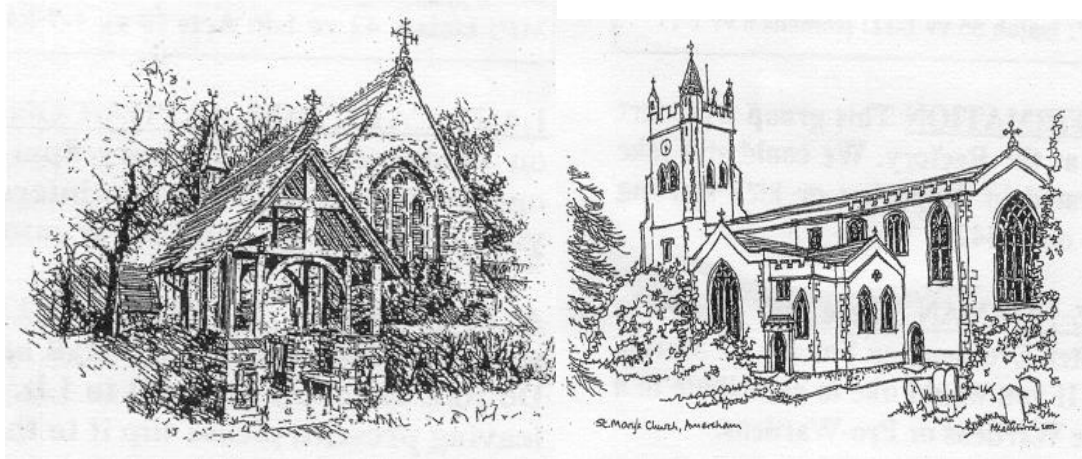


THE PARISH OF AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL



Annual Report 2024

**Come to the Annual Parish Meeting
on Sunday 21st April 2024 at
11.50am in St Mary's Church**

**To discuss the past year and elect
Churchwardens and PCC members**

All welcome

It has been quite the year in the parish with much to give thanks for! But most importantly, we can take this opportunity to celebrate all God has done to bless the ministry of the church in Amersham and Coleshill. It is impossible to list everything or thank everyone for all they contribute to the life and work of the parish, but I hope to give a few examples of the many things to rejoice in over the last 12 months. Certainly, for us as a family, the arrival of Naomi has been wonderful and we feel incredibly blessed. Both Jenna and I felt incredibly humbled by the incredible support given to us by everyone in the parish through prayers, meals, cards, gifts and general words of encouragement. It meant, and continues to mean, the world to us and we couldn't be happier that Naomi will grow up amongst such a wonderful church family.

One of the defining positives over the past year is the growth we have seen in a number of different areas of parish life:

1. Christmas 2023 showed an increase in attendance at almost every service the church held. Both crib services, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day itself saw our churches packed as people chose to celebrate Christmas with us.
2. Our average weekly attendance (which is calculated in October) shows an increase in attendees week by week across the parish.
3. Our electoral numbers are also looking positive with an increase from last year!
4. The Mini-steps parent and toddler faced a lull in September 2023 as a number of regular children went off to school, but months later we have seen attendance on the up for this group with fifteen children (plus 10 adults) attending Tuesday just gone.

But growth need not be isolated to the church itself - by invitation of Mrs. Hills at St Mary's School, I set up a The Bible Brick Club with the help and support of Michelle. The club was inundated with sign-ups in January 2024, so we are still working our way through a sizeable waiting list. The club is an opportunity for Children to explore a bible verse and use their creativity to recreate something with Lego that stood out to them in the passage. The children have created sheep, flowers, whales, boats, frogs, pyramids and even small-scale dioramas of the parting of the Red Sea and the foolish man who built his house on the sand! Not only does this provide children with the opportunity to learn about the bible, but it also enables them to think creatively.

Our work with schools has gone from strength to strength in the past year:

1. In January we welcomed students from Coleshill Village School to learn about different aspects of the church.
2. I was kindly invited to be part of World Religion Day at Coleshill School.
3. We continue to go to both St Mary's and Coleshill School every week for collective worship.
4. I, along with others from the parish, sit on both governing boards for the schools.
5. Governors were involved with the SIAMS inspection for St Mary's in January 2024 which assessed their performance as a church school. The staff at the school did a wonderful job and were granted judgment 1 of 2, which confirms the school is meeting the required standards.

6. St Mary's School are celebrating 150 years this academic year and hosted a service at the church which included a procession from the school to the church as they did 150 years ago. Tim Harper very kindly took this service while I was absent on paternity leave - although I wasn't able to be there, reports of the service have been excellent.
7. Dr Challoner's Grammar School Celebrated its 400th Anniversary with a spectacular service at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle. As Dr Challoner's successor 400 years later, I was kindly invited to lead the prayers. I am so pleased that the church was included in such special occasion for the school.

A highlight of 2024, without doubt, was the Admission to Communion and Confirmation service we hosted in February which saw 12 candidates confirmed and 1 admitted to Holy Communion. It's been a while since Bishop Alan was welcomed to the parish to hold a service of confirmation, so to be able to welcome him for such a service was wonderful. Not least as, sadly, this was Bishop Alan's last service before he died a few weeks later. However, Bishop Alan commented on what a special service this was, which is something we as a parish should be especially proud of.

Every year, in preparation for the APCM I compile a list of possible subjects to include and pick a handful as highlights. This report barely scratches the surface of that list and I am acutely aware of how much I haven't been able to include. So finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to the life and work of the parish over the last year. I am incredibly grateful for all everyone does to support all the many different aspects of parish life. It wouldn't be possible without you. Ultimately, a church is nothing without the people who make it what it is. So, thank you to each and every one of you for building a community where all can flourish and meet with Jesus.

Parochial Church Council Secretary's Report, April 2024

All members of the PCC are trustees of the Parish, which is registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC makes an annual return to the Charity Commission describing its aims and accounts. The Auditors and the Secretary are responsible for this.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Immediately after the APCM in 2023 the PCC consisted of 24 members – the clergy team, 4 Churchwardens, 3 representatives to the Deanery Synod and 15 other elected members who are members of the congregation on the electoral roll of the parish. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The prime purposes of the PCC are to cooperate with the Rector in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, considering matters of religious or public interest and acting as a link between the parish

and the deanery and diocesan synods. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The Standing Committee of core PCC members is empowered to take decisions, within guidelines agreed by the full PCC, on specific issues when no PCC meeting is imminent. Its decisions are always reported, and occasionally reviewed, at the next PCC meeting.

The PCC met on 5 occasions between the APCMs in 2023 and 2024. The average attendance at the meetings was 78%. Each meeting has common items as well as special areas of business. The common items are: reports from church wardens; reports on safeguarding; reports on GDPR; reports on housing controlled by the Parish; and the financial health of the Parish including charitable giving and fund raising.

In November there was an “PCC Away Morning” at which the Mission Action Plan was considered by the members of the PCC. Sheila Shield our Reader, Dorothy Potter our Parish Administrator and Edward McCall our organist also attended.

Valerie Simmonds, David Skinner and Jane McNeilly come to the end of their annual terms of office as Churchwardens. They are all eligible for re-election and have indicated that they are prepared to continue.

Petrina Clackett comes to the end of her four year term of office as Churchwarden and will not seek re-election. The PCC have expressed their sincere thanks to Petrina for all her hard work over the years.

Deanery Synod Representatives. Graeme Coles, Sarah Ainsworth -Coles and Susan Pounce have indicated that they are prepared to continue.

At the time of writing this report Peter Clackett and Melissa Giddings have indicated that they wish to step down.

There are vacancies for elected members.

The positions to be filled at this year’s meeting are therefore:

☐ 4 Churchwardens until 2025

☐ 3 Deanery Synod Representatives until 2025

☐ 3 Elected PCC members until 2025

As we have an electoral roll of over 200+ we can co-opt up to 3 more PCC members

Rev Jonny Rapson	Rector	DS
Rev Sue Gill	Honorary Assistant Rector	DS
Rev Tim Barnard	Honorary Assistant Rector	
Petrina Clackett	Church Warden AS (Lay Chair)	
Jane McNeilly	Church Warden AS	
Val Simmonds	Church Warden SM	
David Skinner	Church Warden SM	
Graeme Coles	Treasurer	DS
Peter Clackett	Assistant Treasurer	
Lorraine Hollett	Sacristan/Health & Safety	
Clare Atkinson	Planned Giving /GDPR	
Clare Samuels	Safeguarding Officer	
Louise Baneke	Charitable Giving	
Neta Foote	Pastoral care	
Mel Jackson/ Giddings	Safeguarding Officer	
Sarah Ainsworth-Coles	Electoral Roll Officer	DS
Paul Clarke	Website	
Simon Hollett	Sunday School	
Bart Schmal	Steaming/Insurance	
Rebecca Benn	Social Activities	
Aurelija Paton	Church & Church Rooms Hiring/Marketing	
David Elliot	Church & Church Rooms Hiring/Marketing	
Sue Pounce	PCC Secretary	DS

DS Deanery Synod

Susan Pounce
PCC Secretary
March 2024

Amersham with Coleshill PCC
Annual Treasurer's Report
For the year ended 31 December 2023

I am pleased to provide you with our annual accounts and this Executive Summary:

Key objective for 2023 were to:

1. Provide finance and strategic guidance & controls to support day to day cashflow & support Mission and Fabric proposals across our Parish

As reported at our quarterly PCC meetings, the workings of the parish and our finances have continued to have been significantly impacted by the macro-economic environment of high inflation, high interest rate, market volatility, cost of living crisis taking centre stage in both media and more locally our cashflow.

Summary of Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2023:

- Challenging times! Across the Unrestricted & Restricted funds our deficit has grown to £8.8k in 2023 from £1.2k in 2022 (before investment movements). This is largely down to a drop in income from Voluntary Income (-£11.1k) & Church Activities (£10.3k). Overall, income down 7.5% on PY.
- Expenditure has been closely managed and down £10.6k (4.5%) from PY mainly due to reduction in ministry costs and PCC property upkeep.
- The reason for the overall increase in funds carried forward (+£21k) is due to the increase in investment value. This is a paper surplus and does not impact the cash reserves of the PCC where we are still well endowed and have £184k of Unrestricted & Restricted funds to support both Parish Mission & Fabric.
- Bearing in mind the markets went the other way in 2022 when we had minus £42k valuation! The increase in investment value seen in 2023 appears to be the markets steadying post Covid and auditors have reported that they have seen similar increases across a number of PCC's that they work with.
- Overall, I feel that our operational financial performance has stood up well given the challenges we faced in 2023 and we have been able to increase our Mission Giving by 18% to £12.1k
- Piggotts End Property - Surplus contribution increased to £13.2k from 5.5k previous year. The property is a reserved asset held in trust with an ongoing debate whether this should be included in accounts at 89k or at current market value). With the valuation of the property we are allowed to take one of two different approaches. First and the current policy is to take the cost value and leave as is in the accounts without any revaluation, this was allowed during the transition period to the new reporting standards and can remain in place if we choose. Second option is to revalue the property and then undertake regular valuations to ensure that the correct market value is shown in the accounts, the valuation should be prepared by a professional. I will take this to PCC again to ensure we continue to be happy with our approach and will update on those discussions through the usual channels.
- Church Rooms - Income decreased by £5,617 to £15,540 but still reported an important surplus £14k. It is fair to say there is some expenditure (eg cleaning, utilities) that gets mopped up by main expenditure but it does show this is still a valuable asset & contributor to both PCC & the community.
- Parish Share was increased by £3,062 to £89,332. We continue to pay our Parish Share in full every year. Disappointingly, Parish share will increase by a further 3.1% in 2024 to £92,123 - £7,677pm – increase of £233pm.

- Balance Sheet: up £21k (3.5%) to £617,265 from £596,230 – again, important context on balance sheet increase is the significant increase in valuation of our investments. It is important to understand when analysing Parish Finances that there are 3 types of Funds:
 - Unrestricted Funds – general funds for general objectives of the church – Day to day operational cash flow but does include unrestricted assets– decreased by £14,780 to £189,715 of which £89,000 is the Piggotts End property.
 - Therefore, the PCC is well endowed and has c£101k (not including PE fixed Asset value) on unrestricted funds as at 31 December 2023. Funds also exist for the maintenance of both churches.
 - Restricted Funds – can only be used for the specific purpose for which they have been given eg Fabric – increased by £19,454 to £237,943.
 - Endowment Funds – represent endowments where capital must be maintained and the dividend income used only for the restricted purposes specified in the establishment of the endowments – increased due to valuation gain by £16,362 to £189,608.
- **Good Box 2022 - 2023 Comparison** - Good Box has become an important revenue generator - also being used for Bookstall & Marquee Hire.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Totals	Ave Donation
2023	£1,605 (303)	£2,148 (422)	£2,584 (495)	£2,816 (500)	£9,153 (1720)	£5.32
2022	£1,172 (219)	£2,133 (404)	£1,777 (320)	£2,312 (432)	£7,394 (1375)	£5.38
Difference +/-	£433 (84)	£15 (18)	£807 (175)	£504 (68)	£1,759 (345)	(0.06)

- Interesting lens to look thru that seems to go against Income numbers above.
- This points to increased foot flow / usage of GB within the parish.
- Note that 2023 average donation down by 6p from 2022.
- Further analysis required on Gift Aid reconciliation to understand any movement from monthly giving to Good Box.
- All Regulation - Charities Commission, Diocesan return, HMRC, RTI and Pension Regulator fully up to date.
- Auditors have expressed no concerns during their independent examination to the way we are running our finances.
- Flower Group – for the eagle eyed amongst you, you will have noticed we have now included the Flower Group as a Restricted Fund in S8 of the accounts.

Planned Giving & Gifts are our largest income source (c66%) and we must thank every one of our congregations for their continued support and contribution during another challenging year. Without ongoing Planned Giving and those generous “one offs” we simply cannot function. Thank you for what you donate now. If you are able to give more

then, I can assure you, that we will put it to very good use and that every penny is accounted for and nothing is wasted.

In terms of Missionary & Charitable Giving, through the huge efforts of many of volunteers our overall total was £12,131 – up £1,844 (18%) from previous year despite the economic headwinds mentioned previously. We will be working with the Mission Giving committee to ensure that we maintain the focus and impetus in 2024. Work still to be completed is to define usage on Rectors Discretionary Fund (£14,081) that is defined in the accounts as support for “alleviation of need”. Looking to tackle this again in H1 2024. Would like to acknowledge the fantastic contribution of Louise Baneke & Petrina Clackett for all their hardwork to Mission Giving over many years. Also to Loraine & Martin Hollett and all those who support Annual Fete, Book & Flower Stall and the Gazebo / Marquee rentals that contribute significant percentage of our Charitable Giving.

Key Finance actions undertaken to address our key challenges and support delivery of sustainable 2022 financial Performance:

- All Regulatory (incl Diocesan, HMRC & Charities Commission) returns up to date including recent completion & update of bank mandates & KYC Due Diligence process.
- Auditors have given us a clean report in the way that we are managing our finances and regulatory obligations.
- Comprehensive Treasurers Report prepared and discussed at every PCC meeting.

Our 2023 operational cashflow showed that we needed **£529 per day / £16,099 per month** to run our parish, this is a significant amount of money that we need to raise just to stand still. It is vital that we continue with focussed, disciplined management of our finances. In terms of operational cashflow, there is very little margin for error, every penny is used and if it is not used for day to day operations then we need to ensure it is only used to support the main good causes both at local and national level.

The PCC is still well endowed with both unrestricted & restricted funds as at 31 December 2023 and as highlighted, funds also exist for the maintenance of both churches. With that in mind, we still have 2 potentially large projects under discussion at St Mary's – West Window / New Boiler and we are taking necessary advice and will look for any possible grants to support. As we did with previous large projects, we will need to plan and scrutinise the scope, scale and timings to ensure their affordability in line with the many other calls on our resources.

In summary, 2023 was another challenging year. However, despite the headwinds and with phenomenal support of our congregation we were able to deliver a good financial performance whilst at the same time meeting our parish share and contributing more to charitable giving.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support from Rev Jonny Rapson, Rev Tim Barnard, Rev Sue Gill, Loraine Hollett, Clare Atkinson & Dorothy Potter who work so hard to support the parish finances. In addition, the Church Wardens, & Parish Secretary Sue Pounce for giving me the time at PCC to report, discuss & debate key financial challenges

that we are facing. Special mention to Peter Clackett who is standing down as ASC Treasurer after many years of excellent service. Thank you.

Should you have any queries concerning the contents of this review or should you have any general questions about the parish finances, please do not hesitate to contact me via mobile 07703 963990 or email at treasurer-pcc@outlook.com.

Graeme Coles - PCC Treasurer
April 2024

PLANNED GIVING

THANK YOU. As a parish we are indebted to all those who give to the Church; no matter what your contribution all gifts together ensure that we are able to serve our community and look after our wonderful buildings.

This year, we again have seen an increase in those making their regular gifts via standing order whilst cash collections have decreased. The GoodBox machines at both churches have been crucial in ensuring that we are able to claim gift aid on donations given by credit or debit card Gift aid added over £21,000 in total to our coffers this year and I make monthly claims to ensure that we are able to ensure that the money reaches our bank account in a timely fashion.

As ever, I will be letting everyone who makes a regular gift know the amounts that we have received and claimed in gift aid shortly after the end of the tax year in April. Please bear in mind that collating this information does take me a substantial amount of time and I therefore am not in a position to get it to you on 6 April! I will do my best to do this as quickly as possible, but please do bear with me!

I remain indebted to Loraine Hollett who banks all of the cash gifts we receive, something which is getting ever more difficult to achieve as we see the demise of the bank branches – it's all a real team effort.

If you would like to make a regular donation through either the envelop scheme or via standing order, please do get in touch!

Clare Atkinson March 2024

2023 Parish Charitable Giving Report for the APCM – April 2024

2023 was another successful year for our Charitable Giving and marked an 18% increase over last year's figure. In **2023**, our giving came to **£12,131**.

£7,796 of this was raised at our annual Parish fete, a successful harvest lunch, a flower workshop, book and plant sales, loaning of equipment and Heritage Day. The Parish fete which raises the largest funds reached £4609 of this total. Over 30 community, charity and other events were supported with loans of marquees, gazebos, and equipment from our Parish – more than double the events we covered last year.

£7,796 was shared and distributed to the following charities:

- The local **South West Bucks MS Group**,
- **The Ukraine Appeal** through the Disasters' Emergency Committee,
- **Scannappeal**,
- **Salt of the Earth**, Tamil Nadu, India.

In addition, funds went to support Steve and Lindsey Poulson, from **Street Kids Direct (SKD)** . Another £1000 was raised for SKD at a very successful oboe recital given by Imogen Atkinson at St Mary's Church.

Later in the year, over £2,700 raised from the Christmas services held at St Marys and at All Saints went to **Crisis at Christmas**. Other successful but separate fundraising events and Special Services took place over the year at both our Churches.

This success would not have been possible without the hard work, help and support of our two congregations, our fete committee, our local community and businesses.

Thank you to all who contributed to our giving in 2023 and in particular special thanks go to, Loraine and Martin Hollett and Val Simmonds.

Louise Baneke and Petrina Clackett

April 2024

Church Warden for St Mary's Church report for 2023/2024 APCM

It hardly seems possible that Jonny and Jenna have now been with us for nearly 2 years and Naomi for 6 months. We have seen the work with young people grow with the Parent and Toddler Group meeting weekly in term time. The introduction of All Age Services for the main service; for significant Sundays; encouraging more people to take part. We saw a special service to mark the Coronation of Charles III which was followed by scones and cream.

In November we welcomed Michelle Fotherby to the clergy team as Curate.

In February we welcomed Bishop Alan for the Confirmation and Admission of Children to Holy Communion and of course all the candidates and their supporters.

We as a Parish were saddened to hear that Bishop Alan died suddenly at home barely 2 weeks after leading the service at St Mary's. We join with the whole Parish in thinking of, and praying for his Family and friends.

You will all be aware, there are 2 wardens at each church, Valerie Simmonds(VS) and David Skinner(DS) at St Mary's, and Petrina Clackett and Jane McNeilly at Coleshill. As the 'new boy' (DS) at St Marys (since April 2023) there has been much to learn (and to continue to learn). In particular I have realised how much work is done by so many members of the Church in making the Parish so successful. We highlight some of their names below. This is not an exhaustive list!

You will know that we have experienced 'problems' with the boiler during this winter. We are hugely grateful to **Peter Clackett** for his tireless work organising repairs, sourcing parts and providing alternative heating. Plans are underway to replace the boiler. **Peter's** experience as an engineer is invaluable in all the planning required for a new boiler.

We remain very grateful to **Loraine Hollett** who has regularly carried out risk assessments, as well as her almost continuous work within St Mary's.

Since his arrival **Jonny** has energetically picked up and developed Pastoral Care within our church community and his work with children and young people is also blossoming. We thank **Simon Hollett**, our children's worker, for his faithful service. He has worked hard with the Rector to build this important part of our mission.

Under the leadership of **Anthony Brown and Martin Pounce** the streaming of church services has gone from strength to strength. As ever our thanks go to the team and to **Dan Solomon** from Terry Tew of Sound and Light for his on-call support in times of need.

Our Director of Music, **Edward McCall** continues to develop the musical life of the church. Our organ scholars, (Zen and Harry) have played competently and confidently at some of our services. We hope to encourage others to come forward. The church choir continues to grow and the wide range of Anthems sung during communion and the monthly services of Choral Evensong together with the wonderful voluntaries and postludes from

Edward enhance our regular worship. Currently young people are being recruited to join the choir.

During the coldest period at St Mary's, Ed went 'above and beyond' by bringing electric hand warmers to Choir practice. Otherwise, he simply couldn't play the organ or piano. Occasionally, the choir had to decamp to the Church rooms.

We were able to hold our annual Parish Fete led by **Martin and Loraine Hollett** in 2023. This, the book and plant stalls and loan of gazebos has brought in substantial additional income for our charitable giving. We are absolutely delighted that the Team, led again by **Martin and Loraine Hollett**, are planning for our fete this year (2024) to be held on June 15th.

We are both humbled and encouraged by the generosity shown towards St. Mary's over the past year. Without the financial support so generously offered by you, our church would simply not be able to function in the way it does. On behalf of the PCC, we would like to thank you all for your faithful on-going financial support of the work of our parish.

The charitable giving team led by **Louise Baneke and Petrina Clackett** have worked hard to determine which deserving charities should benefit from the funds raised, not least by the annual Church Fete. The successful charities will be presenting details of their work in the near future.

St Mary's Church remains in good order. The quinquennial inspection (2021) reported that there were no matters of the utmost urgency. All recommended issues have been dealt with. All the regular checks are up to date (gas safety, electrical report, lightning conductor, fire extinguishers, PAT etc), and the organ has been serviced and tuned as per contract. We thank **Sue Pounce** for her unstinting work during her period as Church Warden (now 'retired'). She continues to give sound advice and help. We are very grateful to her.

However, St Mary's church dates from 1140AD (it was a holy site prior to this). There are therefore constant 'issues' to be addressed. In addition to the boiler, the roof continues to challenge us (leaks) – we are grateful to **Stephen Crawley** (Church surveyor) for attending on many occasions to discuss and organise ongoing repairs. His knowledge of St Mary's and commitment to it is invaluable. He is closely involved in the works regarding the magnificent stained glass window at the eastern end of the Chancel. If the Diocese allows, works will begin this summer.

The "Curate's House" at Piggott's End is privately let and brings in a useful income for the PCC. The tenants found by Hadlands have extended their tenancy for another year and the PCC have agreed to this.

Our thanks must go to Amersham Town Council which has the responsibility to maintain the Churchyard. They carry out their duties so well.

We would like to thank **all PCC members** for their commitment throughout the year. **The working teams, Standing Committee, Staff Meeting Team, our Sacristan Lorraine, and Dorothy, our Parish administrator** all continue to sustain the smooth running of the parish.

The tremendous support and assistance received from the many helpers within our congregation and parish throughout the year is invaluable. Our thanks go to **all** who contribute to the Church services including the flower arranging led by **Jane Partridge and team**, bell ringing led by **Jan Galloway and Matthew Johnson**, the choir under the leadership of our Director of Music, **Edward Mc Call** and the careful stewardship of our finances by our Treasurer, **Graeme Coles and Assistant Treasurer Peter Clackett**. We are grateful to **Clare Atkinson** who manages gift aid and stewardship details for both St Mary's and All Saints Churches and to our Electoral Roll Officer, **Sarah Ainsworth-Coles**.

Jo Coldham has 'retired' after leading the flower team for 20 years. We wish her a happy and healthy retirement and trust her role as a member of the congregation will continue for many years.

The Church as we know it would have difficulty functioning without all this, often unseen, work and we are truly grateful to everyone involved in its running. We would welcome more volunteers. If you are interested, more details can be found on the website under the tab 'about us' or please come and talk to us. We are very grateful to **Michelle Caternach** who designed and maintains our parish website so efficiently. they do to sustain this charity.

The Church is truly part of the community. Just one example of this is its involvement in Amersham United Charities (AUC), whose main task is managing the Drakes and Days Almshouses. These offer up to 11 warm and safe single occupant houses in Old Amersham. We are particularly grateful to **Tim Barnard, Jonny and Peter Clackett (AUC Trustees)** for their commitment, and the substantial amount of work We continue to put our trust in God, praying for **Jonny, Tim, Sue, Michelle and Sheila, and for Sarah, Mel and Edward** our authorised preachers. We remain thankful for the great spirit and shared purpose shown in their ministry.

Valerie Simmonds and David Skinner
April 2024

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH WARDENS' REPORT 2024

This report relates to the activities of the year ending 31st December 2023. Whilst the Church has returned to being fully open for all services, including Sunday communion services, we have continued to intinct wine, although this practice will continue to be reviewed by clergy.

WORSHIP

The pattern of services has remained the same as in previous years, with the continuation of several themed services.

Our normal service is held on a Sunday at 0900 and is usually accompanied by coffee (and a chat), immediately after the service. It is proposed that this will continue as it remains a firm favourite with all.

Our house group, very ably led by Audrey Tridgell, continued to flourish. The group meets every Wednesday, with members from both churches, averaging a total of 11 attendees.

SPECIAL SERVICES

We held themed services to encourage people from the village and Winchmore Hill to join us. We especially welcomed the children to the themed services, including Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and the services around Christmas. There was a good attendance at all with congregation numbers being in the region of 75 for each.

The All-Age service, initiated last year by the rector, continued to be successful.

During Passiontide and Easter 2023, we held several special services, including Ash Wednesday (with the marking of an ash cross), Palm Sunday (joined by a donkey, Denise, and Shetland pony friend, Peggy), Compline (an evening service on the Tuesday of Holy Week), and a special service of hymns, prayers and meditation, with the lighting of candles on Good Friday with our regular 0900 morning service on Easter Day.

We were also fortunate enough to be able to hold our pet service on a sunny day in July 2023. The event was well attended by 16 dogs and 48 people! However, we were unable to hold our bee service due to the death of the colony over the winter period.

Other themed services included the patronal celebration, baptism renewal and Remembrance Sunday, all of which have proved successful.

We ended the year with our festive services, including our crib service (attendance 86), Christingle service (86) and the well-attended carol service of lessons and carols (96).

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, FUNERALS ETC.

We continue to publicise the use of All Saints' for weddings with two couples being married in 2023. We also welcomed three children for baptism at Sunday services. The church was packed for two funerals, followed by the internment of the bodies in the churchyard. There were two internments of ashes of three remains, in the churchyard in the year.

MISSION ACTION PLAN

We continued to hold regular monthly prayer meetings in church with these taking place on the first Saturday of the month. The number of attendees remains encouraging.

PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH

The village school continues to maintain a close relationship with the church that has been further strengthened by our rector.

The Magpie Club for pre-school children holds weekly meetings in the Village Hall, every Friday during term time. On average 10 children and parents come each week.

The Patch system, designed to support those who are ill or need company, and to welcome newcomers to the village, meets twice yearly and it is anticipated that the biennial welcome party for newcomers will take place in 2024.

SCHOOL INTERACTION

Rev. Jonny Rapson takes Collective Worship in the school every Wednesday and twice a term Open Assembly takes place in the church with parents and friends being welcome. They also join us for special services with the children contributing colourful decorations, songs and poems. An end-of-term service is held in the church and at the end of the summer term, leavers are presented with a Bible. An average of 80 attend all these services. The Rector has taken Year 2 pupils round the church as part of RE. He and Jane McNeilly are both Governors of the School which strengthens the bonds between church and school.

ACTIVITIES

In January 2023 the "Flower Ladies", held a coffee morning which included a drink & cake, a raffle, and a bring & buy sale in the village hall, raising in the region of £700. This money was shared between the Flower Fund, the Village school, Street Kids Direct and One Can Trust (High Wycombe). On the Sunday of the King's Coronation weekend, the church was beautifully decorated and a special celebration was held after the service.

In May the churchyard was used to host a plant sale with a donation made to the church.

FABRIC

Running repairs were made to the Church during the year following the observations of the Quinquennial inspection. One Faculty was raised for the installation of an internal noticeboard. This has been completed. Works to another Faculty, raised in 2022, for the removal of asbestos like materials from the porch and subsequent replacement was instigated. The materials were removed in 2023 and the porch re-clad with wooden slats, however we are still awaiting the painting of the slats. This work is expected to be completed in Spring of 2024.

A "Parishioner Church Clean" took place in July and this has helped keep the church looking at its best, both inside and out. The churchyard clearance took place in November. Our thanks go to all of those who helped maintain the church and its surround in good order.

PARISHIONERS

Many people help to support the running of the church, including those who gave their time and service to the Church Committee, meeting on three occasions during the year, to discuss the upkeep and daily running of the church.

In addition, there are many people with specific roles and talents who are essential to keep our church in an attractive, open, and welcoming state by giving generously of their time: -

- We are fortunate that our worship is enhanced by having a fine organ, a consummate Director of Music, Ruth Murphy, and a loyal band of faithful singers, although we are still looking for anyone else who would like to join the choir.
- One of the glories of All Saints' is the colourful and artistic floral decoration organized by Rosemary Valentine and assisted by the flair and hard work of her team of talented workers.
- Chris Wege, as well as being the secretary to the Church Committee, devotes a great deal of time and care to the maintenance of the churchyard.
- Peter Clackett, our All Saints' treasurer, has been responsible for ensuring financial controls are in place. In 2021 plans were put in place, by the Parish treasurers, to combine the finances of both churches. This has been completed and Peter has now stepped down with all financial matters now being run collectively through the Treasurer at St Mary's and the parish office. May I express our thanks to Peter for all his hard work over the past eight years.
- Jane Stefanovic has continued her duties as cleaner and works very hard to keep the building spotless and shining. This is greatly appreciated by worshippers and visitors.
- Paul Evans ensures that the church is both unlocked and locked with the church remaining open to all during the hours of daylight.

The list is not exhaustive, and we are fortunate to have such a faithful team of sidespersons, readers, choir, as well as those who prepare the church for services. We also need to thank our lay preachers, Mel Giddings, Edward Brown and Sarah Ainsworth-Coles for their thought-provoking sermons.

We must especially thank those parishioners who provide regular financial support to the church and have continued to do so. The money they so generously provide helps keep All Saints' church open and in good condition.

We also need to register our huge thanks to our all our clergy, Jonny Rapson (Rector), Rev. Sue Gill and Rev. Tim Barnard (Associate Rectors) for spiritually guiding us through the year. We also extend a warm welcome to our new curate, Rev'd Michelle Fotherby who joined us in November 2023.

Finally, having been involved in one or another church role for the last 20 years, Petrina has decided that now is the time to step down. She would like to wish you all the best for the future and thank all of those, too many to mention, who supported her in her work and role.

Petrina Clackett & Jane McNeilly

St Mary's CE Primary School Report

Governors 2024

Introduction

Jacqueline Rouse leads the Full Governing Body as Chair and Chris Monnington supports as Vice Chair.

Edward Staite (Foundation Governor) and Chris Monnington (LA Governor) chair the sub committees – Teaching, Learning, Pupil & Community (TLPC) and Finance Premises and Personal (FPP) respectively.

Governing Body Structure

The Parish continues to have strong links with St Mary's School, with the Governing body continuing to have a strong representation appointed by the PCC or the Diocese of Oxford, 7 out of the 12 Governors. There has been a change in appointments during the last academic year however the majority of Governors have more than 12 months experience and those new Governors come to the Body with some very valuable experience.

The Governors currently are:

Rev. Jonny Rapson	<i>Ex-officio Governor</i>	<i>Ex-officio</i>
Jacqueline Rouse	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Appointed by the PCC</i>
Chris Monnington	<i>Vice Chair and Subcommittee Chair (FPP)</i>	<i>Local Authority appointed</i>
Steve Johnson	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Appointed by the PCC</i>
Frances Ford	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Appointed by the Diocese</i>
Ed Staite	<i>Subcommittee Chair (TLPC)</i>	<i>Appointed by the PCC</i>
Nasim Clarke	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Parent Governor</i>
Stephen Bell	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Parent Governor</i>
Edward McCall	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Appointed by the PCC</i>
Shanta Gillott	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Appointed by the Diocese</i>
Nicky Norman	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Staff Governor</i>
Julie Hills	<i>Head teacher</i>	<i>Ex-Officio</i>
Martin Pounce	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Appointed by the Diocese</i>

Committees

The two main Committees continue to meet once a term:

- The Teaching, Learning, Pupil and Community Committee*
- The Finance, Personnel and Premises committee*

These committees continue to drive clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. Through these committee meetings the Head teacher is held to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and the FPP oversees the financial performance of the school making sure its money is appropriately spent. The outputs of these meetings are then communicated to the wider Governing Body at the twice termly Full Governing Body Meetings.

Working groups are also formed to focus on particular issues which then report back to the Governing body. We currently have working groups looking at communication including the engagement of St Mary's Staff, Pupils and Parents. This is assessed through an annual engagement survey which has recently been repeated. An action plan has now been fed back to the parents and a meeting with the class reps took place with the Chair of Governors and the Head Teacher in the Spring term. There continues to also be a working party this academic year recognising the 150 year anniversary of the School and to support the activities related to this.

Overview of 2023-24

The school had a strong academic year as it continued its Bounce Back programme following the disruptive Covid years. This programme has continued its success which has been very positive and will continue as required.

The school continues with good academic progress and attainment generally and continues to offer a wide range of sports utilizing our Sports Premium. The school continues to partake in interschool competitions in various sports, with much success. Daily extra-curricular activities are part of school life and include football, cross-country, gymnastics, dance, netball and Choir.

Whilst the school continues to be challenged with regards to the restricted Budget the Parent Voluntary fund has continued to build positively and the Friends of St Mary's have been very active in fund raising for the school. The Governing Body have continued to take every opportunity to make Parents aware of the Voluntary Fund through a new initiative of 'Wish Lists' allowing parents to financially support particular initiatives which they felt most strongly about and this has proved very successful. Working with the Friends of St Mary's we continue to consider all additional revenue streams to support the school including offering out Rectory Meadow for wider Amersham Community use

Our Nurture group and breakfast club still provides a fostering environment for our pupil premium children and SEN where needed and Rev Rapson is also now involved in an extra-curricular group focusing on Faith for the children and an additional 'Lego' club has been set up.

The Governing body continues to appraise the parents of the key focus areas for the Governors through a termly newsletter. One of the main focuses for this academic year has been the 150 year Anniversary celebrations and much has already been achieved with good parent and pupil engagement. We celebrated the actual 150 year anniversary in

September 2023 with a day of activity and a church service which was very well attended by parents, pupils, St Mary's staff & Governors and the Amersham community.

Finally, the Governors continue to support the School on enabling the children to achieve their very best in a happy and safe environment. The Governing Body continue to also be very cognisant of supporting all St Mary's staff in terms of their wellbeing with the continued and increasing demands within the school. It is worth noting that the level of need and specific SEN requirement of the children is increasing exponentially (in line with other schools) which requires the Head Teacher and Staff to operate in very different ways to support our children than perhaps they would have done in previous academic years.

Jacqueline Rouse
Chair of Governors
March 2024

Sunday School at St Mary's

Sunday School has continued to run in the Drake Chapel during part of the 10:30 service.

This year numbers are slightly down (36 different children, 4.4 each week on average - which includes during the school holidays) from last year. However, this numerical decline we've seen is entirely counteracted by a couple of the older children now staying with the adults rather than coming upstairs - no bad thing! We've also seen a few new faces come semi-regularly and several children have expressed annoyance that they cannot come more regularly (some previously having done so) due to often having other commitments on Sunday mornings.



Children's Parties

This year, we have held 3 parties in St Mary's Church for children and their grown ups - for Easter, Harvest (at the end of the Summer Holidays), and Christmas. These were opened to the wider community, as well as those we know from Mini Steps and Sunday School, with some people we didn't know attending. Over the three parties 39 different children attended, and about 30 adults. Lots of fun was had, lots of crafts made, games played, and Bible stories heard. A big thank you to all my helpers, especially Loraine.



MUSIC AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH

As always, I am ever so grateful for the time and dedication of the choir who give their time so generously. We really are incredibly fortunate to have such a talented group within the Church. The time and skill they share enhances the worship so much throughout the year. At a time when many churches struggle to have choirs, we are so lucky for the time and commitment they actively give. The mid-week rehearsal is always an enjoyable occasion and the chance to change gear halfway through a busy week. It has been wonderful having larger numbers in rehearsals and services which allows us to learn new and interesting music.

The choir has explored and enjoyed (I hope!) the various pieces of new repertoire that have been introduced in the past few months and it is an important part of our work to ensure we don't get stuck in a musical rut. With so much wonderful music to choose from, we will never exhaust the plethora of musical possibilities! Thankfully, the choir is becoming accustomed to me throwing new music at them on a semi-regular basis. It is so useful for choirs to be able to sight-read and learn with ease and this makes the process of exploring new music even more enjoyable. As always, I am hugely grateful for the commitment choristers make on a weekly basis to support the worship.

Huge thanks are recorded to Adrian, Andrew, and Ruth for playing on Sundays as need be. Being able to call on such talented players, especially at a time when Organists are in short supply is so helpful. Similarly, my two organ students are developing their skills at a very pleasing rate, going from strength to strength, continuing to gain confidence. One of whom has accompanied from time to time and the other will no doubt be able to do this soon. Developing young organists is an integral part of the role in the Music Department and it is important to attract students who wish to learn an instrument, especially at a time when there is a national shortage of players.

We will finally be in the position to introduce children into the choir, and I am looking forward to getting this off the ground; one of the strategic plans I have had since I joined the Church. Thanks go to Sue and Shima for helping with the recruitment where I can't get to schools during the day. This initiative will also build on the working relationship with St Mary's School and take our mission forwards to encourage others to join the church. It is hoped in time that numbers will grow and release ever more possibilities in the musical life of the church. The next year really will be an exciting time in the life of the church!

Edward McCall

MUSIC AT ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, COLESHILL

Although we continue with only seven choristers, I know from comments we receive from members of the congregation that their contribution in leading the music is greatly appreciated and makes a huge difference to the atmosphere of a service. Personally, I am very grateful to them for their continuing commitment, enthusiasm and loyalty.

Our monthly Choral Evensongs continue to include a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis and an anthem although, with the lack of a tenor in our ranks, some adjustments often have to be made. The introduction of Dyson's C minor setting for unison voices, suggested by my colleague Edward, has proved a useful addition to our repertoire.

Our two choirs continue to join together if necessary for weddings or funerals either at All Saints' or St Mary's to ensure a good attendance.

I'd like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the clergy, in particular Jonny and Sue for their ever-willing support. Also to Gerard Anderson for covering one Sunday a month at the organ and to Dorothy Potter for all she does on the admin side.

RUTH MURPHY

Bellringers' Report 2024

We continue to ring regularly for Sunday morning services and if possible for the monthly choral evensong. We are building up our numbers for Sundays and are often joined by two or three friends from local towers when timing of services allow. We are always pleased to welcome visiting ringers for services and practices. We have rung rounds on 10 and 12 on several occasions, including on Christmas morning, when a visiting experienced ringer commented that even after many years ringing, it was the first time she had rung on 12 on Christmas Day.

We have several regular visitors to our practice nights, some experienced ringers and some learners who come to improve their ringing. During 2023 we have been teaching learners from 7 pm before the normal practice. We are disappointed that some of the learners have taken a break or given up ringing, particularly as one was making very good progress, but our learners who started in 2022 are progressing and are keen to learn.

Our learners were included in the general ringing for the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla on 6th May when we rang rounds and call changes on 8 and 10 including a special change Queens into Kings. We were joined by Mark Roberts, the local mayor at the time. He was very interested to see the bells and took pictures which he put on the Amersham facebook page. We had decided to ring early enough so we could get home in time to watch the ceremony on television, but some ringers went on to ring at

Chenies and other towers later in the day. We also rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples on the Sunday with the help of three ringers from local towers.

Our monthly surprise practice continues on the first Thursday of the month (unless the church is booked for something else). Progress is a little slow, but we are now able to ring touches of Cambridge Minor on normal practice nights and are working on Cambridge and Yorkshire Major with help from friends from other towers.

We took part in the branch 6-bell striking competition, coming second. However, due to possible problems with eligibility of the winning band, by default we were deemed to have won and therefore had to represent the branch at the Guild 6 bell in October, coming a disappointing 6th out of 8. We had a slightly better result in the Lorna Newton final, a local striking competition for all the churches in our branch, a week later by coming second.

In August we hosted an Association of Ringing Teachers course for 8 people wishing to learn to teach bell-handling. There were no people from Amersham, as our deputy ringing master had done a course earlier in the year, but there were 2 people from Penn. Thank you to the band for help providing the refreshments and guarding equipment in church during the course.

We have continued to ring for weddings when requested, though this is less frequent than it used to be, and also school carol services.

During the summer, an infestation of clothes moth was found in a box of ropes. All the spare ropes were inspected and those which were very bad disposed of. The other ropes were put into a spare freezer and once we were sure there were no living grubs they were put into sealed bags and returned to the cupboard and rope box. We had two sessions of thorough cleaning of the tower, including moving the bookcase and the carpet was sprayed. The moth-traps are checked regularly. So far there does not seem to be any more activity.

We finished the year with a get together at my house with delicious food including canapes and desserts provided by the band.

I would like to thank Reverend Jonny and the PCC for allowing us to ring the bells and my personal thanks go to the band for their support in various jobs in and around the tower.

Jan Galloway

Tower Captain

March 2024

Sacristan's Report 2024

This past year has been my fourth full year in the role. You may ask what does the sacristan do? My main role is to help the clergy by ensuring what they need for each service is available and ready; so, for example for the service at 10:30 I set the altar ready for the communion. I count the wafers in the ciborium and put the wine in the chalice. At the end of the service I clear the altar, washing the ciborium and chalice before returning them to the safe and returning the other items to where they are stored in the sacristy. I also record how many took communion and how many were in church in the register of services book. We regularly have between 75 and 90 people taking communion at the 10:30 service. You may have also noticed that the altar frontal changes depending on the time in the liturgical year and since the last report it will have been changed 13 times.

The votive or candle stand continues to be well used by both visitors to the church and the congregation and one of my tasks is to clean the stand and ensure that there are candles available. I also look after the other candles both wax and oil filled, used in church.

I could not complete my role without the help and support of others who regularly assist with the smooth running of the services and the church in general. I would like to thank Tricia and Alison who wash the linen used and Dorothy who orders the consumables and other things which are used in the various services, and I am grateful for their help and support. Of course, there is always room for anyone who would like to join the team, either to cover a specific activity or just to provide an extra pair of hands or to cover for me when on holiday. If you are interested, then please talk to me after the 10:30 service.

Lorraine Hollett, Sacrist

St Mary's Church Flowers

I would like to begin by thanking Jo Coldham for her service as Flower Coordinator at St Mary's. Jo has led the team for more than 20 years, producing stunning flower arrangements and dealing with all the many practical tasks associated with flowers in church. She has inspired and encouraged us all. The churchwardens organised a collection from the Parish to thank her for her work. I'm delighted to say that Jo is remaining on the team.

We will, of course, continue to create arrangements for regular weekly services and special occasions including weddings, funerals and the major church festivals. However, the team has become smaller and we would welcome both novice and experienced flower arrangers to join us. Flowers are provided and we can offer help for beginners. This has been an exciting year for the Flower Group with the staging of our first major Flower Festival since the pandemic, entitled 'For the Beauty of the Earth'. To raise money to stage the festival the group held a quiz evening and cake stalls. The festival took place from 6-9 September 2023 and for the first time the dates included the town's Heritage Day. This led to an increased number of visitors on the Sunday, several of whom lived locally, but had never been inside the church. Just over £4000 was raised and this was shared between 2 local charities: Liberty's Legacy and Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust and a donation was given St Mary's. We are very grateful to all those who helped in many different ways to support the flower team.

On Mothering Sunday bunches of flowers were prepared for the children to give to their mothers and other ladies in the church.

At Easter members of the congregation once again donated lilies in remembrance loved ones and this is much appreciated.

Various groups in the church were again invited to decorate a window sill to symbolise Harvest Thanksgiving. Many thanks to those involved.

The whole team enjoyed decorating the church for Christmas and this year the arrangements featured a star theme.

The annual lunch party in September was a great success. It was held at Shan Pearce's house. It is a popular event and gives members, new and old, a chance to get to know each other and have a good time.

In February the team are having a workshop to try out new ideas.

The Flower Group now has a page on the church website, including a photo gallery, so please take a look!

Jane Partridge

Flower Co-ordinator stmarysflowers@amershamwithcoleshill.org

All Saints' Flower Team Annual Report 2024

Since our last annual report the flower team has continued to decorate the church for our Sunday services, festivals and the altar pedestals for one or two weddings.

As in the past we filled the church for Easter with lilies and spring flowers arranged on every shelf, windowsill and space available, donated in memory of family and friends who have died. Their names were recorded on an attractive poster in the church porch. Kristina Saunders and Sam Donald created a beautiful Easter table with crosses, moss and flowers.

The next event was the coronation of King Charles. We created simple but regal arrangements of purple alliums to represent orbs and deep red carnations for crowns. The altar pedestal was magnificent.

As part of our annual village show in September our team member Sharon Hall gave a very professional flower demonstration that was much enjoyed. Her two arrangements were auctioned raising £75 for the Alzheimer Society. I hope that might encourage others to join our team.

Harvest, my favourite festival, gave us all the opportunity to make colourful displays of fruit, vegetables and flowers both inside and outside the church. For each church festival we put up a large banner on the lichgate to encourage visitors to come in and enjoy the displays.

Catherine Watts despite having retired installed in the porch a giant harvest art poster created by the children of Coleshill Infant School.

The team decorated the church in time for the Christingle service with greenery and candles giving the church a magical touch for all the Christmas services.

We are grateful to Andrew Davies editor of the Coleshill Newsletter for adding several colour photos of our arrangements to Judi Herbert's flower team reports.

He also again designed the poster for our annual fundraising coffee morning which was held in the village hall on January 15th with about 58 attendees. Everyone looked happy sitting at tables enjoying their coffee and cake. We raised over £700 from a raffle, bring and buy and entry fees. We raised money for the flower fund and £150 each for the village school, Street Kids Direct and OneCan food bank in High Wycombe, a very successful time as usual.

Several of us are looking forward to joining the St Mary's flower team workshop. We are now preparing for Easter again asking for £5 per Lily.

Rosemary Valentine

Sunday Morning Get Together after the 10.30 Service

2023/2024 has seen the coffee team keeping very busy serving the congregation after the 10.30 service. We are averaging 60 to 70 mugs of tea and coffee each Sunday.

It is always very pleasing to see new people attending, and it is an excellent way of meeting other members of the congregation and finding out what goes on in church with regards to other activities etc.

We have a loyal team of 26 volunteers, but can always accommodate a few extra hands to help out when others are on holiday, in hospital, or otherwise unable to do their duty. The duty is once per quarter with another helper, so only 4 Sundays per year ... not a great undertaking!

If you feel that you could help us, please do not hesitate to see me after the service, or phone me on 01494 725469.

In the meantime, if you have never stayed after the service for refreshments, please do, we would be very please to meet you.

All are most welcome!

Janet Clayfield

January 2024

SIDESTEAM REPORT

The Sides team are a great group of efficient, happy and enthusiastic members of the congregation. Being on the Sides team is a nice way to get involved at St Mary's and to get to know people. We cover all services including special services and support the Verger role for weddings and funerals. Everyone on the Sides team works well together in a caring and supportive way with each typically on duty two or three times a quarter. The team has the important role of welcoming people to the Church and the feedback received shows how well this is received and appreciated. Thank you for being such a great team and if you'd like to join us please speak to Howard Hughes.

Rev Jonny Rapson	Rector	DS
Rev Sue Gill	Honorary Assistant Rector	DS
Rev Tim Barnard	Honorary Assistant Rector	
Petrina Clackett	Church Warden AS (Lay Chair)	
Jane McNeilly	Church Warden AS	
Val Simmonds	Church Warden SM	
David Skinner	Church Warden SM	
Graeme Coles	Treasurer	DS
Peter Clackett	Assistant Treasurer	
Loraine Hollett	Sacristan/Health & Safety	
Clare Atkinson	Planned Giving /GDPR	
Clare Samuels	Safeguarding Officer	
Louise Baneke	Charitable Giving	
Neta Foote	Pastoral care	
Mel Jackson/ Giddings	Safeguarding Officer	
Sarah Ainsworth-Coles	Electoral Roll Officer	DS
Paul Clarke	Website	
Simon Hollett	Sunday School	
Bart Schmal	Steaming/Insurance	
Rebecca Benn	Social Activities	
Aurelija Paton	Church & Church Rooms Hiring/Marketing	
David Elliot	Church & Church Rooms Hiring/Marketing	
Sue Pounce	PCC Secretary	DS

DS Deanery Synod

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL

**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2024**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL PCC**

I report on the accounts of the above parish for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the parish's accounts carried out under s145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an Independent Examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A Churchill Stone FCA DChA

Mercer Lewin Ltd
Chartered Accountants
6-7 Citibase, New Barclay House
234 Botley Rd
Oxford
OX2 0HP

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

		2024				2023
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Total
	Note	funds	funds	Funds		
		£	£	£	£	£
INCOME						
Voluntary income	2a	159,672	30,440	-	190,112	151,631
Activities for generating funds	2b	10,081	-	-	10,081	5,956
Investment income	2c	7,702	6,408	-	14,110	12,502
From church activities	2d	40,559	26,097	-	66,656	59,533
Other incoming resources		-	-	-	-	-
		<u>218,014</u>	<u>62,945</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>280,959</u>	<u>229,622</u>
EXPENDITURE						
Fundraising costs	3a	549	-	-	549	1,409
Church activities	3b	205,527	62,941	-	268,468	234,318
Governance costs	3c	2,820	-	-	2,820	2,700
		<u>208,896</u>	<u>62,941</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>271,837</u>	<u>238,427</u>
Net Income (Expenditure) before Investment Gains		9,118	4	-	9,121	(8,805)
Gains and losses on investment assets						
on disposal		-	-	-	-	-
on revaluation	5	1,415	2,173	4,355	7,943	29,841
Transfers between funds		<u>40,747</u>	<u>(41,408)</u>	<u>661</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		51,280	(39,232)	5,016	17,064	21,036
Total funds brought forward		<u>189,715</u>	<u>237,943</u>	<u>189,608</u>	<u>617,265</u>	<u>596,230</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>240,994</u>	<u>198,711</u>	<u>194,624</u>	<u>634,329</u>	<u>617,265</u>

**PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	4		89,000		89,000
Investments	5		<u>354,960</u>		<u>347,017</u>
			443,960		436,017
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	6	327		284	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>193,861</u>		<u>183,864</u>	
		194,188		184,148	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>(3,819)</u>		<u>(2,900)</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			190,369		181,248
NET ASSETS			<u><u>£634,329</u></u>		<u><u>£617,265</u></u>
FUNDS OF THE CHURCH					
Restricted funds			198,711		237,943
Endowment funds			194,624		189,608
Unrestricted funds			240,994		189,715
			<u><u>£634,329</u></u>		<u><u>£617,265</u></u>

These accounts were approved by the PCC on and are signed on its behalf by:

Rev'd J Rapson
PCC Chairman

G Coles
Treasurer

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a. Basis of preparation

The PCC is a Public Benefit Entity within the meaning of FRS102. These accounts have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the accounts of PCCs and with the Regulations' 'True and Fair' provisions. They have been prepared under FRS102(2016) as the applicable accounting standard and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

b. Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds available for the general objectives of the church. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

Restricted funds can only be used for the purposes for which they have been given, within the objectives of the church. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against those specific funds.

Endowment funds represent endowments, of which the capital must be maintained, and the dividend income used only for the restricted purposes arising from the establishment of the endowments.

c. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities ("SoFA") when the church becomes legally entitled to the income and when the amount can be quantified with reasonable certainty.

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving is recognised only when received. Grants and legacies are recognised as soon as the PCC becomes aware of its legal entitlement and the amount due is quantifiable with reasonable certainty.

Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is accounted for when the gift is received.

When incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising income) the incoming resources and the related resources expended are accounted for gross in the SoFA.

Interest is accounted for when receivable and includes any recoverable tax.

d. Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay for goods or services.

All costs have been directly attributed to the various categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources based on an allocation of actual costs.

As the church is not registered for VAT, all the expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT.

Governance costs include the costs of the preparation of the annual accounts, the cost of PCC meetings and the legal cost of advice on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants and charitable giving are accounted for when paid over or when awarded, if the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC, provided that there are no conditions to be met relating to the grant which remain in the control of the church.

e. Pensions

The PCC encourages its employees to join the a Pension Scheme which is a defined contribution pension scheme. The PCC matches contributions made by employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the PCC. The contributions payable by the PCC are charged to the SoFA as they are incurred.

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f. Fixed assets

Fixed assets are originally recorded at cost. Items are capitalised when the component purchase price is over £1,000 and are depreciated on a straight line basis over four years.

Freehold land and buildings are not depreciated due to estimated residual value not being below carrying amount. Expenditure incurred maintaining the property to its previously assessed standard is written off when incurred.

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s96(2)(a) of the Act.

Moveable church furnishings held by the Rector and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted for as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed on the church's inventory, which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For inalienable property acquired before 2001 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts. Items acquired since 1 January 2001 have been written off in the SoFA as they arose.

Investments are valued at Market Value.

	2024				2023
2. INCOMING RESOURCES	General fund	Restricted funds	Endowment Funds	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
a. Voluntary income					
Recurring income					
Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Tax efficient giving	112,696	-	-	112,696	112,910
Income tax recoverable	32,261	-	-	32,261	21,710
Cash collections at services	-	6,740	-	6,740	5,409
Gifts and cash offerings	1,590	23,700	-	25,290	11,602
Legacies	13,125	-	-	13,125	-
	<u>159,672</u>	<u>30,440</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>190,112</u>	<u>151,631</u>
	£	£	£	£	£
b. Activities for generating funds					
Fetes, bazaars, etc	10,081	-	-	10,081	5,956
	<u>10,081</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,081</u>	<u>5,956</u>
	£	£	£	£	£
c. Income from investments					
Interest, etc	5,986	-	-	5,986	4,503
Parsonage Trust	-	2,636	-	2,636	2,595
St Michael's Trust	-	3,773	-	3,773	3,715
Coleshill Fund	1,716	-	-	1,716	1,689
Dividends - JM Finn (Parker Trust)	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>7,702</u>	<u>6,408</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,110</u>	<u>12,502</u>
	£	£	£	£	£
d. Income from Church activities					
Income from use of Church	23,356	3,226	-	26,582	17,733
Church rooms	15,614	-	-	15,614	15,540
Bookstall and magazine	1,284	-	-	1,284	1,637
Special services	305	-	-	305	4,664
PCC fees	-	-	-	-	-
Extra fees	-	22,871	-	22,871	19,959
	<u>40,559</u>	<u>26,097</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>66,656</u>	<u>59,533</u>

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

3. RESOURCES EXPENDED	2024			2023 Total
	General fund £	Restricted funds £	Endowment Funds £	
a. Fundraising costs				£
Cost of fundraising events	549	-	-	1,409
	£	£	£	£
b. Charitable activities - mission of the Church				
Missionary and charitable giving	11,209	-	-	12,131
Parish share	92,123	-	-	89,332
Other ministry costs	1,483	-	-	250
Fabric, silver and vestments	-	12,070	-	13,262
Church running costs and maintenance	70,566	-	-	55,751
Upkeep of services	3,886	2,840	-	8,092
Special services fees and costs	-	23,790	-	25,740
Honoraria and organ maintenance	-	-	-	-
Churchyard maintenance	1,790	-	-	1,025
Parish magazine/bookstall	-	-	-	-
Other PCC property costs	-	24,241	-	771
Youth and school support costs	933	-	-	3,213
Church administration	23,537	-	-	23,224
Church rooms	-	-	-	1,527
	205,527	62,941	-	234,318
	£	£	£	£
c. Governance costs				
Administration costs	-	-	-	-
Independent examination	2,820	-	-	2,700
	2,820	-	-	2,700

During the year the PCC employed an administrator and an organist. No member of the PCC was paid by the PCC during the year.

4. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Freehold land and buildings	Equipment and fittings	Total
Cost			
At 1 January 2024	89,000	10,369	99,369
At 31 December 2024	89,000	10,369	99,369
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2024	-	10,369	10,369
Charge for the year	-	-	-
At 31 December 2024	-	10,369	10,369
Net book value at 31 December 2024	89,000	-	89,000
Net book value at 31 December 2023	89,000	-	89,000

The PCC owns freehold land and buildings comprising the Curate's House (held in trust) and The Church Rooms (which were purchased by the PCC of the Parish of Amersham in July 1930 and registered with the Land Registry in January 2014). No formal valuations have been sought for these properties. The land and buildings comprising St Mary's Church and All Saints Church are vested in the Rector of the Parish of Amersham with Coleshill. The PCC consider that depreciation of the buildings would not be material in the circumstances.

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

5. INVESTMENT ASSETS

All CBF Income Shares	Value at 1 Jan 24 £	Investment charges	Additions/ (disposals)	Dividends reinvested	Unrealised movements £	Value at 31 Dec 24 £
Coleshill Investment (unrestricted)	61,806	-	-	-	1,415	63,221
St Michael's Trust (Endowment)	135,903	-	-	-	3,111	139,014
Coleshill Parsonage Trust (Restricted)	94,942	-	-	-	2,173	97,116
Coleshill Fund (Endowment)	54,366	-	-	-	1,244	55,610
	<u>347,017</u>	-	-	-	<u>7,943</u>	<u>354,960</u>

Please note that the investments above are shown as their asset values and not their fund splits.

Coleshill Investment is an unrestricted fund and created from 2 previous trusts All Saints Churchyard and All Saints Organ Fund.

6. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
Gift aid claims made but not received	327	285
VAT recoverable	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
	<u>327</u>	<u>285</u>

7. CREDITORS

	£	£
Income received in advance	1,219	300
Accruals	<u>2,600</u>	<u>2,600</u>
	<u>3,819</u>	<u>2,900</u>

8. FUNDS

	At 1 Jan 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Investment movements	Transfers	At 31 Dec 2024
Restricted funds						
Collections for specific purposes	10,486	6,740	8,071	-	(3,401)	5,755
Special fees	-	22,871	15,719	-	-	7,152
Fabric fund - St Mary's	-	3,773	2,956	-	(817)	-
Fabric fund - All Saints'	48,160	-	9,115	-	-	39,045
St Michael's Trust - income	38,368	-	-	-	-	38,368
St Mary's Bell Fund	6,261	3,226	2,840	-	-	6,647
Coleshill Parsonage Trust	76,735	2,636	231	2,173	-	81,313
Rector's discretionary fund	14,081	-	-	-	-	14,081
Church rooms	37,191	-	-	-	(37,191)	-
Organ fund	3,500	-	-	-	-	3,500
Alpha Court Curate fund	-	23,700	23,700	-	-	-
Flower Fund	3,160	-	310	-	-	2,850
	<u>237,943</u>	<u>62,945</u>	<u>62,941</u>	<u>2,173</u>	<u>(41,408)</u>	<u>198,711</u>
Endowment funds						
St Michael's Trust	128,513	-	-	3,111	7,391	139,014
Coleshill fund	61,095	-	-	1,244	(6,730)	55,610
	<u>173,246</u>	-	-	<u>4,355</u>	<u>661</u>	<u>194,624</u>

Both fabric funds are restricted to the ongoing maintenance of the PCC properties.

St Michael's Trust is held on permanent endowment, the income only from which is for the upkeep and repair of St Mary's.

The Coleshill Parsonage Trust may be used for any ecclesiastical purpose in the parish, not restricted to All Saints'.

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The Rector's Discretionary Fund is held for the alleviation of need.

The Coleshill Fund is held on permanent endowment, the income of which is for the upkeep of All Saints'.

PARISH OF AMERSHAM AND COLESHILL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

9. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total £
Fixed assets	89,000	-	-	89,000
Investments	63,220	97,116	194,624	354,960
Current assets	92,593	101,596	-	194,188
Current liabilities	(3,819)	-	-	(3,819)
	<u>240,994</u>	<u>198,711</u>	<u>194,624</u>	<u>634,329</u>

10. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The amount of expenditure reimbursed to the trustees during the year was £4,360.97.

The total amount of money donated by the trustees to the charity during the year was £12,720.00.

AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL PCC

COMMENTS ON ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

General

In contrast to last year the PCC has made a surplus of around £9k pre investment movements. This is almost exactly the same as the deficit in the previous year. The investment gains are quite a bit lower than in the previous years but this is consistent with the market as a whole.

Overall the funds maintain a healthy position. Funds also exist for the maintenance of both churches although Mercer Lewin do not have enough information to assess whether these funds are adequate to meet predicted maintenance needs. However, on the basis that the Parish is up to date on its Quinquennial inspections and actions therefrom it is likely that the PCC has a clear idea of any sums required.

Highlights from Accounts

The unrestricted funds show a small surplus overall for the year. Across the unrestricted and restricted funds there is a surplus of roughly £17k. Being a £9k increase from regular activities and £8k from investment gains.

The increase in investments is a paper surplus and has not impacted the cash reserves of the PCC which is just over £193k. The increase in investment value is consistent with the markets and we have seen similar increases across all PCCs that we work with this year.

Both expenditure and income has increased this year. On the income this is largely to do with an increase in gifts and on the expenditure side there has been an increase in the church running costs and also the expenditure relating to Alpha Court.

There have been a couple of adjustments to fund balances in order to correctly align investments to fund balances as well as a tidying of old balances that are no longer applicable.

Accounting processes

The cashbook being combined for both churches has made the accounts preparation process simpler and from our perspective has allowed us to carry out our independent examination more smoothly. There are still small amendments here and there, but this is consistent with what we would expect and have no issues on our part.

There is still work around the identification of transactions for us to test specifically as part of our independent examination, but this would remain no matter the level of sophistication of the accounting process.

Mercer Lewin
14 April 2025