

Parish of St Peter Hargrave



Annual Report 2019

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP and EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

The membership of the PCC following the 2019 Annual Meeting was as follows:-

Members

MRS JULIE BRISCOE (2017)
MR ROBERT BURGESS (2018)
MRS JOAN ELLAMS (2017)
MRS DI HOULBROOKE (2018)
MR IAN MCDUGALL (2017)
MRS ELIZABETH MANFORD (2018)
MRS ANNE SMART (2019)
MRS MARY STREFFORD (2019)
MRS ANN WILLIAMS (2019)
MR SEAN WILLIAMS (2019)

Ex-Officio Members

REVEREND CHRISTOPHER DEAKIN CHAIRMAN AND INCUMBENT	
MR MICHAEL WHITTINGHAM	CHURCH WARDEN
MR MALCOLM SMART	CHURCH WARDEN/DEANERY
	SYNOD REP
MR DAVE ROBERTS	TREASURER
MRS JAN BURGESS	ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER
MR EDWARD THORNTON-FIRKIN	DEANERY SYNOD REP
MRS BRENDA ROSCOE	SECRETARY

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The PCC met on 4 occasions throughout the year in addition to the Annual General Meeting held on 14th April 2019.

Completion and installation of the Lych Gates has been finalised, with grateful thanks to the Kerruish family who donated them in memory of Jacqui.

The Rev. Christopher Deakin's Induction as Incumbent of St. Peter's church took place in February.

An organ fund has been set up and it is hoped that progress will be made towards the installation of a digital organ.

This year Happy Days weekend began with a very popular Barn dance on the Friday evening in the marquee.

Another very successful, and sunny Happy Days fete took place on Saturday. The Saturday evening event was organised by Hargrave & Huxley W.I. who invited the Chester Male Voice Choir to entertain.

The Sunday morning service was attended by the Salvation Army and the Sheriff of Chester and her Consort, followed by Sunday lunch in the marquee which was organised by Mary Strefford who produced an excellent meal. This was followed by a rounders match for families and friends.

Various other events took place throughout the year, including the Summer Drinks Soiree that was very kindly hosted by Debbie and Johnny Simpson in their home and garden. Other events during the year included a Burns Night, Mardis Gras evening, a Quiz night and an excellent Christmas lunch cooked and served by Mary Strefford and helpers.

The local Foodbank box in church continues to be generously supplied with donations of food.

The P.C.C. still maintains its policy of giving to charities, and with representatives from Happy Days Committee, charities were nominated to receive our support for 2019. In addition, the church supported several other charities throughout the year.

Produce from Harvest and gifts from the Toy Service were again donated to "Save the Family".

B. Roscoe (PCC Secretary)

PARISH NEWS (DOWN OUR WAY) and CHURCH PRINTING

Down Our Way continues to be delivered 10 times per year in paper copy to all households in the Parish and to Huxley School. Copies are also provided to church members outside the Parish as well as to other interested parties. Print run is normally 270 copies.

The printing and printer lease costs are just about covered by the fees paid by advertisers which in 2018 amounted to £1020. The magazine is set up in MS Publisher every month by Beverley Stubbs who is paid £30 per issue. Her costs are not covered by advertising revenue.

The printer is also used of course to produce the copies of this Annual Report, which is also set up by Beverley.

But of course the magazine depends on a loyal team of volunteers to actually proof read the magazine each time, print it and deliver it to all the distributors. We thank especially Paul and Joan (who deliver to the individual distributors each month), Christopher and Diana, Mac and Barbara, Mike and Brenda, Bob and Jan, and Malcolm and Anne. Each team deals with two issues per year.

Christopher also emails an electronic copy of the magazine to his extensive email list.

The advertising revenue of £1000 is very important and has been entirely obtained for many years by Anne. Last year we reported that she would be giving up this task, but with no volunteers to take this on she has continued to manage those advertisers who have wanted to continue. However we have lost some advertisers recently which haven't been able to be replaced. A significant and relatively easy-to-obtain source of revenue is being lost.

The printer is also used by Christopher to produce the marvellous service sheets we use at special services throughout the year. These have become an important part of our worship in Church and we take them very much for granted. They take a lot of time to produce and print and we thank Christopher for his work in doing this.

Christopher has also taken on board the management of the contract for the supply of the printer/copier itself - chasing new toner cartridges, dealing with the engineer for the occasional mal-operation, reporting monthly printer usage etc. Again many thanks to him are due for this work.

Malcolm & Anne Smart

2019 VICAR'S REPORT

Welcome into the Christian family - Baptisms

Leo Walker, Lillian Williams, Eloise Williams, Peter Collins

Confirmation 2019 with the Bishop of Chester

William George Raybould, Magnus Joseph Raybould, Leah Rachel Martin, Henry Bernard Briscoe, Betty Margaret Briscoe, Benjamin Philip James Nicholas, James Churchill-Evans

Joined together in Holy Matrimony – Weddings

David Hargreaves & Emma Wilkinson
Andrew Smith & Andrea Large

With Christ in Glory

Jim Stubbs, Barbara Newman, Kay Whittle, George Carden, Stan Gee

This has been another busy and varied year. Early in January we held our annual Plough Sunday service which is of such relevance within our community with its strong farming links. Thanks again to Mike Whittingham for the loan of his magnificent antique seed drill which I blessed during the service. A week later on Sunday 20th January we welcomed the Rt Revd Peter Foster, Bishop of Chester, to Hargrave for a Parish Confirmation Service when he confirmed seven youngsters into full membership of the Church.

The following month on Wednesday 6th February the Rt Revd Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead, came to St Peter's, together with the Dean of Chester Cathedral, The Archdeacon of Chester, the Rural Dean, staff from Church House and many members of clergy from the Malpas Deanery to carry out my induction as Incumbent and Vicar of St Peter's. This was a splendid occasion and I felt honoured to be so well supported by so many residents of Hargrave and Huxley. My change of title from Priest in Charge does not mean a role change in any way but is an acknowledgement of the success of the parish.

We greatly enjoy our parish celebrations and always reach out to connect with members of the wider community offering a hand of welcome and friendship. Just before the season of Lent began we held another 'Mardi Gras' on 2nd March in a brightly decorated Church Hall with traditional Mexican food and lively dancing to music performed by Diego and his

2019 VICAR'S REPORT (cont...)

excellent supporting band. Great fun was had by all! The following month on Wednesday 10th April many of us enjoyed a traditional Lenten Soup Lunch in the Church Hall at which a generous sum was raised in support of a local charity, Save the Family.

A little over a week later we held our annual Maundy Thursday Agape Supper when we recalled the Last Supper in the upper room the night before Jesus' arrest. On Good Friday a few of us met in church for the Final Hour and our Easter Day Eucharist was well attended.

Once again we welcomed Chester Salvation Army Brass Band to St Peter's to lead our singing at our special Patronal Festival Songs of Praise on Sunday 30th June, the final day of our busy Happy Days weekend. This was followed by a delicious lunch in the marquee prepared for us by Mary. The Salvation Army Band returned to Hargrave on 18th December on the occasion of our popular annual "Carols and Mince Pies" in the hall when everyone was in good voice and raised the roof! Continuing on a musical theme, a representative group from our congregation attended the Deanery Songs of Praise which was held at St John the Baptist, Aldford. It was a most enjoyable occasion and we enjoyed the opportunity of meeting up with members of other parishes across our Deanery. Our Harvest Festival service was on Sunday 13th October and was well attended. We were delighted to support Save the Family with our Harvest gifts which were gratefully received. Following the service we enjoyed a lovely Harvest Lunch in the hall, prepared for us by Mary.

Many of you will remember our visit last year from Chester Cathedral's superb Nave Choir who sang Choral Evensong for us. It was greatly appreciated by a large congregation so I decided to repeat this idea this year and invited the Manchester Musicians Choir, directed by Pippa Goss, to come to St Peter's on 17th November to sing a full BCP Choral Evensong. We enjoyed refreshments after the service which provided the opportunity of meeting and chatting with the singers.

The project to replace the old, worn out pipe organ in St Peter's with a new digital organ is on going. The members of our parish organ team have carried out extensive research, have compiled a comprehensive report and submitted a suggested plan of action for consideration by the Diocesan Advisory Committee.

2019 VICAR'S REPORT (cont...)

In the meantime we are grateful to our visiting organists who continue to tolerate the limitations of the current instrument.

I enjoy my visits to Huxley Primary School on Tuesday afternoons during term time to take assemblies and am impressed by the children's enthusiasm and willingness to participate in these acts of worship. We were delighted to welcome the whole school to St Peter's for their wonderful Easter and Christmas services, along with their parents, friends and families.

Our annual Gift Service was on Sunday 15th December when we filled our church sanctuary with beautifully wrapped Christmas presents for children and their families who are being sheltered and rehabilitated by Save the Family at Cotton Hall Farm. We hope our gifts provided some Christmas cheer to those who are going through desperate times.

At the morning service on Sunday 22nd December our Sunday School, together with some members of our congregation, told the story of the Nativity through some wonderfully expressive readings. That evening our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols was much appreciated by a large congregation - special thanks to Barbara for rehearsing and conducting the choir and to all the singers, soloists and Lesson readers. The ever-popular Crib Service on the afternoon of Christmas Eve was made extra special this year due to some "surprise" visitors. We thank Sarah Lees and Max for dressing up as Mary and Joseph and for leading their donkey, Wedgie and his Shetland pony companion, Gucci (both were beautifully behaved) into St Peter's. They, together with Santa thrilled the children! Our Midnight Eucharist was well attended and a smaller congregation attended the Christmas Day morning Eucharist.

St Peter's continues to flourish and this year we have maintained our average Sunday attendance and have welcomed some new faces. I cannot thank my two Churchwardens, Malcolm Smart and Mike Whittingham enough for their continued commitment. Thanks also to David in his capacity of Treasurer for his hard work with the Church's finances and to Brenda for dealing with our Planned Giving and ensuring that the tax is reclaimed. She is also a highly efficient PCC Secretary; I should like to express thanks to all PCC members for their support.

2019 VICAR'S REPORT (cont...)

There are so many who play an important role in the smooth running of the church services and I thank them all for their input, however big or small. Lesson readers, Intercessors, Sidespeople, Choir Members and visiting organists to name but a few. Thanks to Barbara for choosing hymns and leading the choir and also to Mac for his musical input especially at Family Services. We are also grateful to him for arranging monthly collections of our donations to Chester Foodbank which we are very keen to support. Mary and Julie continue to run our Sunday School with enthusiasm and should be proud that five of the seven candidates who were confirmed this year are regular members of our Sunday School. We greatly appreciate the thoughtful prayers that the youngsters deliver so clearly and confidently at our monthly Family Services.

Visitors to our church regularly comment on how beautifully kept the building is and we have Sybil, Betty and other helpers including June, Marion, Margaret and Carole to thank for glorious floral arrangements and gleaming brass and well polished pews and floors. We thank Brenda for overseeing the grass cutting of both churchyards and Edward and others for looking after the fabric of the building.

There are many others I haven't named who do so much. We have every reason to be proud of our Church community and all we achieve together.

Christopher – Vicar of Hargrave

A prayer for the parish

O God, we give you thanks for all you give us. Grant, we pray, that being knit together in community and prayer, we your servants may glorify your holy name and win others to your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WARDENS' REPORT

As anticipated in last year's report, 2019 started with the Induction and Collation of our Vicar on 20th January by the Bishop of Birkenhead. The service was attended by the Archdeacon of Chester, the Dean of Chester Cathedral, clergy from the Deanery and other dignitaries. This was closely followed by a Service of Confirmation on 6th February, when the Bishop of Chester confirmed seven of our youngsters in St Peter's. Needless to say the service was attended by a large congregation of families and friends of the confirmees as well as our cohort of regular worshippers.

Other non-regular and notable events in 2019 included the dedication of our new oak church gates, donated by Stan Kerruish in memory of his late wife, Jackie, and the donation of our new flag-pole. This was given by Jackie Wilson and family in memory of the late Canon Ken Harris and his wife Jean. We are so very grateful for the kindness of Stan, and Jackie and family.

The replacement of our ailing pipe organ is still not resolved. A faculty request has been submitted, which the Diocesan Advisory Committee referred to the Church Building Council in London for advice. The Council's "expert" (Dr D. Knight) attended at St Peter's, together with the DAC secretary. Suffice it to say that his lack of empathy for our views and our Church thoroughly disappointed those of us who met him. He advised against the installation of a digital organ, but in our view gave no good reason for this decision. Clearly this was very disappointing but we will be refuting his advice and requesting a meeting with the DAC, and intend to extend every effort to achieve the PCC's unanimously agreed objective...

A new Headteacher, Cathy Davies, has been appointed at Huxley School, together with new teaching staff. Cathy has some excellent ideas for improving the School. Morale amongst staff, parents and pupils has hugely improved, the School has received a good Ofsted report and we hope that Cathy is successful at increasing the worryingly low number of pupils over the next couple of years. It was great to see pupils, staff and parents in Church for their Harvest Service and for their Nativity Play. Both these were also supported

WARDENS' REPORT (cont...)

by members of our congregation.

Our Crib Service on Christmas Eve was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by kids and adults alike. In addition to being attended as has become usual by Santa Claus (why does he sound so much like one of our Churchwardens?), Mary's donkey also attended, together with his Shetland pony friend to the great delight of those present.

Otherwise congregations have largely remained steady but our evening BCP services are now very sparsely attended and a decision on their future will have to be made soon.

Our Church is kept going by lots of work by our faithful members. Unsung and insufficiently recognised is the work that goes on week in week out by those who clean the Church and supply and arrange the altar flowers etc. We owe all of them a huge vote of thanks.

ST PETER'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Once again this year, we have had an extremely busy time in our happy Sunday School. We have continued to meet on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. We have maintained taking an active part in Family Services. Our roles and responsibilities include giving out the hymn books and orders of service, assisting with delivering the bread and wine, taking the collection and writing and delivering our thought-provoking prayers to the congregation.

January 2019 saw 5 of our members – William, Henry, Magnus, Leah and Betty get confirmed alongside two other members of our community - Ben Nicholas and James Churchill-Evans.

During dedicated Sunday School time, we learn about the stories Jesus told through a variety of experiences including storytelling, paired activities, games and lots more practical stuff too!

In September, we were pleased to present The Connie Gee Memorial Trophy to Magnus Raybould who really is a good role model to all members with his great prayer reading and general enthusiasm and commitment to Sunday School. We are all very proud of the way Magnus approaches readings and prayers and know he can be relied upon to carry out tasks sensitively and thoughtfully. This year was a particularly poignant year as this was the first time the cup has been presented without Connie's husband Stan being present as he sadly passed away earlier in the year

At Christmas, we performed our 'Stories and Songs for Advent' service. The service took over the family service and saw all children performing their readings confidently with crystal clear speaking voices. This year, we were pleased to invite several members of the congregation to read with us. Many thanks if you took part with us.

We have been very proud of all our children's achievements and continue to receive a great number of positive comments about how lovely it is when Sunday School takes part in services.

Finally, we must offer our thanks for all of the support shown towards our Sunday School, particularly by our supportive congregation, Hargrave PCC and The Moulson Trust.

Mary Strefford and Julie Briscoe

REPORT on the FABRIC and ORNAMENTS of ST PETER and REVIEW of WORKS to the CHURCHYARDS and HALL

St Peter's : Fabric

The year commenced with further works in upgrading the electrical installation. All existing high level lights were replaced by LED long-life units and new uplighters were installed to illuminate the ceiling and hammer beams. This work was undertaken by Edward Lloyd of Hargrave.

In September the routine annual inspection of the electronic clock installation was undertaken by Smith of Derby (ex J B Joyce). This Company installed the original electronics in 1994 and has maintained the mechanism ever since, gaining access by ladder to the housing above the nave. They have now advised that this operation is considered too dangerous to allow their operatives to continue with this procedure and the PCC has been asked to consider providing safe access at their own expense before the next maintenance visit is due.

In October the wood block flooring which was loose and a trip hazard just inside the main entrance was taken up, dirt removed and the flooring glued and relaid. The threshold step was made even. We are grateful to Paul Ellams and Mike Roscoe for this work.

In November the annual maintenance of the boiler and heating system was undertaken by Grosvenor Heating. The oil jet was replaced. The original 5 year extended warranty has now expired.

St Peter's : Organ

An application was made in 2018 to the Diocesan authorities for permission to replace the existing organ with a digital version – this was reported upon last year. Since then, after rejection by the Diocesan authorities of our detailed proposals, much work has been undertaken by the Vicar and Church Wardens in trying to persuade the Diocese of the merits of the original proposition – so far without avail. Much research had originally been undertaken by the Vicar and a detailed report with costings submitted. This has all been agreed to and unanimously supported by the PCC. The existing pipes would be retained so there will be no change to the interior appearance of the church.

REPORT on the FABRIC and ORNAMENTS of ST PETER and REVIEW of WORKS to the CHURCHYARDS and HALL (cont...)

St Peter's : Ornaments

St Peter's is generally open from breakfast time until near dusk. Many of the comments in the Visitor's Book at St Peter's continue to reflect the gratitude of visitors, shared by the local community, that we are able to do this. The door is not noticeably open from afar so as not to attract the attention of vandals.

We are extremely fortunate to have the good offices of a faithful band of parishioners who clean the church and polish the brasses each and every week. Their only reward is the joy and grateful thanks of all who worship at St Peter's. It is a demonstration of their talents and a tangible reflection of commitment to our community and to The Lord.

The Churchyards

Please note the item in the 2013 Annual Report which described the status of consecrated land and which is not readily identifiable on the ground by boundary features.

The state of the brick and stone boundary walls gives concern and much movement has been experienced. This is highlighted in the Quinquennial Report and essential repairs will be needed before long.

Both churchyards have been regularly mown through the growing season.

In February the gates erected in the Millennium lychgate were removed and replaced by new oak gates in memory of Jacqui Kerruish paid for by her husband, Stanley. The gates were made by Sean Roberts of Tarpoley.

Church Hall

The Hall is rented from The Sir Thomas Moulson Trust which remains responsible for the fabric of the building. The day-to-day maintenance and cleaning is the responsibility of Hargrave PCC as is the hiring out of the premises to local community groups and private individuals.

SIR THOMAS MOULSON TRUST

Report of the Trustees for the Year ended 31st December 2019 Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

E. Thornton-Firkin – Chairman

P. Ellams – Vice Chairman

Rev. C. Deakin

The Venerable M. Gilbertson

C. Houlbrooke

Councillor M. Jones

M. Roscoe

J. Simpson

J. Windsor

Principal Office - Meadow Barn, Cow Lane, Hargrave, Chester, CH3 7RU

Charity Number – 214342

Independent Examiner – M. Pearson, Nimrod, Church Lane, Hargrave, Chester, CH3 7RN

Clerk – J. Turner

Bank – NatWest, Eastgate, Chester

Investment Managers – Investec Wealth and Investment, 3 Hardman Street, Spinningfields, Manchester M3 3HF

Structure, Governance and Management

The Trust was established under the Scheme of 1981 and amalgamated two previous charities;

Meetings are normally convened twice yearly, in March and September to discuss any matters pertaining to the objectives and activities of the Trust. When necessary, interim meetings are arranged between these dates. In March 2019, Mr Thornton-Firkin was elected Chairman and Mr Ellams Vice-Chairman. Mr Roscoe, Parish Council nominated trustee, Rev. Deakin and Mr Thornton-Firkin, PCC nominated trustees, were reappointed in March 2019. These terms of office are for a period of four years.

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Trust are to manage the assets of the Trust and distribute the income to the bodies in the area of benefit as stipulated in the Trust's Scheme;

SIR THOMAS MOULSON TRUST (cont...)

After payment of expenses of management, including the costs of repairs, insurance and other costs in respect of the property and buildings, and the deduction of all the proper costs, charges and expenses of, and incidental to the administration and management of the charity, the trustees divide the income of the charity into three parts;

- i)** One third to the Parochial Church Council of St Peter's Hargrave, towards the Parish share (and paid to the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance by the Parochial Church Council)
- ii)** One third to the Parochial Church Council, half of which is to be used towards the maintenance and repair of St Peter Hargrave, half towards defraying the cost of any expenses incurred by the Vicar of St Peter, Hargrave
- iii)** One third in promoting the education of persons under the age of 25 years who are resident in the area of benefit, being the Ancient Parish of Tarvin and that part of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Peter, Hargrave that lies outside the said Ancient Parish, preference being given to such persons who are resident in the Parishes of Foulk Stapleford (Hargrave) and Huxley (now combined as Hargrave and Huxley Parish Council).

Achievements and Performance

During 2019 maintenance work carried out in the School House included roof and chimney repairs to remedy damp ingress and the interior walls of the room affected by damp were redecorated. Maintenance work was also carried out in the Hall, including repairs to the roof, exterior lighting, the floor in the entrance area, and oven in the kitchen. Repairs were also carried out to the boundary walls of the Hall and the tractor mower used to maintain the Church field.

Educational grants were awarded to six local students to assist with their educational expenses, the Sunday School and Huxley Primary School.

Financial Review/Investment Policy and Performance

The Trust's work is dependent on income from two main sources, capital endowment investments and property, namely The School House and Village Hall, Hargrave.

SIR THOMAS MOULSON TRUST (cont...)

The School House is tenanted and the Hall is leased to the PCC. The Trust achieved its objectives of maintaining the properties and distributing income in the form of grants. Full details of the Trust's finances can be seen in the Accounts to year ended 31st December 2019. The reserves at the end of the year are to provide the working capital needed for the running of the Trust.

Risk Management

The trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and have reviewed those risks and established systems to mitigate those risks.

TREASURER'S REPORT 2019

There has been no detailed financial report prepared yet for 2019. The main reason for this being that the financial software we purchased to replace the obsolete version is taking longer to set up than anticipated. I have every confidence that it will be ready for the 2020 financial year.

The planned giving in 2019 was up on the previous year at £13,007 and was some £1,364 higher than 2018. Collections at services £2,485 showed a modest decrease. Income tax recovered from HMRC totalled £3,832 and added to the planned giving and collections at services this was enough to cover the Parish Share, which at £18,065 was a 2.5% increase on the 2018 figure. Thanks go to Brenda Roscoe as the Gift Aid Secretary for her efforts in recovering the tax from HMRC.

Grants, legacies and sundry donations came to £13,927, the largest portion being £11,000 from the Moulson Trust.

The continuing excellent fund raising efforts for Happy Days and other fund raising events contributed a little over £3,213 after costs.

Fee income at £3,395 was up on 2018 but as has been stated before, the fee income entirely depends on the number of weddings and funerals conducted over the year. The arrangements for the collection and forwarding of the Diocesan fees of £1,108 have operated satisfactorily.

Vicarage costs were up a little this year at £2,796 and consist of the council tax to CWAC and the water rate to United Utilities.

The costs for the overall upkeep of the Church were £4,420 which consists of £3,199 for general running costs and £1,221 for maintenance. Upkeep of services at £924 is up considerably on the previous year while the upkeep of the churchyard at £2,590 shows a substantial increase as we had to take on a new company to keep the grounds tidy.

TREASURER'S REPORT 2019 (Cont...)

There are now several groups using the hall on a regular basis. The rental income for the hall was £5,093 which includes a book transfer of £1,380 for Church use. Hall and field running costs at £4,383 were the same as last year.

The PCC continued its commitment to charitable giving with £2,920 being donated to local, national and international charities. The parish ledger recorded an additional £1,006 that the church and wider community have given to other charities and good causes.

As of 31st December the state of the church accounts were as follows;

Nat West Current Account £5,301

Nat West Business Reserve Account £8,517

Nat West Organ Fund Account £14,193

Church of England Deposit Fund £11,248

It has been another interesting year and I extend my thanks to all who have helped to make it so.

David Roberts, Hargrave PCC Treasurer

A Prayer for our Church

*Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing
on our church.*

*May the doorways be wide enough
to welcome all
who need your love and ours,
narrow enough to shut out evil and strife.*

*May the thresholds be smooth enough
to present no stumbling blocks to
children, nor barrier to those who
are elderly and disabled.*

*May the doors be strong to turn back
the tempter's power
but open and inviting to those who
are your guests. May they be doorways
to your eternal kingdom.*

*Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.
Amen.*