

St Mary's Haughley Choir Report for Haughley Annual Parish Meeting, May 2022

1. Summary

- We currently have a total of 13 choristers. If you know of anyone who enjoys singing and who would be interested to find out more about the choir please encourage them to have a word with Janet Sheldrake, or any of our choir members.
- Choir activities were greatly limited during the first 15 months or so of the Covid-19 Pandemic. During this period the choir was not able to sing together in person. However, the choir was able to sing “virtually”. This involved recording individual voices at home, to a backing track, with all the individual recordings being joined together using computer software to create a “virtual” choir.
- In the second half of 2021 there was a return to some sort of normality for the choir with a resumption of weekly choir practices in the church and singing at Sunday services.
- We are delighted to report that in August 2021 Celia Barrow agreed to take on the role of organist and accompanist. Celia brings with her a wealth of musical experience both as performer and teacher.
- Sadly we lost Eileen Jones who passed away in January 2022 following a period of ill health. Eileen had been organist at Haughley for over 20 years and for several years was our choir director. The contribution that Eileen made to music in our church was immense.

2. Highlights of the past 2 years

- **Virtual Choir Recordings** - During the period when the choir was unable to meet in person the choir made a total of 25 “virtual” recordings. These have included a variety of hymns, carols, anthems and Taize. Several of the recordings were used in the Benefice online services, and recordings were also used in both Haughley’s “virtual” Carol Service and in the “virtual” Easter Celebration. Two of the recordings have been uploaded to YouTube - a link to these may be found on the haughley.org.uk website.
- **September 2020** - The choir participated in the SHCT (Suffolk Historic Churches Trust) Ride and Stride event and, socially distanced, sang outside the churches at Onehouse, Harleston and Shelland.
- **March 2021** – Using “Zoom”, the choir participated in a “virtual” Lent Lunch raising a total of £100 for Christian Aid.
- **April 2021** - The choir was honoured and privileged to sing at the memorial service to Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in St Mary’s Haughley.
- **September 2021** - The choir participated in the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust Annual Sponsored Ride & Stride event.

- **December 2021** - For the first time in 2 years, with the relaxation of Covid-19 rules, the choir was able to sing together at various Christmas period events, namely the Haughley “Switch-on”, the Christingle service and the Nine Lessons & Carols service.
- **April 2022** - For the first time in 3 years the choir was able to sing together at Easter services.

3. Plans for 2022

- **June 2022** - The choir, together with friends in our local community, will be staging a concert to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.
- **September 2022** - The choir will again be participating in the Suffolk Historic Churches Ride & Stride event singing in churches visited.

Janet Sheldrake / David Fleetwood - April 2022



The choir singing outside Harleston Church during the 2020 SHCT Ride & Stride event