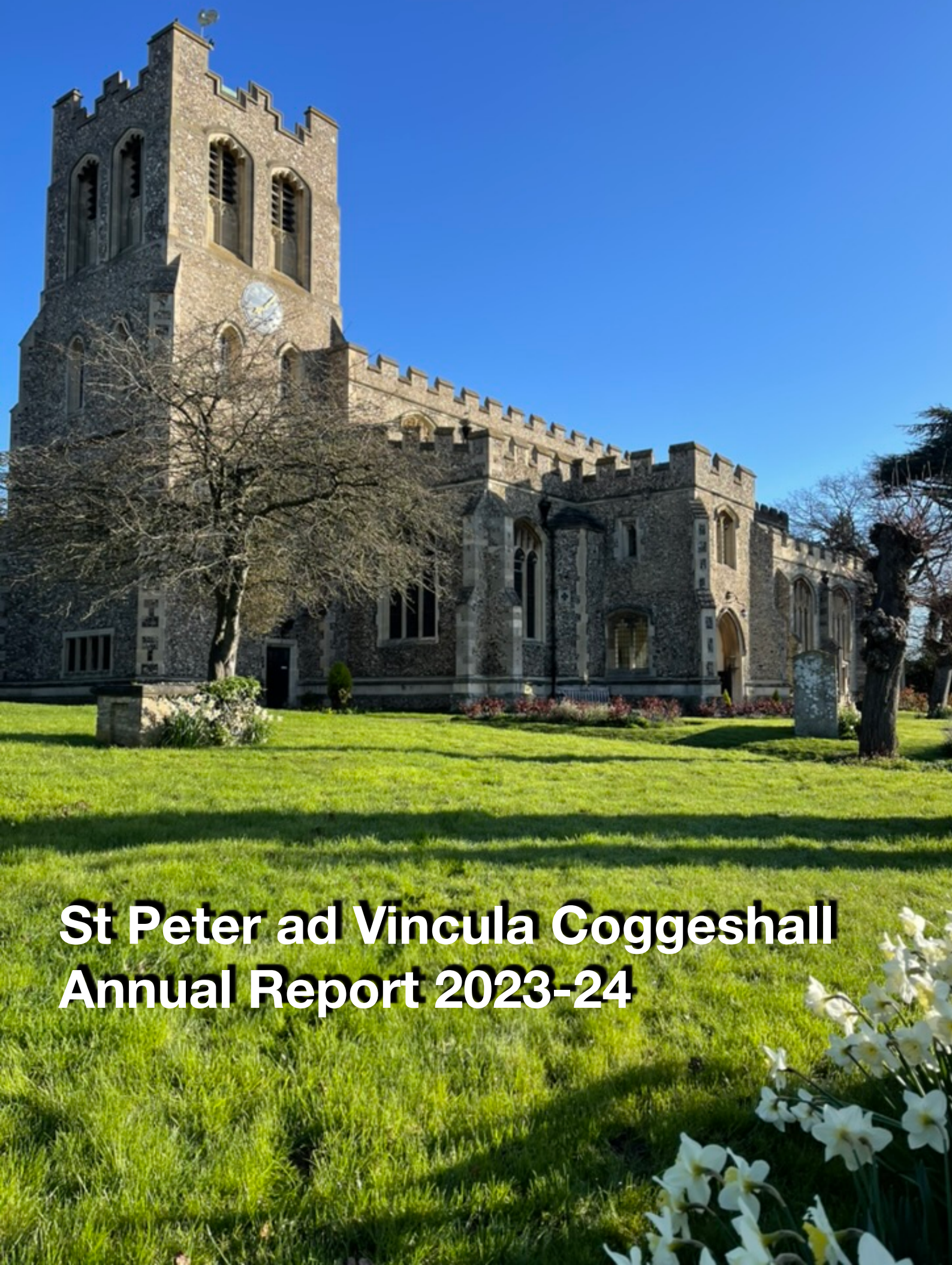




St Peter ad Vincula Coggeshall Annual Report 2023-24



The Parish Church of St Peter ad Vincula, Coggeshall, Essex



Annual report of the members and proceedings of the Parochial Church Council 2023-24

PCC Members

Ex-officio

Vicar and Incumbent of the benefice
Assistant Curate
Churchwardens

Revd Heike Prentice
Revd Melanie Shillito
Judith Wargent (Fabric Officer)
Ian Elliott
Brian Meads

Licensed Lay Minister

Elected Deanery Synod members **2023-26**
(also ex officio)

Martin Bevan
Heather Semken
Thomas Taylor (PCC Health and Safety Officer)

Elected

2020-

Janet Florence (PCC Secretary)

2021-24

Joanna Clark
Susan Williams

2022-25

Derek Wilkins
Stephen Beckett
Lizzie Armour

2023-26

James Kneller
Tim Butt

Co-opted

2022-23

Justin Jeffs (Treasurer)

Although not members, the following are involved in various St Peter's PCC responsibilities:

Parish Administrator

Justine Kneller

Communications / PA

Adele Pye

Bell Tower Captain

Janet Edwards

Electoral Roll Officer

Revd Melanie Shillito / Lizzie Armour

Parish Safeguarding Representative

Joanna Clark

Pastoral Care Team Leader

Sarah Glossop

Coggeshall Youth Project Worker

Vacancy

Richard Fox was appointed as **Independent Examiner** for the 2023 financial statements.

St Peter ad Vincula is part of the Coggeshall and United Parishes Benefice (CAUP).

Foreword by the vicar



Once again it is a privilege to be able to commend to you the Coggeshall Church Annual Report as we look back over the last year, giving thanks for God's faithfulness to our church community and the commitment, generosity and contributions of so many.

We've tried to keep individual contributions shorter, and once again are making the Annual Report available on-line, as it's a more environmentally friendly and cost effective way of publishing.

I am particularly grateful to our wardens Judith Wargent and Ian Elliott, who together with Justine Kneller and Adele Pye in the office have ensured that the church in all its activities runs smoothly: the building is well cared for, we have again conducted a good number of baptisms, weddings and funerals, and now offer three very different services every Sunday morning: an 8am communion service, the 9.30 service with choir, and the slowly but surely growing family service at 11am, which, thanks to Melanie and Tim and Becky Butt now happens every week.

We may not be many, but our wonderful ministry team has again achieved more than most people realise. Most of all I value that we continue to meet every week to pray together. I am blessed by the depth and breadth of their ministry, support, friendship, resilience, hard work and wisdom. They are Revd Melanie Shillito, Revd Tayrina Ferguson, Revd John Richardson and our LLM Brian Meads.

Particular highlights and events have shaped this last year:

For the first time since the pandemic, at the beginning of June, Open Gardens drew people of all ages enjoying some of the horticultural delights of Coggeshall and raising money for the church in the process.

In May we joined in the Coronation celebrations and in June we hosted a confirmation service for the Braintree deanery, at which three of our own congregation were confirmed.

In August, once again picking up on the Coronation theme, we hosted another hugely successful and popular Flower Festival, aptly named 'King of Kings', more of that in the report.

In September two important events took place: at the beginning of the month Revd Tayrina Ferguson was ordained Deacon at Chelmsford Cathedral, then at the end of September we had the privilege of hosting the priesting service for the Colchester area, at which Revd Melanie Shillito and also our former Ordinand Natasha were priested. On this joyous occasion we were joined by previous incumbents and other colleagues, once again celebrating that we belong to a much wider and greater family than we often realise.

In late November the church tower became again the focus for Memory on a Star. We marked the lighting ceremony with gentle fireworks and a confidence, that the light of those stars reminds us that light always overcomes darkness, never the other way round. And so in remembering loved ones, others are helped and receive hope.

It is a real joy that at long last we are again able to offer a group for the youngest of all: Susan Elliott and Jane Richardson started Little Seeds towards the end of last year - a group for pre-school children and their adults, who meets on the first Monday of the month.

Our midweek activities continue to thrive: the Knit and Knatter Group, Men's Coffee Morning Drop in, the Thursday lay-led service and prayer group and of course Cosy Kitchen, all offering a warm welcome and a time to connect.

We continue to have strong links with St Peter's Primary School, welcoming them to termly school services at the church. For the second time they joined us last year on Ascension Day to send prayers up the church tower on a string, and then receive encouraging bible verses written on hearts as messages from above. We regularly take assemblies at the school, and of course the Open the Bible group continues to enthral the children by performing bible stories.

Once again we have worked hard to become more proactive in safeguarding God's creation in the way we live, preach, worship and work. My thanks goes to Stephen and Audrey Beckett, who have helped us to steadily move towards the Eco Church Silver Award.

Of course church could not happen without the countless volunteers, who give so generously of their time and skills. Servers, readers, cleaners, intercessors, welcomers, flower arrangers, singers, musicians, sound and visual technicians, bell ringers, money counters, administrators, organisers, PCC members, pastoral visitors, hospitality providers, safeguarding representatives, flag bearer, librarians, gutter clearers and gardeners, a formidable army of people, thank you to all.

Thank you also for your continued generosity to our church, and please consider if you are able to increase your giving in line with rising costs. Generosity and kindness are characteristics at the heart of our community. We recognise that all things come from God, and when we give, we give back to Him.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report as an expression of our love and service to God and our neighbour.

Revd Heike Prentice

Reports from Church Activity Groups 2023-24

Baptisms

Throughout last year we have continued to welcome young children into our church family through baptism, which usually take place during our family service on the third Sunday of the month. All enquiries are handled by Justine and either Melanie or Heike visit the family beforehand to prepare them for baptism. The baptism families are frequently joined by a good number of godparents, family and friends who consistently tell us how much they enjoy the joyful, relaxed and creative format of our family services. Especially those who do not normally come to church comment on how the positive experience is changing their perception of church.

Heike, Melanie and Justine

Bellringers Report

Bellringing at Coggeshall has had a varied year with many of our ringers, at times, being out of action for a variety of reasons. We again had a presence at the Coggeshall Festival and from that we gained two recruits who, together with another, started training in September. They all made excellent progress and were able to join our main practice at the beginning of 2024. I was delighted that we were able to ring for both the Midnight Mass and Christmas morning services. During the year we rang a quarter peal for the King's coronation. We entered the annual striking competition and were placed in the middle of a field of 12 teams. A creditable performance. When not ringing, we enjoy social activities and this year we have adjourned to The Chapel after practice, held a Garden Party courtesy of one of our ringers and enjoyed a Christmas meal at The Bell Inn, Feering. Our bells continue to be used by the Essex Association and visitors during the year. We are able to ring for Sunday services and hold a practice every week. Many towers are not that fortunate. Therefore I believe that Coggeshall bells and ringers are in a healthy position at the moment and we look forward to the future with confidence.

Janet Edwards

Braintree Area Foodbank

Braintree Area Foodbank has been providing to people in food crisis for eleven years. Since the pandemic the Foodbank has seen a huge increase in the number of people who are accessing its services. Without the food that is provided, these individuals and families would be unable to manage to feed themselves or their families. The foodbank provides a minimum of three days' nutritionally-balanced emergency food to people who have been referred in a time of crisis or who find themselves locked into longer term poverty. Many of those who access the service have experienced difficulties in their lives, and some are in low paid employment and are unable to keep up with the increased costs they face. The Foodbank has many volunteers who work in the warehouses, distribution centres, and who greet clients and welcome them and assist them. They also take time to listen and provide pastoral support to help take away any embarrassment or guilt they may feel.

We have been supporting Braintree Foodbank for eleven years now and the volunteers I meet are thankful and aware of how much our church supports their clients who find themselves so dependent upon the kindness and generosity of others. The donations of items and money are so needed. A shopping list is on the notice boards outside church and on our Mailchimp message. The donations are now taken on the first Monday or Tuesday of each month. Last years report mentioned that a facility for distribution was being considered for Coggeshall. This is not likely to happen as in the coming weeks a distribution point will be set up in the centre of Braintree on a Saturday morning. I can only thank everyone who supports either through item donation or monetary donations or giving time to assist in the centres for your help. It is indeed very humbling that we can support those in need in some small way.

Joanna Clark

Braintree Deanery Synod

The Synod

Braintree Deanery Synod is a council of church members drawn from the clergy and congregations in each of the Deanery's parishes. It provides the communication link between congregations, the Diocese of Chelmsford and the Church of England nationally.

During 2022, St Peter ad Vincula was represented in the House of Clergy by Revd Heike Prentice and Revd Melanie Shillito and in the House of Laity by Mrs Heather Semken, Mr Tom Taylor and Mr Martin Bevan, Martin Bevan serving as Treasurer. The Synod met three times, chaired jointly by the Area Dean, Rev'd Rod Reid, and the Joint Lay Chair, Canon John Turton.

In July, the Synod welcomed a new Lay membership (with some familiar faces) following the triennial elections of representatives in May. Revd Tayrina Ferguson and Revd Nikki Horsley joined the House of Clergy in October following their ordinations. Members congratulated them both, together with Revd Melanie Shillito on her ordination as priest.

Issues considered in 2023

In October, the Synod was delighted to welcome Michaela Southworth, Chief Executive and Secretary of Chelmsford Diocese, who gave a helpful and interesting presentation on giving and Diocesan finances. Synod members were encouraged to engage with the budgetary process and to feel able to propose alternative approaches. The Synod appreciated the insight into the Church's finances provided by Ms Southworth, as well as her detailed and open assessment of the ongoing challenges facing the Diocese.

The Synod has received updates throughout the year on progress regarding the motion it passed in 2020 concerning the management of issues around lay officer conduct. By the end of 2023 it was being considered by the (General) Synod office as a potential item for referral to General Synod. It is heartening to note that even a small Synod like ours can make a difference by bringing issues of concern to the attention of the national Church. Members would like to thank Rev'd Dr Sara Batts Neale (a Member of the House of Clergy, elected by the clergy of Chelmsford Diocese) for advocating so effectively on our behalf.

Other issues considered by the Synod included:

- A presentation by the Friends of Essex Churches Trust.
- Safeguarding: face-to-face training sessions were arranged and delivered by Revd Melanie Shillito for those without online access. The sessions were very well received.
- Updates to each meeting on environmental matters, with many Deanery Churches either working towards an Eco Church award or having already obtained one.
- Regular reports of proceedings at Diocesan Synod and General Synod, and updates on news and events from parishes across the Deanery.

Martin Bevan, Heather Semken, Tom Taylor

Choir and Music

After many changes in 2022, 2023 has been a year of settling down. Our focus remained on worshipping the Lord, while maintaining the highest possible quality of music. We have been constantly refreshing the repertoire of the choir, maintaining a balance between traditional hymns and contemporary songs. The most enjoyable hymns and songs were those arranged for this particular choir, adapted to our set-up and abilities. In comparison with the previous year there has been a slight increase in the number of singers, which is encouraging. However, the most exciting thing, beyond worship through music, has been seeing and experiencing our growth in faith within the choir and the congregation.

Mátyás Bacsó

Church Flowers

Thanks to our talented and dedicated Church Flower Team, beautiful flowers continue to be arranged in church throughout the year. We have a two weekly rota for regular church flowers, but often do more than that to decorate the church for festivals, weddings, funerals and other special occasions. Whilst trying to maintain our high standards, we are mindful of being very careful with expenses. We slightly reduced the number of arrangements last year and our policy of mixing artificial flowers in amongst fresh flowers and foliage works well. Most of the foliage comes from our gardens.

We are always looking for new flower arrangers to join the team and would be delighted to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining us.

Judy Crawford and Janet Florence

Church Library

The Church Library, established by Fr Chris and in memory of Fr Bill is situated in the Lady Chapel by the organ. It is easy to borrow books. Sign the large blue book with your first name, title of book borrowed and date of borrowing and return on the same line. There really is something for everyone from faith stories to Bible guides, prayer, vocation, poems, art and history. There are 6 versions of the Bible and a large print copy. Do take time to look at the stock and enjoy the books. A great way to grow and encourage your faith.

Audrey and Jane

Churchwardens' Report

Thanks to our Ministry team, the church continues to thrive with a wide variety of services for all, most notably the now weekly Family Service, the monthly Little Seeds, and the fortnightly school assemblies taken by Heike, Melanie and Brian in St Peter's School.

The Churchwardens are grateful to the many members of the congregation who organise the myriad of meetings, lay led services, working parties, groups and activities which have all contributed to the wider life and ministry of the church and whose reports can be read in this year's Annual Report. In addition our thanks go to the many who work silently behind the scenes with untold acts of kindness.

Our work could not continue without the generous contributions from Adele, Glenda, Justine and Alistair who work tirelessly, quietly, week in, week out – thank you!

Several projects are ongoing: Fire Risk Assessment and accompanying action plan; discussions with the Parish Clerk about Church parking, green rubbish collection for the Churchyard gardeners, charitable support for selected charities,

Judith and Ian

Coggeshall Churches Together

Coggeshall Churches together no longer meets on a regular basis. After more than forty years of shared activities between our local churches only two events survive. On Christmas Eve 2023, hundreds of people gathered near the Christmas tree for Carol singing. We were able to use new Carol sheets supplied by Christ Church so that there were plenty to go round.

On March 1st 2024, we held a service for the 'World Day Of Prayer'. This service was put together by Christians from Palestine before the present conflict and the views of three women from that area were expressed. The meeting was held in Christ Church and thanks are due Rev. John Prothero who gave us permission to use their worship area and also to those who supplied drinks and cakes etc for us to enjoy after the meeting. A total of £122.00 was collected from the small congregation of 20 people and sent to the organisers of WDP to help pay for materials to be used at future meetings. It is hoped that we will be able to continue our connection with Christ Church and St. Bernard's so that the Christian presence in Coggeshall will be strengthened. Next year's meeting will be held in St. Peter's.

Janice Burges (Secretary/Treasurer)

Coggeshall Youth Project

Youth clubs have not run since March 2023 as the Coggeshall Youth Project ("CYP") Youth Worker resigned from his position. The CYP Trust has considered the future of CYP and whether the format should be changed. All are in agreement that it should continue, which the churches of Coggeshall are all supportive of, and steps are now being taken to review the job description and advertise for a new Youth Worker.

Revd Melanie Shillito

Concerts at St Peter's

2023 saw another strong programme of concerts at St Peter's. The lunchtime concerts ran on the first Thursday of the month from April to October. As usual, we built a programme which included some long-term favourites, such as Christine Stevenson and Martin Dobson, and some incredibly talented young musicians such as harpist Adelaide Jang and the fantastic Albizia Trio.

A January concert by Colchester Chamber Choir is rapidly becoming a tradition at St Peter's! In January 2023, the theme was "A Restless World – English sacred music from Henry VIII to James I." The church was lit by hundreds of candles and the music was, as ever with Colchester Chamber Choir, sublime.

In April, the Kelvedon Singers gave a fantastic performance of Handel's Messiah to celebrate the 80 th birthday of their director, Christopher Phelps, complete with period instruments. Over 200 people attended and it was a fitting celebration of Christopher's special birthday.

We were also delighted to welcome back the Roman River Festival for the grand finale of their September 2023 festival – a performance of Mozart's Gran Partita, featuring clarinettist Sacha Rattle. We are very proud to be one of the favourite venues for this prestigious annual event, welcoming audiences from across the region. So far in 2024, we have already enjoyed a return visit from Colchester Chamber Choir and Colne Philharmonic Orchestra, and the programme for the rest of the year is looking very promising!

The concerts provide a useful income stream for the PCC, but perhaps more importantly, they bring people into this beautiful church to share the experience of listening to great live music. But we urgently need more helpers! If you would like to get more involved in the concerts, perhaps as a steward or helping with refreshments, I would love to hear from you.

Sarah Wickens

Cosy Kitchen

After the initial idea of forming a warm hub for the village in the winter of 2022, the Cosy Kitchen has gone from strength to strength. We now have a regular group of visitors, including their well behaved dogs.

I am very pleased to say that the Cosy Kitchen has done exactly what I envisaged from the start. It is a warm and cosy place to meet and make friends while enjoying hot food and drink. Many thanks go out to my marvellous team of volunteers who turn up every week come rain or shine, not only to make and serve the delicious bacon rolls and coffee, but also to chat and make everyone welcome.

I firmly believe that the Cosy Kitchen is meeting a need in the community and making a difference to the lives of those who join in.

Julia Ibbotson

Eco Church

The Church of England's Fifth Mark of Mission is "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth". The Eco Church Project helps us to fulfil this vision. The reward scheme is there to encourage us as a church and as individuals. Having gained the Bronze award last year we are now working towards Silver. We have advanced in two of the five areas, namely "Community and Global Engagement" and "Lifestyle". Some more work on the "Buildings" topic will be done this year and we are hoping to apply for the silver award before too long.

Audrey and Stephen Beckett

Fabric

Fabric - St Peter ad Vincula

The 2023 Quinquennial Inspection for St Peter's was completed in June/July by our architect, Christopher Barker. The major works to be addressed concern the deterioration in the external masonry of the church and an ongoing repair/restoration plan has been agreed, to be completed over the next five years.

As with any house, the house of God requires ongoing minor maintenance; leaking taps, broken hinges, chipped plaster etc., and these are constantly addressed and repaired by the churchwardens and other more skilful members of the congregation. Careful husbandry has meant that the fabric fund has maintained a healthy balance over the year, and will thus allow of some plaster and decorative repairs inside the church over the forthcoming year. Repairs to broken glass have been completed. Damage to parts of the organ, caused by water will be repaired in the next two months. The cost of this will mostly be covered by insurance. Despite extensive examination, the source of the water ingress has not been located.

Fabric - St Nicholas Chapel

The 2023 Quinquennial Inspection for St Nicholas' Chapel has been completed by architect Christopher. No urgent repairs are required, but some external decorative, preservative work to the window surrounds and doors is recommended.

Ian Elliott and Judith Wargent

Flower Festival 2023 - 'King of Kings'

We think we can proudly say that this year's 35 th Flower Festival was a great success with over 1500 people attending from far and wide. The theme this year, 'King of Kings' told stories of Kings and Queens from the Old and New Testaments, culminating in a moving depiction of the ascension of Jesus, The King of Kings. Huge thanks are due to all those who helped in so many ways, firstly to the core team and also to Heike, Melanie and the Church Wardens, who have all been so supportive throughout. We had 32 flower arrangers working this year, using their skill and artistry to create wonderful displays to illustrate the stories so vividly.

However, none of this would have happened without generous help with publicity, sponsorship, finances, donations and all the practical help. Our visitors comment every year on the warm welcome they receive from our stewards and how much they enjoy the delicious refreshments, all so beautifully presented. The Card Stall was a great success. The Preserves and Produce Stall, outside in a tent, overflowed with kind donations of wonderful fruit, vegetables, plants and preserves, and featured the usual fun and banter. Music, including piano recitals, the choir singing favourite hymns and a very enjoyable concert given by Martin Dobson's Midnight Oil are always an important part of our festival weekend. It was a huge community event that our visitors from near and far embraced and thoroughly enjoyed, thanks to the generosity of spirit, the many talents shared, the enthusiasm, cooperation and hard work of all who helped to bring it to fruition.

We are absolutely delighted to announce that a profit of £10, 615 has already been raised and when the remaining £550 of sponsorship comes in, the final figure for St Peter's will rise to £11,165. Thank you all so much!

Judy Crawford and Janet Florence

Knit and Natter

After a very trying 2 years of COVID this past year has seen our group gradually build up again to a healthy 15-20 ladies. We continued to be a vibrant group knitting for - Women's Refuge, Colchester Maternity Wing and the Seafarers at Felixstowe. We have all missed Mary, especially me, who sadly died last summer.

Valerie King

The Link

The Link Magazine is produced thanks to the goodwill of those who regularly send articles and information, those who deliver faithfully each month, Designsweet, our very supportive printer and our advertisers who help with our production costs. Our grateful thanks go to each and every one. At present we are asking for a volunteer to replace John Gospage who co-ordinates all deliveries and by the time you read this we hope to have someone in place. John has done a wonderful job with this for several years and we are very grateful to him for all his hard work.

Val Lewis (Link Editor)

Media Desk

The same team has continued to serve faithfully throughout the year and we are very grateful for all that they do. We do need new team members though so as to give a bit more flexibility covering both regular and special services.

Two new headset microphones were purchased during the year and have led to improvements in sound quality, but we do still have issues with clarity which are being addressed.

Alistair Prentice

Memory on a star

Christmas 2023 was the eighth year of Memory on a Star, and was the first year that all the stars were sold on our first selling date. Money raised was divided between two local groups and St Peter's church. We hope that this can remain a community event and are grateful to the church to allow us to utilise the tower.

Kate Burmby

Men's Coffee Drop-In

The Men's coffee mornings continue every Wednesday from 9.30 to 11.30 and provide a great opportunity for relaxed conversations with a wide range of fellow enthusiasts. Numbers have remained steady at close to 20 each week, slightly lower than before lockdown but, nonetheless very encouraging. Occasional groups and casual visitors are always welcome.

Roger Tattersfield

Open Gardens 2023

At last, after several years break, on Sunday 1 st June we celebrated Coggeshall Open Gardens once again with 16 glorious gardens on show and a theme of "Through the Garden Gate". Over 900 visitors enjoyed a spectacular afternoon of walking around the wonderful gardens, taking tea in the churchyard, and making purchases from the plant stall – a grand sum of £8,300 was raised. As always, we are extremely grateful to all the hardworking and generous gardeners and volunteers involved in the event, and to the Community Bus who very kindly provided transport. We are now planning for Open Gardens 2024 which will be held on Sunday 2nd June 1 – 6pm.

Verity, Jo and Sarah

Open the Bible

In September we began the tenth year of Open The Bible, presenting dramatic bible stories to St. Peters School. Starting the three year programme for the fourth time. In the Autumn term we covered the lives of Abraham, Noah, Jacob and Joseph. During the Spring term we followed the early life and ministry of Jesus. In the Summer term we will continue with stories from the New Testament, mainly of the parables of Jesus. The positive response of the children makes the commitment of our team to share the bible with them a real pleasure. We generally get a few children to take an active part, this is always very popular. Thanks to the school for letting us present God's word to them. We would always welcome more people to join us; it really is a lot of fun!

Stephen Beckett

Pastoral Care

The team continues to be busy visiting people both in care homes and in their own homes. We also take Communion to those who are not able to get to Church. The team is happy to be contacted regarding the provision of pastoral care and also sends out Get Well and Sympathy cards.

Sarah Glossop

Recycled Greeting Cards

There are so many really lovely cards that just get used once only, so at St.Peter's we like to give them another go round. We have been recycling cards for years now and it has been a brilliant way to reuse any greetings cards that are donated.

The cards are cut, remounted and packaged, then displayed in the church for purchase at only a pound each. Not only does this mean that the cards are not wasted, but the money raised goes to the church.

I recycle all types of greeting cards (except Christmas), so consequently have a huge range of recycled cards for any occasion to choose from. If you have any cards that you would like to donate please put them in a bag beside the display unit for me to collect, then keep an eye out for your card to reappear, born again!

Thank you for your donations.

from Julia Ibbotson

Safeguarding

The care and protection of children, young people, adults who attend services and church activities must be a priority for us all. The PCC follows safeguarding guidance from the House of Bishops and the Diocese of Chelmsford. They review policies and procedures annually, and ensure that guidelines are displayed prominently in the church and on the website. This year we have undertaken an audit of safe working practices and recruitment for the National Church Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding is a regular item on the PCC agenda. Changes to procedures do occur both nationally and locally and we are guided by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and Thirty One Eight (the Christian organisation which process Disclosure and Barring Service applications). Where required, volunteers leading or taking part in activities within the church, are DBS checked and trained. Both checks and training are updated every three years. The DST also requires us to complete activity plans and a risk assessment annually. All documentation relating to safeguarding is kept securely following GDPR guidance.

I am very fortunate to have a committed team of volunteers, a supportive ministry team in this vitally important side of church life. Not only do they give of their time to training and running activities, their vigilance and care is essential to making our church as safe and welcoming for those who visit to worship or take part in activities.

Joanna Clark

St. Nicholas Chapel

It is lovely to report that a full complement of monthly services (March to December) took place with the majority taken by our Vicar. In September the decision was taken to revert to services on the first Sunday of the month with these being taken by the Curate. Melanie also took our usual traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Once again the opening of the Chapel on Sunday afternoons in July and August proved a great success with over 250 visitors and donations to the Bonton Fund, used for the maintenance and upkeep of the place. Enormous thanks to those who organised and stewarded these openings. We hope to continue this in 2024.

It is most disappointing to record damage to both the East and West windows at the time of the Coggeshall Beer Festival which takes place on adjacent land. The windows have been beautifully repaired and we hope to recover some of the costs. It is planned to work with the organiser of the Festival to try to eliminate this vandalism.

In November a Vigil for Bill Gore was held in the Chapel prior to the service in St Peter ad Vincula. He was a regular supporter and lesson reader. We are also sad to record the death of Michael Horne who likewise was a regular attender and read lessons with great enthusiasm. He loved the history of the place and will be missed.

The small band of parishioners continues to ensure the Chapel is in good order for each service and the surrounding area tidy.

Julian Prideaux

St Peter's Church of England Primary School and Pre-School

'Let your light shine before people so that they can see the good things that you do'.
Matt 5:16.

Of major importance to any school, its pupils, staff, parents and governors, is the outcome of their latest Ofsted Inspection. St Peter's was inspected on 28th and 29th March 2023, too late for me to report on last year, but I am pleased to confirm now that in the opinion of the inspector 'St Peter's continues to be a good school'. This outcome was in no small part due to the leadership skills over 10 years of Headteacher Alison Cole, whose retirement at Easter 2023 I was able to report on last year, but whose replacement was still undecided upon. I am therefore equally pleased to report now that after a rigorous appointment process Miss Sam Wilding took up the position in September 2023, having previously been Headteacher at St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School in Marks Tey.

From my observations, under Sam's leadership, St Peter's School continues as an excellent, happy and distinctively church school, with staff, parents and governors working well together to the benefit of our children and of our community. St Peter's School stated Christian vision is that all children will flourish and develop a love of learning in a caring and supportive environment, and that all associated with the school will aspire to walk in Christ's footsteps by showing patience, forgiveness and kindness to one another.

Brian Meads – Foundation Governor

St Peter's Welcomers

We continue to attract visitors from across the UK and also the world, including from Western Australia, and North America. Comments have been made saying what a beautiful church we have and how lovely that we are open and people can walk around and enjoy it. Names have joined us and some have left, so we still have spaces when a friendly face in church would be welcome to talk with them. If you would like to meet and chat to these visitors, then please see me when I can allocate you a period. That means we may be always providing a presence here. Many thanks if you can spare the time.

Derek North

Sunday Welcomers (Sidespersons)

We are grateful to those who greet people on Sunday mornings for our services at St. Peter's and also at St. Nicholas' Chapel. Anyone who would like to join the rota should please contact the office, we would be delighted to hear from you! Alongside those who continue to provide a warm welcome at our regular services, we would also like to express our thanks to everyone who has volunteered for the additional services around the main church festivals.

Justine Kneller (Parish Administrator)

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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Registered Charity number 1126947

Treasurer's Report 2023

After a challenging couple of years which saw cumulative losses building during COVID and into 2022, I am pleased to report that 2023 has been a much better year financially for St Peter's.

We achieved a positive operating result for the year of £13,408, compared to an operating loss of £16,541 in 2022. This meant that we were again able to pay our full parish share in 2023 and did not need to sell any investments. At year end, we retained a positive cash position of £31,055. Overall, this was an excellent achievement during a period of rising inflation and increased energy costs.

There were three primary reasons for this improved performance:

1. One-off events including the Flower Festival, Open Gardens and Concerts
2. The generous giving of the parishioners
3. Reduced repair costs

In addition to providing essential income to the Church, the events continue to put Coggeshall on the map and make it a desirable place to visit and live, thereby also providing benefits beyond the Church.

On the downside, due to some turbulence in the markets and the overweight position in real estate, the value of Church's investments reduced by £2,352 / 1.8%. The good news is that this is only a notional loss which will not crystallise unless the investments are sold. The value of these investments at year-end was £129,988. A sub-working group has now been established to enable the PCC to agree and implement a more active approach to their management.

In total, the value of the Church's assets increased by £11,056 to £161,043 during 2023.

Looking ahead to 2024, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Income needs to be protected and grown, and costs need to be closely managed. The importance of staging successful fund-raising activities remains key to the financial health of the Church. We hope that the Open Gardens and Flower Festival can again provide significant boosts to our income. Attracting younger parishioners into the Church is also essential to maintain long term sustainability.

While energy costs have stabilised and are now reducing, our bills remain high and are not immune to future shocks. Keeping the Church building warm and welcoming is essential, and thus we will continue to look for additional revenue opportunities and cost savings to mitigate these costs, including an investigation into the installation of solar panels on the church roof. No major repairs are currently foreseen and the investments should be retained and grown to deal with any material one-off expenditures.

Treasurer's Report 2023 cont'd

In summary, a good year with many positives to take and for that I would personally like to extend some well-earned gratitude.

Firstly, we should all extend a huge thank you to those who gave their time and money during 2023 and continue to do so to enable the important work of the Church to continue and the village to thrive.

I'd also like to extend a special thank you to Justine, Judith, Heike and the PCC.

Justine, our administrator, has been simply brilliant since joining in 2022. She has automated our bookkeeping and handled all manner of other financial and non-financial duties without which my role would have been impossible. We are all sad to see Justine and James leaving shortly but wish them all the very best on their new adventure.

Judith, our Church Warden, continues to handle all manner of Church fabric and operating queries and is also a general wise head. In addition to her day to day, she is playing a key role as we explore the possibility of installing solar panels on the Church roof (out of sight of course!) thereby reducing our operating costs and improving our sustainability.

I would also like to thank Heike. Her energy, drive and ability to get things done in the right way are inspiring. I know that I echo the feelings of all when I say that we are very lucky indeed to have her in the Parish.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the PCC for their support and commitment during 2023. The Church could not operate without your hard work and dedication.

Well done all and thank you all!

Justin Jeffs

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I report on the financial statements of the St Peter ad Vincula Church, Coggeshall, PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on Pages 22 to 27

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the financial statements presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

No matters have come to my attention during my examination of the accounts:

(1) which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- * to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- * to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Address: 27 Lancaster Road
Rayleigh
Essex
SS6 8UP

Name: Richard Fox
Certification: AAT

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	2a	112,264		1,728	113,991	101,827
Income from charitable activities	2b	17,543			17,543	10,406
Other trading activities	2c	14,513		28	14,541	11,070
Investments	2d	5,994			5,994	5,461
Other income	2e	7,494			7,494	5,322
Total income		157,807		1,755	159,562	134,086
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	3a	10,192		109	10,301	7,002
Expenditure on charitable activities	3b	130,024	763	4,503	135,289	143,626
Other expenditure	3c	565			565	
Total expenditure		140,780	763	4,612	146,155	150,628
Net income / (expenditure) resources		17,027	-763	-2,857	13,408	-16,541
Transfers:						
Gains/losses on investment assets	6e		-3,009	657	-2,352	-11,783
Net movement in funds		17,027	-3,772	-2,200	11,056	-28,324
Total funds brought forward		10,967	77,642	61,378	149,987	178,312
Total funds carried forward		27,994	73,870 (Note 9)	59,179 (Note 10)	161,043	149,987

The notes on Pages 22 to 27 form part of these financial statements

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
		General	Designated			
		£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets						
Tangible Investments	5					
Investments	6b		70,174	59,814	129,988	132,341
			70,174	59,814	129,988	132,341
Current assets						
Debtors	7					4,485
Cash At Bank And In Hand		27,994	3,696	-636	31,055	17,112
		27,994	3,696	-636	31,055	21,597
Liabilities						
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year	8					3,950
Net current assets less current liabilities		27,994	3,696	-636	31,055	17,647
Total assets less current liabilities		27,994	73,870	59,179	161,043	149,987
Liabilities						
Total net assets less liabilities		27,994	73,870	59,179	161,043	149,987
Represented by						
Unrestricted						
Unrestricted - General Fund		27,994			27,994	10,967
Designated						
Designated - Fabric Fund			6,530		6,530	7,255
Designated - Roof Renewal Fund			67,340		67,340	70,388
Restricted						
Restricted - St Nicholas Chapel Trust (Bonton)				19,792	19,792	18,657
Restricted - Eve Crawford Fund For Elderly				36,135	36,135	38,114
Restricted - Bill Howes Library Appeal				153	153	153
Restricted - Youth Project & Ministry				3,098	3,098	4,455
Fund Totals		27,994	73,870	59,179	161,043	149,987
			(Note 9)	(Note 10)		

The notes on Pages 22 to 27 form part of these financial statements

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

1. Accounting Policies

1a Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible by law.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The PCC considers that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

The financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1 and are prepared in Sterling

1b Funds

General Fund represents the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1c Income

Regular giving is recognised when received by the PCC. Income tax recoverable under Gift Aid is included when that income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are recognised when the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due.

Parochial fees are now an integral part of the activities of the PCC.

Fee income from the letting of church premises is recognised when the rental is received.

Investment income and interest are accounted for when receivable.

Fundraising income is recognised when received by the PCC.

Unrealised gains or losses are recognised on the revaluation of investments at 31 December. Realised gains or losses are recognised when investments are sold.

1d Expenditure

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded if that creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Expenditure on activities relating to the work of the church and the Diocesan Quota are accounted for when payable and include irrecoverable VAT where applicable. Governance costs comprise those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the PCC, this includes the preparation and examination of these financial statements.

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1e Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements by Section 96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993. The church extension has been built on benefice land and, being a physical extension to the church, is subject to Ecclesiastical Faculty Jurisdiction; it, like the church, is therefore not included on the PCC Balance Sheet.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, and which require a faculty for disposal, since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

All expenditure incurred on consecrated or benefice buildings, and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure of the year in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Other fixtures, fittings and office equipment are depreciated to write off their cost on a straight line basis over five years, at the rate of 20% p.a. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

1f Investments

Investments are valued at market value at 31 December where materially different from cost. Investments comprise investments in unquoted equity

1g Financial instruments

Financial instruments are classified and accounted for, according to the substance of the contractual arrangement, as either financial assets or financial liabilities.

- Short term debtors (financial assets) are measured at transaction price
- Short term creditors (financial liabilities) are measured at transaction price

The PCC only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments.

1h Cashflow

The accounts do not include a cashflow statement as the PCC as a small reporting entity is exempt from the requirements to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP (FRS 102) Bulletin 1.

	Unrestricted Funds			Total	Total
	General	Designated	Restricted	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	2023	2022
				£	£
Income and endowments from:					
2a Donations and legacies					
0101 - Gift Aid - Bank	48,400			48,400	50,853
0110 - Gift Aid - Envelopes	5,228		510	5,738	7,724
0201 - Other planned giving	14,216		207	14,423	3,365
0301 - Loose plate collections	4,241		496	4,736	3,731
0410 - Giving through church boxes	1,895			1,895	1,704
0415 - Online Giving	5,570			5,570	6,688
0501 - One-off Gift Aid gifts	3,090			3,090	
0550 - Donations appeals etc	9,128		515	9,643	3,720
0601 - Tax recoverable on Gift Aid	15,959			15,959	19,156
0701 - Legacies	5,006			5,006	1,782
08A1 - Non-recurring one-off grants	855			855	
0901 - Other funds generated	-1,323			-1,323	3,104
Donations and legacies Totals	112,264		1,728	113,991	101,827

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Unrestricted Funds				
	General	Designated	Restricted	Total Funds
	£	£	£	2023
				£
				2022
				£
2b Income from charitable activities				
1230 - Church hire - objectives	605			605
1240 - Church hire - fund raising	3,625			3,625
1260 - Parish magazine sales & advertising	2,613			2,613
1290 - Fees Income Weddings	7,864			7,864
1295 - Fees Income Funerals	2,836			2,836
Income from charitable activities Totals	17,543			17,543
2c Other trading activities				
0902 - Flower Festival	13,362			13,362
0910 - Sales of cards, mugs and teatowels etc	1,006			1,006
1210 - Bookstall sales to promote objectives	110			110
1220 - Bookstall sales - fund raising	35		28	63
Other trading activities Totals	14,513		28	14,541
2d Investments				
1001 - Dividends	5,994			5,994
Investments Totals	5,994			5,994
2e Other income				
1250 - Broadband income	600			600
1270 - Other Income	3,364			3,364
1280 - Fees for Vicar's PA	3,530			3,530
Other income Totals	7,494			7,494
Income and endowments Grand totals	157,807		1,755	159,562
3 Expenditure on:				
3a Raising funds				
1701 - Fees paid to fund raisers	302			302
1730 - Fundraising costs	5,097		109	5,206
1731 - Flower festival expenses	3,910			3,910
2502 - Cost of cards, mugs and teatowels etc	883			883
Raising funds Totals	10,192		109	10,301

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

		Unrestricted Funds			
		General	Designated	Restricted	Total Funds 2023
		£	£	£	£
					Total Funds 2022
					£
3b	Expenditure on charitable activities				
	1801 - Giving to missionary societies	110			110
	1830 - Giving - relief and development agencies				860
	1850 - Home mission	78			78
	1854 - Relief for the Elderly			1,470	1,470
	1855 - Coggeshall Youth Project Donations	4,000		2,000	6,000
	1870 - Secular charities	400			400
	1901 - Diocesan quota (Parish Share)	64,470			64,470
	2001 - Salary of Vicar's PA	7,215			7,215
	2050 - Salary of parish administrator	8,952			8,952
	2060 - Honorarium	5,670			5,670
	2101 - Working expenses of incumbent	191			191
	2150 - Vicar's telephone				406
	2170 - Education	82			82
	2201 - Parish training and mission	1,064			1,064
	2301 - Church running - insurance	7,504		1,033	8,537
	2305 - Church running - Roof Alarm	1,379			1,379
	2310 - Church office - telephone	1,206			1,206
	2320 - Choirmaster, organ and music	1,955			1,955
	2329 - Property repairs - vicarage	300			300
	2330 - Property repairs - general maintenance	516	339		855
	2331 - Cleaning	1,901			1,901
	2340 - Upkeep of services	2,463			2,463
	2341 - Flowers	1,755			1,755
	2345 - Upkeep of Family Services	80			80
	2350 - Upkeep of churchyard	800			800
	2360 - Office Administration	2,053			2,053
	2361 - Website	2,020			2,020
	2370 - Visiting speakers / locums				60
	2401 - Church running - electric	2,925			2,925
	2410 - Church running - gas	7,015			7,015
	2420 - Church running - water	218			218
	2501 - Magazine expenses	2,870			2,870
	2510 - Bookstall costs	160			160
	2601 - Governance costs examination/audit fee	670			670
	2701 - Church major repairs - structure		424		424
	2710 - Church major repairs - installation				829
	Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	130,024	763	4,503	135,289
3c	Other expenditure				
	2306 - Church running - Fire	565			565
	Other expenditure Totals	565			565
	Expenditure Grand totals	140,780	763	4,612	146,155
					150,628

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4. COMMITMENTS

(a) The 2018 (St Nicholas Chapel) and 2019 (St Peter's Church) **Quinquennial Inspections** identified various works that had previously been highlighted in the 2013 report. These works are of a non urgent nature and will be phased and undertaken when funding allows.

(b) There were no other major **Capital Commitments** at 31 December 2023

5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Equipment £
Cost	
as at 1 January 2023	2,675
additions	0
as at 31 December 2023	<u>2,675</u>
Depreciation	
as at 1 January 2023	2,675
additions	0
as at 31 December 2023	<u>2,675</u>
Net Book Value	
as at 1 January 2023	£ 0
as at 31 December 2023	£ <u>0</u>

The tangible fixed assets are held for charitable use by the PCC

6. INVESTMENTS at market value

(a) Allocation to Funds

From 2011 it was agreed that all investment assets, short term deposits and bank balances should be considered to be 'Pooled Assets' and all interest and dividends received should be allocated to the different funds in proportion to the assets held by that fund at the end of the month before the payment or revaluation was realised.

(b) Investments at Market Value

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	General	Designated			
	£	£	£	£	£
BontonChapelTrust - St Nicholas Chapel Trust (Bonton)			19,250	19,250	18,727
CrawfordElderly - Eve Crawford Fund For Elderly			31,466	31,466	31,975
FabricFund - Fabric Fund		2834		2,834	2,796
RoofFund - Roof Renewal Fund		67,340		67,340	70,388
Youth&Ministry - Youth Project & Ministry			9098	9,098	8,455
Total Variable Investments	0	70,174	59,814	129,988	132,341

(c) Gains/(losses) on revaluation of investment assets

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	General	Designated		
	£	£	£	£
Variable Investments at Market Value				
As at 31 December 2022		73,183	59,157	132,340
Sale of Investments				
Purchase of investments				
As at 31 December 2023		70,174	59,814	129,988
Gain/Loss on Revaluation		-3,009	657	-2,352

ST PETER AD VINCULA CHURCH, COGGESHALL, PCC

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

7. DEBTORS

Nil

8. CREDITORS

Nil

9. DESIGNATED FUNDS

	Total	Fabric Fund	Roof Renewal Fund
	£	£	£
As at 1 January 2023	77,643	7,255	70,388
Investment income			
Interest received			
Gain/Loss on revaluation of investments	-3,009	38	-3,047
Donations and related Gift Aid			
Library Appeal			
Fund Transfers			
Expenditure	-763	-763	
As at 31 December 2023	<u>73,870</u>	<u>6,530</u>	<u>67,340</u>
		(a)	(b)

(a) The Fabric Fund consists of monies designated by the PCC for major works.

(b) The Roof Renewal Fund was established in June 2010.

The initial investment was a transfer of £50,000 from the Fabric Fund.

10. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Total	Eve Crawford	Bonton Fund	Bill Howes Appeal	Youth project & Ministry
	£	£	£	£	£
As at 1 January 2023	61,378	38,114	18,657	153	4,455
Investment income	0				
Gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	657	-508	522		643
Interest received	0				
Donations (Inc Gift Aid)	0				
Other income	1,755		1,755		
Expenditure in year	-4,612	-1,470	-1,142		-2,000
Transfer of funds	0				
As at 31 December 2023	<u>59,178</u>	<u>36,136</u>	<u>19,792</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>3,098</u>
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)

(a) The executors of the will of Eve Crawford requested that 20% of the net sale proceeds of 3 Robinsbridge Road be made available for helping the elderly. The Eve Crawford Fund for the Elderly was therefore created in 2007 to reflect the executors' wishes.

(b) Funds held in the St Nicholas Chapel Trust (Bonton) Fund were, with the agreement of the Charities Commission, transferred to the PCC accounts and are held for expenditure at St Nicholas Chapel.

(c) The Bill Howes Appeal is to raise funds for the library. In the previous year, expenditure on this project exceeded income and excess expenditure was funded from the Fabric fund. During the current year, income has been sufficient to cover the expenditure on this fund.

(d) The Youth project & ministry represents donations made towards youth project expenditure and ministry expenditure. The donation towards youth projects was fully expended during the year.

