



## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023

### **Administrative information**

Holy Trinity Church is situated in Logmore Lane, Westcott. It is part of the Diocese of Guildford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, St John's, Furlong Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3PP.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (charity registration number: 1132869).

PCC members who have served from 1 January 2023 until the date this report was approved (unless noted otherwise) are:

*Chairman, Ex-officio:* The Rev'd Tim Armstrong, incumbent  
*Wardens:* Mark Shakespeare: Elected at APCM 23.4.23  
Nicola Smetham: Elected at APCM 23.4.23.

*Representatives on the Deanery Synod:*  
Glynis Cranefield Elected at APCM 11.10.20

*Elected members:*

Kay Meldrum, Treasurer	First elected for three years at 2009 APCM, then for three years every third APCM, up to and including from 23.5.21.
Jan Way, Secretary	Co-opted at PCC meeting 8.5.17. Elected 22.4.18. for three years and again 23.5.21.
Mark Shakespeare	Co-opted at PCC meeting 8.5.17, elected 23.05.21 for three years.
Malcolm Bradley	Elected 11.10.20. for three years and 23.4.23 for one year.
Richard Packer	Elected 11.10.20. for three years and again 23.4.23.
Hannah Mayo	Elected 23.4.23 for three years.
Elizabeth Mair	Elected 23.4.23 for three years.
Murray Stephen	Elected 11.10.20 for three years and 23.4.23 for one year.
Louise Scillitoe-Brown	Elected in 23.4.23 for 3 years.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

### **Objectives and activities**

Holy Trinity's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the building of St John's, Furlong Road, Westcott.

### **Church attendance**

There are 181 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll (2021 – 185). The average weekly attendance on a “normal Sunday” was 61 – comprising 55 adults and 6 children (2021 figures: 72; 70 adults and 2 children).

The “worshipping community” (ie attend worship at least monthly) is 116 (2021 – 104) - adults, children in congregational worship/activities, plus home communions and services taken at Bramley House and Westcott House.

### **Review of the year**

The full PCC met five times during the year. Committees met between meetings and any matters arising were referred to the PCC as necessary.

## **SAFEGUARDING – Jan Way, Safeguarding Officer**

Jan Way is the Safeguarding Officer and Helen Hughes the DBS Validator for this period.

### **Activities**

#### a) *Safeguarding incidents*

There have been no safeguarding incidents during the period from January 2023 to December 2023.

#### b) *Complying with policies, procedures and good practice*

The Church of England introduced a set of National Safeguarding Standards in October 2023 building upon existing policies and procedures and these will be linked to the Parish Dashboard. The five standards cover:

- Culture, Leadership and Capacity
- Prevention
- Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk
- Victims and Survivors
- Learning, Supervision and Support

The Safeguarding officer continues to monitor the Safeguarding Parish Dashboard - an online platform that outlines the duties and responsibilities of each Parish regarding safeguarding, covering training, adoption of policies, activities etc. There are numerous levels as you move through the platform. Currently Holy Trinity is on Level 3, having completed tasks in the year to move from Level 2. The only outstanding item is that all PCC members attend the Prevention of Domestic Abuse training online. 7 out of 12 have completed the course so far.

Risk assessments and job descriptions were recommended for any church activity involving children and both Cookie Club and Sunday Club leaders now have job descriptions and both activities have undertaken a risk assessment. Jan has visited and inspected both.

c) *Training*

As above. In general people have engaged with the training offered which is of a high quality.

d) *DBS Validations*

It is important to note that key roles in the church require an enhanced DBS, specifically when the role involves work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Equally DBS status lasts three years so renewals are required. However, there is now an update system, free to volunteers where, once registered the DBS is automatically updated and the status of individuals can be checked. This saves a great deal of time and expense, so it is really worth everyone who undertakes a DBS doing this. It is not possible to continue to work with children or vulnerable adults if a DBS has expired.

Helen Hughes looks after the DBS validations, which is not straightforward, and I remain extremely grateful to her for doing this key role.

e) *Safeguarding meetings*

A safeguarding meeting was held in September 2023 and these are now a regular occurrence between Jan Way and Tim Armstrong.

## **Conclusion**

Safeguarding is now a standing item on the PCC agenda, which is as it should be, as it remains a key component of the church.

The Dashboard is a helpful tool to ensure that as a church we are both compliant and cognisant of our duties and responsibilities.

## GENERAL REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023 – Nicola Smetham & Mark Shakespeare, Churchwardens

2023 has seen the completion of all but one of our key development projects. This will now enable us to focus on engaging with the wider community, ensuring that our church building is fully utilised and seen as a thriving and welcoming space for all. In line with our church vision of welcome and building relationships within the village, we held the hugely successful Westfestivity event in mid-November. We received tremendous feedback on this event ranging from – ‘I’ve never been in here (church) before’, to ‘I haven’t visited for years.’ There were comments too on the vibrancy of the church community and how welcoming the church looked and felt. In short, there was strong feeling of ‘mission accomplished’. Westfestivity will return again this year.

Other community events have included ‘Captain Noah and His Floating Zoo’, which was a great success and well-attended by school parents supporting the newly formed and grant-assisted school choir. This was a great example of outreach and connection coming full circle, ending up with a ‘new audience’ entering the church. Earlier in the year we held a Pancake Party, which again was very popular and drew in many children and families from across the village, for some of whom it was a much needed meal.

Our partnership with Surrey Hills All Saints School has been strengthened during the year, not only through events such as these but also through ‘Open the Book’ school assemblies, the Transforming Lives for Good mentoring scheme (TLG) and the Easter Pause Day. (More on both of these initiatives later in the report.) For younger children in the village and their parents or carers, Cookie Club continues to provide a place of welcome and support.

In October, we held our first Service of Remembering, an opportunity to give thanks for the lives of those we have lost, whether recently or long ago. This was very much valued by those who attended, with a request for it to become an annual event.

Earlier this year we gathered in prayer for a resolution to our vicarage dilemma. God is clearly moving within the community of Westcott. Within a matter of weeks a suitable property came on the market, was viewed and reviewed by the Diocese, and a speedy completion on the property was made. It will be tremendous to have the Armstrong family living in the heart of the village, demonstrating faith, parenting and the importance of family. Meanwhile, the old vicarage site is being sold by the diocese and is currently under offer.

We are now mindful of the Quinquennial that will take place in May 2026 under the supervision of Louise Scillitoe-Brown, who oversees buildings and maintenance, (more detail later in the report). Our next steps are to fully consider the availability of grant funding to assist with the works. With this in mind a new volunteer position of Grant Writer/Researcher is to be advertised shortly around the village.

As we look ahead to the year to come, we have outlined a need for the upper room (above the kitchen) to be 'updated' and made a suitable space for the Sunday Club to expand into. A truly wonderful problem to have!

Immense thanks must go to our previous church wardens, Simon and Ali, Libby and John, as the final re-ordering works complete. The kitchen was completed in November and shortly after christened with a Baked Potato Lunch, another well attended event and soon to be repeated. To sit down and share food as a church family is very special, it all helps to build connection, enable good conversation and strengthen our fellowship. This facility makes it all so much easier and we have much to be thankful for.

The floor levelling represents the last of the re-ordering projects one which, along with the new chairs, will help to create a more flexible and accessible space for future events. These projects have been funded through grants and gifts, with no impact on general funds.

Early discussions have started on reviewing our giving to cover our increased running costs. More will be shared on this as we continue into the summer, but we are reassured by the steady congregation numbers and indeed the number of regular 'new faces' attending. We are blessed with so many resources, not least the many gifted volunteers who give of their time and counsel, and other income streams, (village mag and phone mast rental), that help support the work of HTW.

We conclude with the church health check list as a reminder of the direction we continue to journey in as a church.

- Healthy Church attendance.
- Involve a broader range of people in leading and supporting worship.
- Encourage people to join the "Electoral roll" – membership of the Church.
- Church engagement with the village school, and in village life generally.
- Volunteer posts filled.
- Clear evidence of discipleship – people growing in Christian faith – including ordinands.
- Activities organised by church members.
- Pastoral care offered through the village.
- Engagement with (inter) national issues e.g. through "Eco Church" – paused for now.
- Engagement with the wider Church, including, for example the great support for Papua Partners.
- Meeting the costs of running the Church in Westcott – under review

Both Mark and I would like to extend our thanks to the many of you who have answered our endless questions and helped us settle into our first year as church wardens. Thank you!

## A REVIEW OF THE YEAR – Tim Armstrong, Vicar

- Our 2023 sermon series included looking at Jesus' journey in Mark's Gospel, the nature of wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, and the challenging yet hopeful writings of the prophet Malachi.
- We spent 8 weeks as a whole church exploring Spiritual Formation on Sunday mornings and in small groups – asking the question what does it mean for each of us to be intentional in how we are being formed day by day and looking at 7 'practices' which have sustained Christians over the centuries.
- Hannah Mayo continued her ordination training (see below) and the Diocese launched a new Foundations in Ministry course for those in lay ministry who would like space over a few Saturdays in the year to do some theological thinking, form a support network with others in similar situations and have space to see what God is calling them to step into in the coming years.
- Nicky, Mark and Grant became our new Church Wardens and have done an incredible job doing all sorts of vital things – most of which go unseen. I am extremely grateful to the three of them for all they did in 2023 and the incredible support, wisdom and encouragement they give me.
- Many of us went on a Church Weekend Away at Wychcroft Retreat Centre where we enjoyed beautiful surroundings, good company, excellent food, and inspiring teaching from Rev'd Alex Cacouris. The feedback from the event was extremely positive and we are looking to return on another weekend away there in 2025.
- Our links with Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School continued to develop with Open the Book and TLG both having a positive impact on the school community. In addition to these two great initiatives (see more on them below) the whole School came to the church for their collective worship three times in the year and members of the church are involved in supporting the school through prayer, governance, 'Pause Days', encouragement, and providing regular collective worship. A new Head, Jacky Fyson, began her role in September 2023 and is having a very positive impact on the school and community.
- Our Sunday Club has grown over 2023 led by Julie Badman and Jenny Armstrong with children aged between 0-6 dancing to the worship and filling the Sunday Club room during the service. There is a strong foundation to keep building on this going forward as we seek to grow in our vision to be a church of all ages.
- The Diocese launched the first stage of the Catalyst Project which is already having an impressive impact on helping young people in Dorking and the surrounding area explore the possibility of faith in Jesus for themselves. There is much more to come in the next few years and we have been in conversations about how the Church in Westcott can be involved.
- Monthly worship nights took place throughout 2023 alternating between relaxed contemporary worship and the reflective liturgy of Compline.

- The Village Magazine was delivered each month to almost every house in Westcott. Huge thanks to Cath who edits the magazine and to everyone involved in producing it and taking it door to door.
- Women's Group and the Wednesday Communion at St John's Chapel remained key spaces of discipleship and mutual support within our church community.
- The Church in Westcott was present and represented at a number of wonderful community events – from Westfest and Westfestivity, to Pub Quizzes and Concerts.
- We saw attendance at services over Christmas return to their pre-pandemic levels with people from across the village joining us for the Crib Service, Christingle, Carols, Midnight Communion (which returned to a midnight slot in 2023) and other services.
- We work closely with the other churches in the local area. Deanery Synod – attended by Clergy and Lay Members (Glynis Cranefield represented Westcott) - has had a year of vision setting and reflection. I met regularly with the other church leaders in Dorking through the Dorking Ministers' Fellowship where we shared vision, sought ways to work together to proclaim the Gospel through words and actions, and prayed for one another and our communities.
- The Church Finances have been a challenge in 2023. We have been hit by the inflation and raised costs that have impacted on all people and organisations and regular giving has not increased with inflation over the past five years. There was some good news – especially in terms of special funding for one off projects such as the new kitchen which was entirely covered by grants and specific gifts. I am so grateful to all of you that gave as part of your worship over the course of 2023. See our treasurer Kay's helpful summary below for a breakdown of the years finances.
- There are countless stories from 2023 of people taking steps on their journey with God because of there being a living, breathing Christian Community in Westcott. A snap shot of this information is contained below. Thanks to each of you for being a part of the ongoing story of our church as we seek to continually be formed into the community God is calling us to be.

### **ORDINATION TRAINING - Hannah Mayo**

I am now nearly two-thirds of the way through my ordination training with the Local Ministry Programme for the Guildford Diocese. The training is part time –

- college each Monday evening in term time
- a study day at the start of each term
- 3 residential weekends a year

Each term we study a different module: e.g. Mission and Evangelism, Pastoral Care, The Bible, Discipleship and Ethics, Church History and Doctrine, and for each of these submit 2 assignments. In addition, we need to preach at least once a term, and I've recently done a placement with the Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy.

Crucially, I have always been clear that God is calling me to the parish of Westcott, so, unlike Ellie Lister and David Packham when I am ordained, in June/July 2025, it will be as what is currently called an Ordained Local Minister (OLM), to serve here, with you and alongside Tim, as an additional priest in this parish.

I look forward to discovering more of what that might mean with you in this place, and I'm constantly astonished and humbled by the road God is taking me on, and the ways I'm being formed as I travel, as we all are in our different ways. So I'd encourage you to think about where God might be leading you, what God might be calling you to be and do, using the unique gifts God's given you, recognising we all have so much to offer in building the kingdom and radiating God's love and the hope of Christ in this community.

### **OPEN THE BOOK – Liz Bradley, co-ordinator**

Open the Book (OtB) is an exciting storytelling project where Bible stories are shared with children in a way that is fun, interactive and memorable. The OtB team has grown from 3 to 9 over the past year and we take a weekly Assembly in Surrey Hills All Saints on Wednesday afternoons. The stories are scripted and the children (from a different year group each week) enjoy dressing up as the characters alongside the adults. After the storytelling there is a structured time of Reflection with prayer.

New volunteers are welcomed and training is available.

### **TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR GOOD (TLG) – Libby Witt, co-ordinator**

In the past year, Holy Trinity has continued partnering successfully with 'Transforming Lives for Good' (TLG) and Surrey Hills All Saints School to run an Early Intervention programme with children from the school. TLG is a Christian charity which partners with local churches to give emotional support to vulnerable children and young people through a year-long coaching programme, designed to help the child make the very best of their time in education.

In 2023, three volunteer coaches from Holy Trinity (Karen Ratzke, Lisa Brady and Libby Witt) coached 6 children under the programme: three from January to July and another three from September onwards. We are blessed in having great support from the Senior Leadership Team at Surrey Hills and continue to have a good working relationship with our School Key Contact, which has helped with the smooth running of the project. We recently underwent our annual review with our TLG Regional Coordinator, in which we were able to hear from the school of the positive change they have seen in the coached children. TLG continue to be a huge support to our coaching team: providing resources, training and encouragement through termly online regional forum meetings, and contact with our Regional Coordinator.



We are delighted that 2 more coaches (Grant Smetham and Murray Stephen) will start their coach training Spring 2024. If anyone is interested in joining the team and would like to know more about what coaching involves, I'd love to hear from you!

## RESOURCES TEAM

### Financial Review – Kay Meldrum, Treasurer

Holy Trinity's finances have continued to decline over the past twelve months, with a drop in income not matched by the drop in expenditure.

Total receipts on ordinary Unrestricted Funds were £119,933 and are detailed in the Financial Statements. This represents a decrease in Unrestricted Income of approx. 16%. This includes a small decrease in covenanted donations and associated tax credits of 2% (2022 11%), a 43% decrease in one-off donations, a surplus from St John's and an increase in investment and other income.

The field next to the churchyard was let on an annual basis, and gross income of £1,000 from it is included in these accounts. Rental was also received in respect of a mobile telephone mast on church premises, and gross income of £5,617 from it is shown in these accounts.

£134,892 was spent to provide the Christian ministry from Holy Trinity Church, a decrease of approx. 7%. The main item, 61% of total expenditure, (last year 49%), is the contribution to the Diocesan Parish Share, which largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy.

The PCC continues to own the former St John's church, which was used by various organisations and individuals. The net surplus on the premises was £1,601, compared with net deficit of £461 in 2022.

The net result for the year was an excess of expenditure over income of £21,352, £6,393 of this arising from the reclassification of income from the Westcott Magazine as Restricted, leaving a "working" deficit of £14,959 (2022 deficit £3,026). The balances carried forward at 31<sup>st</sup> December for Unrestricted Funds totalled £80,095 (2021 £101,447).

In addition the PCC has £34,149 in Funds Designated for improvements to the Church fabric and other work, which includes £31,417 in fixed assets, leaving £1,732 cash available. (2022 £44,335). The sale of the pews contributed £1,000 towards this Fund.

Looking forward to 2024, work is needed on the building following the Quinquennial review, and Gas and Electricity costs have increased substantially following the end of a fixed rate contract. If donations continue to fall it will be another challenging year.

## Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to accumulate a balance on Unrestricted Funds of £50,000, to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. The balance of £80,095 on Unrestricted Funds at the year-end exceeds this target.

The balance of £250,636 in the Restricted Funds represents £4,640 in the General Support Fund, £7,336 for Youth Work, £217,224 net cost of St John's, £1,640 grant for the churchyard at St Johns, £3,631 for work on St John's building, £1,421 received for the Peace Garden, £3,388 relating to the Touche Fund, and £11,356 in the Magazine Fund. Investments held in the Building Development Fund for future work on the church building were sold during the year to fund the new kitchen.

It is our policy to invest our Restricted and Unrestricted Funds balances with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund. Permanent Endowment funds are invested primarily in income generating Funds.

### **FABRIC – Mark Shakespeare and Nicola Smetham, Churchwardens**

Alongside regular maintenance items (such as electrical and fire safety checks), we continue to steward and safeguard the fabric of the HTW church buildings and graveyards.

- The new flexible seating arrived and transformed the main body of the church building into a lighter more user-friendly space. A developing annual programme of concerts and village events is beginning to take form, creating fuller utilisation of the church throughout the week by all members of the community.
- 2023 saw the successful completion of the kitchen, a much anticipated part of the re-ordering works. It was quickly put into action with Westfestivity being held in the church and facilitating Jon and Mum catering at the event. Many thanks to Jan Way and Paul Goddard for their work on this project.
- You will recall our new boiler was fitted in 2022, in the nick of time, with the increased energy costs we've faced in 2023. Its efficiency has certainly contributed to minimising bills.
- The new memorial garden in the overflow graveyard is now established.

We are also grateful to the many volunteers who help us in so many ways, and in particular to Louise Scillitoe-Brown and Murray Stephen, for taking on responsibility for the Church Building and Churchyards respectively. (Louise's more detailed report follows.) We'd also like to thank Sarah Massey our hard working parish administrator and Kate Fairbass, our communications person. Maria Hebbard our cleaning 'angel' who keeps the church neat and tidy for us and notifies us of much besides. We are very grateful to the entire team.

## **BUILDINGS AND MAINTENANCE – Louise Scillitoe-brown**

### **Stonework:**

In summary progress has been slow. Stonemasons are an elusive trade, difficult to find and slow to quote for works. We have now called upon the resources of Church House and further contacts have been received, who are now in the process of quoting for Quinquennial 'essential' works.

The two stonework quotes received so far (C.Anstey + new stonemason) for repairs are vastly different, in both the work suggested to fix the issues and the price. The former has identified some potentially serious movement in the eastern gable, and we have been advised to find a structural engineer to review. An email has been sent to Chris from Taylor Williams Daley (Chris is a structural surveyor and was involved in the Quinquennial inspection), to see if he is able to, or interested in advising.

### **Lightning Conductor:**

The on-going issue with the lightning conductor has yet to be resolved. We have now invited other contractors to look into this and asked each for onsite inspections and their evaluations. Using the scheme suggested by Mike Smith of MDS (HTW's usual lightning rod tester and installer) as a starting point, quotes were requested from four specialists on the Diocese list. Two have responded so far and new reports are awaited, before working out what action should be taken.

### **Grants:**

Until comparable quotes have been received for the necessary works we cannot proceed with grant funding. We can however look at compiling a maintenance plan, often a requirement of funding bodies in the application process.

## **ST JOHN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE – Jon Mears, Manager**

### **Initiatives**

#### **Westcott Community Garden:**

Thriving as it moves into its second year, with strong volunteer attendance, successful events – Soup and Poetry evening, and a bountiful harvest of fruit and vegetables. This initiative has clearly resonated within the community.

### **Westcott Community Larder:**

In partnership with Mid Surrey Community Fridges, the larder diverts food waste and serves 20-30 people each week with the help of dedicated volunteers.

### **Jon and Mum Groceries / Westcott Village Hub:**

This transitioning not-for-profit enterprise is developing well. The addition of a cafe and home-cooked meals, summer BBQs, and support for various community groups indicate the shop's evolving role as a community centre. The shop has also provided an outlet for goods made by start-up village businesses including a Pottery, an Artist, a Beekeeper and our many wonderful village bakers!

### **Chapel Bookings:**

Increased bookings from diverse groups (yoga, art, writing, recovery, etc.) demonstrate improved awareness and use of the space. The quarterly poetry night is a hit! For future consideration there is also interest in a cinema club, board gaming, and other events, suggesting further opportunities for community engagement.

Looking ahead additional funding will be needed for essential maintenance and to ensure St John's remains fit for purpose. Suggested items are carpet replacement in the Chapel with a more durable carpet for increased footfall. The Westcott Village Hub project and potential CIC status provide hope for securing additional funding and enabling the necessary renovations.

Increased awareness and utilisation of the space not only brings the possibilities of longer opening hours, and volunteer opportunities, but potentially offering support for individuals transitioning back into the workforce. As you will have read, all these opportunities involve the support of the community and volunteers, we have been supported well, but are still on the lookout for community minded locals to support ventures and opportunities. All of the above demonstrates the strong community spirit in Westcott and the growing role St. John's Chapel plays as a vital hub.

### **FLOWERS – Andrea Gabb, Co-ordinator**

One of the biggest challenges for 2023 was the rising costs of fresh flowers. The wonderful flower arranging team at HTW have adapted and embraced working with a mix of fresh and silk flowers to ensure the displays in church are not diminished by the cost-of-living crisis.

My thanks to the Flower Team who immediately rose to the challenge bringing Christmas to HTW a month early (!), in mid-November, for the Westfestivity event. There were Christmas tress galore and the church looked wonderful - Christmassy and welcoming. So many wonderful comments were received from visitors confirming as much. Once Advent proper arrived Mark Seymour delivered and put up the huge and beautiful Christmas tree by the altar.

Our immense thanks to him once again. Many of the congregation commented on how lovely it was to have an extended Christmas decoration period in the church, (mid-Nov through to twelfth night).

Our rota is small, which means we all have to work extra hard, so anyone, ladies or gentlemen, who enjoy the tranquillity of our church and the peace and quiet to arrange flowers, is most welcome to join us. Flower arranging experience isn't necessary, and there is help at hand if you feel unsure about your skills. May I finally say, again and most importantly, my grateful thanks to those on the Flower Team who make all this happen, and who make our church look loved and cared for.

### **Westcott Vicarage**

As this document is updated Tim Armstrong and the family have moved into Watson Road in the village in May 2024. The Diocese took the decision in late 2023 that development of the previous Vicarage site was beyond the time and resources required with their small in-house land management team. The plan moving forward is to sell to a developer and hand over control of the planning for the proposed development.

### **MISSION & SOCIAL JUSTICE**

The following was donated by way of Outward Giving in 2023 for outside agencies in direct giving to Holy Trinity or from general funds:

Royal British Legion £64.27

Leatherhead Start £163.10

CMS £360

Crisis at Christmas £200

### **PAPUA PARTNERS – Naomi Sosa**

Papua Partners remains a key mission partner and we raised a few thousand pounds to support their vital work through fundraisers and initiatives in 2023.

During 2023/23 Papua Partners worked in partnership with six organisations and two key networks in West Papua.

Yasumat (Social Foundation for Isolated Peoples); Yapelin (Social Foundation for the Evangelical Church of Indonesia – GIDI); Womens Department of the GIDI Church; Suu Bin Tedei (working with women affected by conflict); Yum Yaf Papua; Eruwok – Bokondini; Elisa Foundation; West Papuan Council of Churches; IWaTaLi Papua; West Papua Christian Youth Forum.

## **Changes in Papua Partners**

During 2022/2023 we have gone through a significant shift in our organisational structure, shifting more control and management responsibility to West Papua. We initiated a formal partnership with our core local partner, iWaTaLi, who now functions as the local arm of Papua Partners. This year also saw the recruitment of a full-time Papua coordinator who will lead the iWaTaLi team and our programme of work and provide training and support to partners. A part time director in the UK provides overall management and technical support to the programs in West Papua as well as growing support for the charity and raising awareness of the issues facing West Papua in the UK and internationally.

During 2022/23 we focused our support on six main areas:

- Empowering Women
- Community Mobilisation
- Indigenous Leadership
- Peace Building
- Human Rights Documentation
- Environmental Stewardship

## **Some of the highlights of 2022/23**

- Women leading in Business - In partnership with Melania Foundation in the Netherlands, Papua Partners were able to support two new small women led business cooperatives in Bokondini. Our partner, Eruwok, worked with women from 10 communities to set up a baking cooperative and a basic goods cooperative. An amazing example of women leading change and being the engine of growth in their communities.
  
- This year saw the continuation of the ending violence against women and girls programme in the town of Dekai, Yahukimo. Starting in January 2022, 10 community facilitators were trained and these facilitators are now leading small groups in their communities.
  
- Responding to the crisis of internally displaced communities - In February 2023 we started a new initiative 'Integrated Development for Internally Displaced Indigenous Communities in West Papua' which is funded by the JA Clark Trust. This programme is being led by iWaTaLi and is supporting communities displaced by land-based conflict, and natural disasters. The project has three main areas of work:
  - i) Building Strong Communities: Improving the livelihoods of 3 IDP communities through the establishment of green business, savings groups and improved management of the environment.
  - ii) Speaking Out: Equipping 30 youth and women leaders as Change Agents and network leaders to monitor, map, and document causes of displacement, raise awareness on climate change and the environment and advocate for change.
  - iii) Building Bridges: Creating opportunities for joint working and better relationships with host communities to ensure environmental sustainability and peace.

- Trauma Healing for communities in Star Mountains – We continue to partner with the Women’s Department of the GIDI church who have supported internally displaced people in the Star Mountains with trauma healing through story telling.
- Peacebuilding - iWaTaLi has been growing their important peacebuilding work and are active behind the scenes training activists in conflict areas, building connections and consensus, helping Papuan groups build non-violent movement for peace and justice. We have supported several small grants for activists to travel internationally to carry out advocacy on the ongoing situation in Papua.
- Paralegal and documentation Training - iWaTaLi initiated its training programme to equip youth leaders from conflict zones with skills for documenting human rights and environmental crimes, and start the process for some of them to become paralegals.
- Church and Community Transformation (CCT) – The CCT program continues to grow and is the core approach used by Yapelin, Yasumat and iWaTaLi to build the capacity and resilience of local communities to bring about positive lasting change. Together with partners the CCT program is working with 100 local congregations and currently impacting over 8,000 people. We work with a Papua wide network of CCT trainers and a Papua CCT leadership team which has representatives from all the partner organisations.
- This year we have continued to support and facilitate the advocacy work of the Papuan Council of Churches (WPCC) and the West Papuan Christian Youth Forum internationally.

Papua Partners is very grateful to the community and church in Westcott who continue to faithfully support us and enable this work to continue.

### **“ECO CHURCH” – Hannah Mayo**

Activity has paused whilst Hannah completes her ordinand training.

However, our eco awareness is now a part of our ethos and discipleship, and very much embedded in our decision making as a church.

‘Forest Church’ will continue to run 4 times a year as an invaluable service in the All-Age church service calendar.

Jakki Phillips continues to forge close links with the community garden project which is now firmly established in the graveyard at St Johns.

In other news:

We came out of our fixed green energy (Good Energy) contract in September 2023 and changed green supplier, due to the rising cost of living crisis and no competitive rates being offered by the existing supplier. Our contract with green Octopus Energy comes up for renewal in August 2024 for both HTW and St Johns sites.

**SURREY HILLS GROUP – Tim Armstrong**

(Group of Churches formed 1.1.15:

Abinger & Coldharbour with Holmbury & Wotton; Westcott)

We continued to work closely in an informal but significant partnership with Abinger, Wotton, Coldharbour and North Holmwood, with our Open the Book team being drawn from across the churches and useful discussions taking place about youth work and provision in the coming years.

\*\*\*\*\*