

Communication Officer's report for St Edmund's Parish AGM on Sunday 30 July 2017.

I am Andy Parris and since February last year, I have been the communications officer for the parish. I have responsibility for maintaining the parish website and for passing on any news items and stories that the diocesan communications officer may find interesting enough to include in the diocesan newsletter or on its website. These have been articles about the crib festival; John Charmley's appointment as Pro Vice-Chancellor at St Mary's University in Twickenham; and Mary Kirk's pilgrimage to Rome.

I am part of the parish communications team. This team consists of Helen Kirby, Mary Kirk and me. The three of us meet every 3 months or so to review what has happened with the website and to make plans for its development. Mary and I meet more frequently to resolve any problems and fine tune the way articles and information is accessible to you and others.

During the year, we have made changes to existing features and information to make the site more logical and easier to navigate around – articles have been combined or removed, menus improved and new features added. For example, an 'active' calendar has been added to the sidebar, safeguarding has a more prominent position and the readings for the Sunday mass are available under 'Liturgy'. Blogs and photo stories have been reorganised and placed under the menu 'People'. We have also increased the contrast between text and screen to make it easier to read. In November, we changed the company that hosts the site. This has resulted in it loading more quickly onto your computers.

A new feature, interviews with people in the parish, is also under the 'People' menu heading. These have given fascinating insights into the lives of a range of different people from both ends of the parish and have been popular with visitors to the site. We know this because the statistics about the site, collected automatically, give us information including the number of visitors, what pages are opened, the country in which visitors live and how long they stay on the site. During the year although numbers accessing the site have fluctuated month on month, they have steadily risen. In June, there were over 300 visits a day to the site: nearly 10,000 in the month.

People access the site not just from in the UK but also from around the world. This means it has an important role to play in describing and explaining what life is like in a typical catholic parish in Suffolk/Norfolk. The weekly newsletter, which is not part of my responsibility, is an important source of information in this evangelizing role. In addition, we are dependent on parishioners sending in information about events in the parish. To give us an idea about local use of the site, in October we shall conduct a simple survey as people are leaving Mass. I hope you will all be happy to take part.