulness in a time of waiting, before returning to the Lectionary and the theme of light through Christmas and Epiphany to Candlemas.

### **Community Contact**

It has been frustrating once again not to be able to have the same contact with people because of Covid restrictions and care. I have been able to do some pastoral visiting, but

mostly this has had to be on the doorstep - it is a difficult call with Covid still swirling. Meadow Way services were resumed with a new plan from November 2021 but attendance has been minimal despite plenty of advertising and conversations with people on their doorstep. Many have been in and out of hospital and there is not the same motivation for it. Because Christmas coincided with the start of a new variant we did not have the same footfall as we hoped for at the carol service, or Christingle, although Christmas Day was better.

### **Occasional Offices**

2021 was a sad year in our Benefice with a record 12 funerals in the one year, and none directly from Covid-19. These included five at Harston including our beloved Jilly, and her mother Joyce. There were no weddings at Harston in this last year, but one notable baptism of Henry Hoyle to Emily and John in September.

### **Ecumenical Links**

We are really pleased to benefit from the ministry of the Rev'd John Barrett, our retired Methodist minister who lives in Harston. We have been unable because of Covid and mixing groups of people to participate with the Baptist Church except at Remembrance service when two or three attended and Scott preached at the parish service at Harston.

### **Children's work**

Our children's work within the benefice of Harston All Saints', Hauxton St Edmund's and Newton St Margaret's includes regular contact with Harston and Newton Primary School, and Little Hands Nursery in Newton; the twice monthly Treasure Hunters Group and occasional 'pop-up' play/craft events in school holidays.

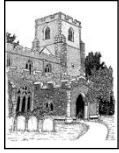
Schools work includes Rev'd Susan doing assemblies and sometimes classroom visits for particular subjects. We also welcome the children into church for RE or Art, on a regular basis, Covid permitting, as well as for Christmas carols, although Covid has prevented that in the last two years.

During 2021 Treasure Hunters met at Harston church on the first Sunday of the month and at Newton church on the third Sunday of the month from 4-5pm. It is deliberately a very relaxed time of being together as families. We light candles for each child, usually explore outside to see what 'treasure' the season is yielding, have a story which reflects on this and tells us something about the goodness of God, and share a healthy snack together when we can catch up with families' news. We use the 'Lord's Prayer cubes' to finish the session with prayer.

Pop-Up Play was an event we ran three consecutive weeks of the school holidays in August 2021 and would happily repeat. It involves providing the space of Harston church for families from the villages who are not on holiday to have a place to meet together and the children to play with various toys and messy-play inside and out.

My very grateful and heartfelt thanks go to our Churchwardens, PCC members, and PCC Officers for all your help in the last year, which has held many trials of its own. It is as always a real pleasure and privilege working with you.

*Revd Susan Bowden-Pickstock*



## 2. ANNUAL PCC REPORT

Over the past year the membership of the PCC has been:

Reverend Susan Bowden-Pickstock	Minister
Joy Richardson	Churchwarden
Shaun Fitzgerald	Churchwarden
Margaret Greeves	Assistant Churchwarden
Francis Clarke	Assistant Churchwarden
Paru Oatey	Deanery Synod representative (ex officio)
Norman Jones	Parish Environment Contact, Restoration
Andrew Pitts	Treasurer, Electoral Roll Officer
Brian Nash	
John Barber	
Kathy Kreetzer	PCC Secretary

The PCC has met six times over the past year, resuming meetings in person as we came out of the pandemic. In January 2022 we held a joint Benefice PCC meeting in order to approve policies that apply across our churches, to discuss the Deanery Plan and to share development plans for each of our churches. The PCC is concerned to ensure that deanery resources are used effectively to support the development of our church life. Each church in the benefice has been updating its mission action plan, and our PCC has discussed development points for us including:

- continuing to grow, but sharpening targets
- reaching out more to Meadow Way
- continuing the growth of the 'Friends'
- extending the website
- supporting the Food Hub and village projects
- promoting eco-friendly church development
- developing our spiritual life by supporting and encouraging each other eg coffee and chat, Lent groups, Compline and other services, and reciprocal support to Newton and Hauxton

We are currently without a PCC Secretary as Kathy Kreetzer moved away during the year. We greatly appreciated her service, following Mary Nash's long contribution in this role. Andrew Pitts is finally stepping down as our Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer, and Francis Clarke will be taking over as Treasurer. Andrew's quiet efficiency, reliability and attention to detail have been invaluable in keeping our finances in order. As a PCC member from 2001, Churchwarden from 2004 to 2013 and Treasurer from 2013 to 2022, Andrew has made an inestimable contribution to the life of our Church for which we are truly grateful. John Barber is also stepping down, and we appreciate his long service and steadfast support as a PCC member since the 1990s, Churchwarden from 2007 to 2015, and for many years our webmaster. I would like to thank our team of wardens and assistant wardens, and all the members of the PCC for their commitment and dedication in working together to help our church thrive.

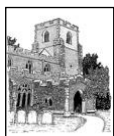
In order to streamline our administration and communication, we have established a Benefice planning system, supported by Nina Kay, so that we now have a shared calendar and services plan, accessible through Dropbox. The development of a new website by Paru and Alastair Oatey, building on John Barber's work, has provided a central source of

information that has been well received and is widely used. Making use of technology, we have set up wifi for the church, a card reader for donations, and remote control for our heating. Margaret Greeves has led work to update our record keeping and to document our church's history. We have set up a pattern of regular cleaning for the church, and gardening for the churchyard.

We are grateful to all those who contribute readily and generously as vergers, sidespersons, readers and intercessors, in serving coffee and arranging flowers, in fundraising and organising events, and in looking after the building in so many practical ways.

It has been a year of growth and development, as you can read about in the sections of this report. The refurbishment of the church has provided us with an attractive and versatile space for our worship, and for a growing range of events and activities that serve our wider community. We are grateful to Rev'd Susan for her ministry amongst us and for all that she has done, as evident in her report, to enrich us spiritually and to enlarge our vision.

*Joy Richardson on behalf of the PCC*



### **3. SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

Nina Kay serves as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for the benefice and oversees policy and practice with regard to safeguarding in each of the three parishes, working with Rev'd Susan. The joint PCC in January 2022 reviewed and approved the Safeguarding Policy for the benefice. Safeguarding is a standing item at PCC meetings, and we are committed to following the Church of England's guidance 'Promoting a Safer Church'. Nina maintains a Safeguarding Dashboard to monitor our compliance with Ely Diocesan safeguarding requirements and to highlight actions required. She reports:

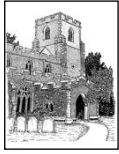
Great progress has again been made during the last 12 months with our compliance with Safeguarding Regulations in the parish and we are now progressing in Level 3, the highest level of compliance.

New items of policy and procedures are being added by the Church of England at intervals. Items for attention are marked as amber or red on the action plan according to urgency, and these must be brought forward to PCC meetings.

The PCC must ensure that national guidance is being followed, including with regard to use of social media (see Section 12 of the [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#)). Church activities must be listed and reported, and training requirements met.

Some training needs to be scheduled and the PSO will review these and the remaining items in the coming weeks

*Nina Kay*



#### **4. FABRIC REPORT**

The new floor was completed and services, with the new seating, resumed in May 2021. Inspection was carried out following the rectification period and subsequent correction of minor faults. The project was signed off in February 2022 and the final bill paid. We await a VAT receipt from Herringbone in order to reclaim this amount.

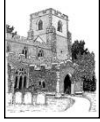
New locks and keys have been fitted to the main doors of the church.

A Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in October 2021 by Ashley Courtney, our new church architect. Following receipt and circulation of the report, wardens and assistant wardens, with Norman Jones and Revd Susan, had a 'walk around' meeting in March 2022 to identify the key areas that need immediate attention and to establish a maintenance guide. The priority is to start clearing blocked drains and gutters, and to remove ivy and mosses. The main aim of this work is to improve the drying out of the walls in preparation for redecoration.

We have removed temporarily the red carpet in the chancel and disposed of the underlay which was trapping damp. A local contractor has been approached to clean the tiled floor in the chancel area.

The vestry which is cold and damp will feature high on the list for major improvements.

*Norman Jones*



## 5. FINANCE REPORT

### General Fund

Total receipts in 2021 on unrestricted voluntary funds were £37,695 of which £25,631 was unrestricted voluntary donations and a further £5,550 was from tax recovered from GiftAid. This is up by 8% from last year but is a decrease of 5% compared with pre-pandemic receipts in 2019. The General fund had a surplus of £7,266, compared with a deficit of £3,428 last year. Our main source of income is donations via the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS): currently 15 people use it to give monthly, 14 of whom apply GiftAid and 9 of whom have agreed to yearly automatic increases in line with inflation. 7 people choose not to use the PGS and give monthly via bank standing order. A very small number of people (just 2 in the first quarter of 2022) use the Envelope Scheme for cash donations. Since all cash donations under £30 are eligible for GiftAid under the GiftAid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS), the use of envelopes to indicate a donation eligible for GiftAid is not necessary from the church's point of view but may still be valued by the donors who use them. From January 2022 we have provided the ability to use a credit or debit card to make donations in church. This consists of a card reader running SumUp payments software connected by Bluetooth to a tablet running an application from the GiveALittle organisation and connected to the internet via the church's 4G cellular WiFi connection. It will take some years to recoup the initial costs (£410.40) and the combination of communication technologies needed for it to work is quite brittle, but nevertheless it is a necessary development, given the recent shift towards a cashless society. We also receive some payments from JustGiving (on-line donations) and Eventbrite (ticket sales and donations).

### Restoration Fund

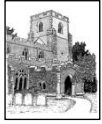
Total receipts in 2021 on restricted funds were £10,312, of which £2,095 were donations and fees, £2,125 from fundraising activities and £6,074 from tax recovered from GiftAid (a large figure because of the large amount of donations for the church floor project made in the last quarter of 2021). The donations and fundraising income are to support the continuing restoration and development of the Church building, including this year the new church floor and seating. We paid £53,664 for works and fees, resulting in a deficit of £43,352.

*Friends of All Saints' Church.* This was set up towards the end of 2021 as a subcommittee of the PCC. Its finances will be run using the church bank accounts and recorded as a Fund in the yearly Financial Statements.

### Financial Policy

The PCC aims to pay all Church running costs from monthly income, which is made up of Tax Efficient Planned Giving (via the Parish Giving Scheme and via bank standing orders), the Envelope Scheme, the Sunday collection plate and credit/debit card reader. In the past a minimum amount of cash was kept in the current account and any surplus transferred to an on-line savings account to earn interest; however, since current interest rates are close to zero, this is less of a concern. It is PCC policy to maintain an amount in our General Fund at least equal to our average yearly payments as a reserve. All fundraising income is transferred to our Restoration Fund for building repairs and new developments. The Restoration Fund is held in a Barclays bank account and in a CBF Deposit Account. Fundraising income is augmented from time to time by donations made by the *Friends of All Saints' Church Harston*.

*Andrew Pitts*



## 6. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Deanery Synod Meetings held 22 April 2021, 7 July 2021, 11 November 2021 and 29 March 2022

Deanery Giving Review Meeting held 17 June 2021

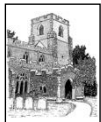
Deanery Development Planning Meeting held 12 March 2022

### Summary of Significant Points

- 1) **A Mental Health First Aid Committee** will be formed to provide support to lay ministers and office holders. Deanery will meet approx. £1020 costs for the mental health training of 3 people. These people will serve as ambassadors for the Deanery.
- 2) **Clergy News:** Catherine Waite licensed 22 June 2021– Sawston+Babraham, Lydia Smith licensed 15 July 2021 – Hinkledux. Linton Benefice and Great Shelford currently in vacancy and recruiting/interviewing. New Rural Dean Michael Wilcockson.
- 3) **Deanery Finances:** Deanery met 90% of the ministry share in 2021. 19 of the 24 churches met their share. Due to the Deanery shortfall, the Deanery were not entitled to the £11-12K rebate. Request for more transparency in all ministry costs.
- 4) **Giving Review** Paru, Francis and Andrew attended the Giving Review Meeting with the Deanery Treasurer with representatives from Newton, Hauxton and Great Shelford. A letter of thanks and a request for an increase in giving was sent to all on the Electoral Roll. Some positive responses.
- 5) **Diocesan Synod:** meeting held 6 November 2021 by Zoom with 80 attendees. Both Bishop Stephen and Dagmar have visited all the Deanery Chapters. Clergy numbers will remain at 104 FTE stipendiary clergy. A new post can only be created if an old one is lost. The Diocese has run at a deficit for three years which has been met by reserves/investment income.
- 6) **Deanery Development Planning (DDP) Living Ely2025:** The Deanery needs to have a draft plan for summer 2022 which should be finalised in the autumn. There are three documents to aid the planning: Living Ely2025 Full Guide (28 pages), Living Ely2025 PCC Summary Guide (12 pages) and a Z card suitable for the congregation. Our (HHN) need for more ministry support could be addressed as part of the DDP. Next stage is to form a Steering Committee.
- 7) **Youthinc:** Groups have grown during the lockdown. Still aiming to recruit a Youth worker and potentially aim for full time if costs and resource can be shared with another Deanery. Phillipa Hanna, a Christian musician gave a concert on the 6 November and this was attended by 70 people, of which the children were aged 9-12yrs, and there was representation across 11 churches. Deanery Fair held in April 2022 raised £1500. Harston Church have contribute £300 to Youthinc.
- 8) **Living in Love and Faith.** Several churches have undertaken the 5-week course and formed study groups to address identity, gender and sexuality issues. Little Shelford and Linton described the benefits of the discussions. Not all Churches have engaged in LLF. Aim is that all churches complete and feed back to Diocesan Synod by 30 April 2022.

*Paru Oatey*





## 7. MUSIC GROUP REPORT

The Music Group is a group of singers and instrumentalists from the Benefice that has been going since 2007. When possible, we continue to meet every Sunday evening, from 6pm until 7pm, to rehearse and we are pleased include people of all ages and abilities. The Sunday evening rehearsals are also a time of fellowship, and the friendship and support is as important as the music.

It has been pleasing to come out of the Covid-19 restrictions so that we can enjoy singing more during the services and invite the congregation to join with the singing. We have contributed to services in Hauxton and Harston and we have singers from both communities.

We generally sing a short anthem either as an introit or between the readings, and sometimes we contribute instrumental or choral pieces during communion. We particularly enjoy contributing to Festivals including Pentecost, Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Here are some examples of the music that we have sung recently which illustrate the breadth of the period and styles to augment the liturgy and provide something for everyone:

Thomas Tallis: If ye love me

Henry Purcell: Rejoice in the Lord always; Thou knowest, Lord

H Walford Davies: God be in my Head

John Stainer: Hail, gladdening Light

Sally Beamish: In the stillness

Four pieces that we sang at our Remembering evening in November:

Moses Hogan: Hear my prayer

Parry: Crossing the Bar

Sullivan: The Long Day Closes

Brahms: Geistliches Lied

Norman Warren: Mother Teresa's prayer for Mothering Sunday

Several pieces from the Taizé community which enriched our service on Maundy Thursday

The Passion Hymns by Bob Chilcott were sung as part of the Meditation on the Passion of Christ with dramatized readings for Good Friday

We would like to thank all those who contribute to the richness of our music in church. We always welcome new members and suggestions.

*Rebecca Fitzgerald and John Barber*



## 8. FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS' REPORT

Since our launch last September, we have recruited nearly 50 people, drawn from c30 households. Roughly a third of members are from our regular congregation. Francis Clarke and Paru Oatey maintained our recruiting presence at local events and amongst neighbours.

Our income this year will total almost £3000, mostly comprising donations of £10-£100. Our administrative expenses are minimal.

So far, we have sent members a Christmas card and two newsletters, as well as reminders about each of the 'In Conversation' events (and some others). Some FoAS members have attended each of these events.

Future plans include a late May newsletter and an annual gathering on Saturday 17 September, which we hope will combine a social aspect with a historical presentation. We are exploring ideas for our next Christmas card, a coaster mat, and a pamphlet history of the church which might be given to members and sold more widely. Over the summer we shall introduce a discrete FoAS gmail address. We are also looking at a simplified new flyer.

The PCC controls what FoAS income is used for. It needs to establish clear and published criteria for projects attracting FoAS funding: these seem likely to centre on:

- a) Heritage: conservation and preservation of the historic building (rather than routine maintenance)
- b) Community: improvements which will benefit community use of the church (rather than solely enhancing worship by the congregation)

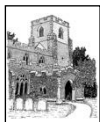
In practice, each of these distinctions is a fine one. Where (b) is concerned, there has been discussion around a grant towards the cost of a new sound system.

We need to continue to grow our membership as and where we can. Two box adverts in the Village magazine have so far produced no identifiable result: we shall persevere when magazine space allows, but word of mouth seems more effective.

Our biggest foreseeable challenge will come in the autumn as half of current members have paid us a one-off BACS subscription, and we shall ask them to renew their membership.

The current steering group comprises Francis Clarke (Chairman), Paru Oatey and Nigel Richardson (Secretary). We are considering how and when to recruit to it someone who is not a member of our regular congregation.

*Nigel Richardson*



## 9. EVENTS REPORT

Following the repair of the floor, the replacement of the pews and the PCC's decision to make the church available during the week for use by the community, it was also possible to plan a series of events to attract members of the Harston community and beyond to come to the building.

### Hire

For the first six months of their meeting in person after lockdown the **Parish Council** met in the church finding the spaciousness an attraction although the difficulty of access meant that their last use of it was in December 2021. The PCC drew up a Policy for the Use of Premises to cover such hires.

**Prime Brass** and **Junior Prime Brass** have used the church for rehearsals on a regular basis, each giving a concert *in lieu* of a hire fee. This has proved generous, rewarding All Saints' with almost £2,000 in total. Junior Prime Brass would like to repeat this annual event which was held in the afternoon of Mothering Sunday 2022.

### Open Day

To celebrate the completion of the current phase of restoration and coincide with Harvest Festival an Open Day was held (18 September) with an exhibition of the **History of Restoration** of the Church, a produce stall, activities for children in the churchyard and ending in a rousing concert in the evening given by Prime Brass.

### Remembering

To mark remembrance church members and the Harston Music Group offered an evening's anthology of prose, poetry and music both sacred and secular which proved both moving and amusing. As our first in person experience of a non-worship event for a long time it was also memorable.

### In Conversation

A series of free, informal, evening events were held on the last Thursday of each month between January and April 2022 where Rev'd Susan interviewed leading people from Harston about their specialism and then encouraged discussion. The subjects were:

Mark Williamson, BBC, *The Pandemic and Local News*

Shaun Fitzgerald, OBE, Centre for Climate Repair, U of C, *Repairing the Climate*

Alison Liebling, U of C, *Finding Truths in Prison*

Terry Waite, CBE, *Survival in Solitude*

On each occasion light refreshments were served, an average of 50 people attended and donations averaged £150 an evening. This proved an excellent way to encourage people to see the church in a new light and experience its possibilities.

Publicity for events was helped by the revamp of the church website [www.hhn.church](http://www.hhn.church). Bookings for all events was via Eventbrite and some donations were via card reader.

*Margaret Greeves*

**Electoral Roll 2022**

John Barber	Norman Jones
John Barrett	Patsy Jones
Sally Barrett	Iris King
Philip Bowden-Pickstock	Audrey Knight
David Buckle	David Leonard
Magda Buckle	Judy Lindgren
Francis Clarke	Brian Nash
Charlotte Clarke	Mary Nash
Sarah Coe	Alastair Oatey
Doris Durham	Paru Oatey
Julie Elmes	Frances Pearce Gould
Shaun Fitzgerald	Rupert Pearce Gould
Rebecca Fitzgerald	Giles Pemberton
Luke Fitzgerald	Ceri Pemberton
Sam Fitzgerald	Andrew Pitts
Jacob Fitzgerald	Susan Pitts
Andrew Flewitt	Joy Richardson
Margaret Greeves	Nigel Richardson
Roger Greeves	Jeremy Symes
Beth Hawkins	Jonathan Wedgebury
Paul Holdom	Genevieve Wedgbury
	Jan Vaugon

**Number on roll = 43**

## Sidespersons

Paul Holdom
Charlotte Clarke
Francis Clarke
Joy Richardson
John Barber
Mary Nash
Frances Pearce Gould
Norman Jones
Patsy Jones
Margaret Greeves
Ceri Permberton
Giles Pemberton