

The Parish of Neston

Charity No 1129453

**Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the
Neston Parochial Church Council**

For the year ended 31st December 2021

Incumbent

Interregnum: No Incumbent appointed.

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 31st December 2021

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Endowment Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2021	2020
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS							
Voluntary Income	2(a)	81,872	74,682	150	0	156,704	77,963
Church activities	2(b)	11,986	0	0	0	11,986	8,840
Activities For Generating Funds	2(c)	26,815	23,483	0	0	50,298	53,640
Income From Investments	2(d)	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOME		<u>120,673</u>	<u>98,165</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>218,988</u>	<u>140,442</u>
EXPENDITURE							
Raising funds	3(a)	177	0	0	0	177	212
Church activities	3(b)	127,024	25,560	0	0	152,584	139,041
Other Expenditure	3(c)	1,956	0	0	0	1,956	1,206
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>129,157</u>	<u>25,560</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>154,717</u>	<u>140,459</u>
NET INCOME/(-EXPENDITURE)		-8,484	72,605	150	0	64,271	-16
Gross Transfers between funds - In			408			408	
Gross Transfers between funds - Out		-408				-408	
Other Recognised Gains					281,991	281,991	
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>-8,892</u>	<u>73,013</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>281,991</u>	<u>346,262</u>	<u>-16</u>
Balances b/fwd 1st January		60,400	123,639	4,104	0	188,145	188,161
Balances c/fwd 31st December		<u>51,508</u>	<u>196,652</u>	<u>4,254</u>	<u>281,991</u>	<u>534,407</u>	<u>188,145</u>

The Notes on Pages 3 to 6 form part of these accounts.

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

BALANCE SHEET at 31st DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Fixed Assets		25,001	25,001
Investment Assets	9	312,393	30,402
		<u>337,394</u>	<u>55,403</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock on Hand		410	410
Debtors	6	8,190	9,282
Short Term Deposits		148,148	88,198
Development Fund		49,993	53,195
		<u>206,741</u>	<u>151,084</u>
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	7	9,730	18,344
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>197,011</u>	<u>132,740</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>£534,405</u>	<u>£188,143</u>
FUNDS	5		
Endowment		281,991	0
Unrestricted - Designated		4,254	4,104
Restricted		196,652	123,639
Unrestricted		51,508	60,400
		<u>£534,405</u>	<u>£188,143</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 21st April 2022 and signed on its behalf by

Vice Chair
Marion Forshaw



Hon. Treasurer
Lucy Brooks
Member of the Association of
Chartered Certified Accountants



The Notes on Pages 3 to 6 form part of these accounts.

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of Financial Reporting Standard 102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCC's and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provision.

They have been prepared under FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102))

Fixed Assets

Consecrated Land and Buildings and Movable Church Furnishings.

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011. Such Assets are not capitalised in the financial statements

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 during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the SOFA and separately disclosed.

Other Fixtures and Office Equipment

Equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight line basis appropriate to the life of the equipment concerned.

Funds

Unrestricted Funds

These represent the remaining income funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC including amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or for spending on a future project and are therefore not included in its 'free reserves' as disclosed in the trustees' report.

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.

Restricted Funds

These are income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and details of the funds held and restrictions provided are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment Funds

Endowment funds have been introduced this year. There were none last year. These are restricted and separately invested.

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021 (Continued)

2	INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	TOTAL 2020 £
2(a)	<i>Incoming Resources From Donors</i>					
	Planned Giving	59,002			59,002	47,215
	Collections in Church and Boxes	3,713			3,713	3,155
	Gift-Aided Gifts	30			30	586
	Regular Gift Days	0			0	7,815
	Donations and Appeals	3,492	800		4,292	4,415
	Planned Giving Tax Refunds	14,384			14,384	12,176
	VAT Refunds	750	1,312		2,062	
	Legacies	500	71,971		72,471	
	Chester Diocesan Board Grant				0	2,000
	Stay & Play			150	150	
	Vision Income		600		600	600
	Rounding	1	-1		0	0
		<u>81,872</u>	<u>74,682</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>156,704</u>	<u>77,963</u>
2(b)	<i>Incoming Resources From Church Activities</i>					
	Wedding and Funeral fees PCC	10,812			10,812	8,840
	Assistant Staff Costs refunded by Diocese	734			734	
	Cadent Compensation	440			440	
2(c)		<u>11,986</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,986</u>	<u>8,840</u>
	<i>Activities For Generating Funds</i>					
	Pew sales	60			60	0
	Wedding and Funeral fees Diocese	8,324			8,324	8,176
	Parish Fellowship	53			53	393
	Rent - Neston Centre	12,900			12,900	12,265
	Rent - 99 The Ringway	1,188	15,060		16,248	1,649
	Comrade's Field	720			720	720
	Room Hire	2,865			2,865	990
	Parish Magazine Adverts	0			0	1,260
	Wall Safe	66			66	6
	Shop Income	164			164	233
	100 Club		2,241		2,241	3,656
	Village Fair	0			0	0
	Christmas Fairs	0			0	0
	Events	475			475	0
	Insurance Claims	0	6,182		6,182	24,292
2(d)		<u>26,815</u>	<u>23,483</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>50,298</u>	<u>53,640</u>
	<i>Investments</i>					
	Income from Investments	-				
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021 (Continued)

3	EXPENDITURE	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	TOTAL	TOTAL
		Funds	Funds	Funds	2021	2020
		£	£	£	£	£
3(a)	<i>Fundraising Trading: Costs of Sale & Other Costs</i>					
	Costs of Stewardship Campaign	177			177	212
	Shop Purchases	0			0	0
		<u>177</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>212</u>
3(b)	<i>Church Activities</i>					
	Outward Giving		3,213		3,213	778
	Secular Charities	100			100	0
	Weddings & Funeral Fees Diocese	8,324			8,324	8,176
	Parish Share	68,132			68,132	67,624
	Assistant staff costs	2,239			2,239	578
	Vicar's Working Expenses	1,112			1,112	1,092
	Curate's Working Expenses	447			447	0
	Vicarage Expenses	4,296			4,296	3,978
	Curate's Rent,Rates,Water and Phone	0			0	0
	Repairs, Fees & Maintenance Ringway	0			0	-7
	Education	53			53	44
	Training				0	25
	Insurance	6,398			6,398	6,365
	Organ, piano tuning	997			997	23,423
	Repairs & Maintenance Churches	7,759	11,586		19,345	1,875
	Cleaning	1,523			1,523	972
	Altar requisites	417			417	216
	Service books	87			87	51
	Robes & chalices	198			198	0
	Music licences	681			681	534
	Organist's fees	3,941			3,941	2,415
	Choir fees	240			240	0
	Bell fees	425			425	0
	Flowers	0			0	82
	Upkeep of churchyard	1,103	6,221		7,324	2,065
	Equipment hire	382			382	1,526
	Equipment servicing/ usage charges	779			779	581
	Visiting speakers	0			0	0
	Heating, Lighting & W Rates	5,860			5,860	6,612
	Parish Magazine Costs & Prayer & Actio	0			0	53
	Bookstall costs	0			0	0
	Repairs & Maintenance Neston Centre	10,318			10,318	6,750
	100 Club Prizes		1085		1,085	1,772
	Vision Expenditure		2,669.00		2,669	576
	Youth Matters General Expenditure		176		176	0
	Miscellaneous Expenditure	743	610		1,353	465
	Bank charges	470			470	418
		<u>127,024</u>	<u>25,560</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>152,584</u>	<u>139,041</u>
3(c)	<i>Other Expenditure</i>					
	Other Ordinary PCC Expenditure	50			50	50
	Parish Office & Administration	816			816	760
	Parish office equipment	694			694	0
	Software subscriptions	396			396	396
		<u>1,956</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,956</u>	<u>1,206</u>

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2021 (Continued)

	2021	2020
	£	£
4 FIXED ASSETS		
Freehold Land and Buildings	25,000	25,000
Equipment Written down	1	1
Investment in Ringway property (including The Hillcrest Curacy Trust Fund)	112,393	30,402
Invested Legacy re Betty Smith Endowment	200,000	
	<u>337,394</u>	<u>55,403</u>

The freehold land & buildings comprise the Neston Centre and Comrade's Field at Neston.
The gross values of these and the equipment have been estimated at 1st January 1997.

5 ANALYSIS OF FUNDS

	At 1st Jan 2021 £	Movement in Year £	At 31st Dec 2021 £
Endowment Funds			
Betty Smith Endowment	0	200,000	200,000
Hillcrest (including Robert Hamilton) Fund Endowment	0	81,991	81,991
	<u>0</u>	<u>281,991</u>	<u>281,991</u>
Designated Funds			
3 Churches Repairs from £10,000 designated	2,104		2,104
Chester Diocesan Board	2,000		2,000
Stay and Play		150	150
	<u>4,104</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>4,254</u>
Restricted Funds			
Garden Fund	653		653
Lighting Fund	2,661	-500	2,161
Neston Centre And Comrade's Field Fund	25,000		25,000
St Thomas's Donations	39	761	800
St Thomas' Bishop's trust	2,100	-2,100	0
Thursday Coffee Fund	3,213	-3,213	0
Vision Fund	89,788	-888	88,900
Miss Morris Legacy for Parish Church		64,078	64,078
Hillcrest (including Robert Hamilton) Fund		15,060	15,060
War memorial fund	10	-10	0
Youth Fund	176	-176	0
	<u>123,640</u>	<u>73,012</u>	<u>196,652</u>
Unrestricted Funds			
General Fund	60,400	-8,892	51,508

6 DEBTORS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	1,800	1,852
Other Debtors	734	3,541
Tax and VAT refunds due	5,656	3,888
	<u>8,190</u>	<u>9,282</u>

7 LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021	2020
Accrued Expenses	5,583	5,269
Neston Centre Deposits	275	275
Agency Collections		-133
Parish Church Bells	3,872	1,272
Vicar And Wardens' Trust Hillcrest		9,285
Vicar And Wardens' Trust: Robert Hamilton		2,376
	<u>9,730</u>	<u>18,344</u>

8 Staff Costs

No PCC Members were paid any wages in the year.
Several members of the PCC were reimbursed for minor expenses incurred on behalf of the PCC.

9 Connected Charities

The Hillcrest Curacy Trust Fund
The Robert Hamilton Fund

On 13th July 2021 the PCC became the sole trustee of the Hillcrest Curacy Trust fund and the Robert Hamilton Fund was merged into it at the same time to be administered as a restricted fund in the PCC accounts.

These Trusts have been invested in the Curates house at 99 Ringway along with £30,402 of PCC Funds

Land Registry records show the registered owner of the property is Chester Diocesan Board of Finance and as such the house does not form part of the assets of the PCC. The PCC's investment of £30,402 in the property is recorded in the Balance Sheet.

10 Neston Village Fair

An autonomous committee runs this annual event and maintains an account to fund the next event. The ultimate benefactor of these funds held in additional accounts would be the PCC and the surplus carried forward at the year end was £6,433.
The Fair did not take place in 2021 because of Coronavirus restrictions.

Report of The Independent Examiner to the Trustees of Neston Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021, which are set out on pages 1 to 6

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner

As trustees of the charity, the members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- 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 Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts 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 a full audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the gross income for the year exceeds the amount provided in section 145(3) of the Act, I confirm that I am qualified to act as Independent Examiner under the provisions of that section of the Act and that my qualification is as shown below.

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and 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 accounts to be reached.

B. H. Morris FCA

Highfield, Bull Hill
Lt Neston

CH64 4DN

19th April 2022

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2021

Parish of Neston

2021 Report and Accounts

Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Neston, Cheshire.

Aim and purposes

Neston Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the aim of every Church of England church:

To promote the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical.

The PCC has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting this aim throughout the ecclesiastical parish of Neston. The PCC is specifically responsible for maintaining:

- St Mary & St Helen's Church: Parish Church, High Street, Neston, CH64 9TZ;
- St Michael and All Angels' Church: Marshlands Road, Little Neston, CH64 0SN;
- St Thomas the Apostle's Church: School Lane, Parkgate, CH64 6SR; and
- Neston Centre: High Street, Neston, CH64 9TZ.

Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. We aim to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish through:

- Services, worship, and prayer;
- Social outreach and pastoral work; and
- Missionary outreach, especially to children and young people.

During the year, the Vicar of Neston (Revd Alan Dawson) resigned. From the 15th November 2021, the post of incumbent has been vacant.

During the year we continued to address some of the additional needs of the parish identified in 2020 including:

- The need to clarify our vision, including worship, pastoral care, and mission in the wider community.

- The need to address our financial position and manage our budgets to prevent unplanned overspending.
- How to operate during the restrictions placed on churches and the country more widely during the Covid19 pandemic.

We continued to apply the lessons learned from the restrictions required by the Covid19 pandemic, when our churches were closed and we learned how to worship, pray, and communicate better online, by phone, by socially distanced visiting and by post.

It is also important that we maintain the fabric of our three church buildings and the Neston Centre to enable us to carry out our objectives and activities.

Achievements and performance

Revd Alan Dawson announced his resignation as Vicar of Neston in June 2021 and resigned on 15th November 2021. The Parish and the PCC thanked Revd Dawson for his service in the parish at his last service on 14th November.

The resignation has created some uncertainty about when a replacement would be available. Careful consideration and a plan was developed by the PCC in late 2021, with the assistance of the Rural Dean and Archdeacon of Chester to seek the views and comments of our Parishioners and the wider Parish community.

Work and prayer continues in 2022 to discern who the next Vicar of Neston will be. (Hope cards have been distributed, and comments analysed, shared and discussed. These will help the PCC prepare a Parish Profile and other reports for interested applicants for the vacant post of Vicar of Neston).

The Covid19 pandemic that started in 2020 required responses and actions to ensure

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2021

everyone stayed safe, and imagination to find new ways of doing our work. While some activities ceased for some time, much has now been restored and new work started and is thriving.

Most of our activities benefit from the work and commitment of many volunteers, without whom much of our work could not happen and the PCC would not meet its objectives. The PCC wish to thank those many people who are contributing their time and talents to our work.

During lockdown in early 2021, several people remained at home, which limited what we were able to do in our church buildings and beyond.

The year began with two Clergy in the Parish and a strong, albeit small Ministry Team. By the end of 2021, the position of Vicar was vacant, and the Assistant Curate was taking extended leave.

The PCC is reasonably placed to address its financial position and manage budgets to prevent unplanned over-spending and enable growth. This means it is more secure in the control of its funds. We acknowledge particularly the skill and commitment of the Honorary Treasurer, Lucy Brooks, who, though not a Trustee, has continued to provide exceptional service.

Work on a clear vision for the Parish continued during 2021 until the Vicar's resignation and this work has been deferred until a new Vicar is in post.

Quality management information enables the PCC to plan to strengthen its financial base. A planned-giving campaign has been deferred until a new Vicar is in post.

Due to the pandemic, we had to rethink the social events that we could still provide and where would be the safest place to hold them. It was decided to start a new group combining the Bereavement group that had been held at St Michael's Church and the Young at Heart group held at the Parish Church. This is now a combined group called CAFÉ (Community and Friendship for Everyone).

One of our pre-school gatherings resumed during 2021: Stay & Play met in term-time on Friday mornings at the Parish Church, offering Christian teaching in a creative and well-received way. However, the toddler group meeting at St Michael's Church did not resume as restrictions were lifted during the year.

Kids' Club resumed meeting at St Michael's Church, though the Sunday Club that met at St Thomas' did not.

Worship and prayer

At the start of 2021, during the lockdown, while our churches were closed for worship, Revd Alan Dawson (and the Ministry Team) recorded and streamed a Sunday service on YouTube. Dedicated IT was upgraded to improve the streaming of our services on YouTube, and a team of volunteers was set up for the streaming of the Parish Church's Principal Service. The Principal Sunday Service is Streamed live from the Parish Church each week. (Parish of Neston YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqJnfi7zbIT5zttz7OQQWJw>)

Our worship patterns changed in 2021 so that a Sunday service takes place on alternate Sundays in St Michael's Church, with the Kids' Club taking place on the remaining Sundays. Weekly services resumed at St Thomas's Church. Two Sunday services and the recently established midweek service take place in the Parish Church. (The midweek services in all three churches were combined into one midweek service in 2020 in the Parish Church, attracting people from across our congregations to a lunchtime communion service.)

In 2021, our annual return to Statistics for Mission indicated:

- Approx. 90 people (including children) attended our three churches in person on those Sundays in October 2021 when we held services there (including the Kids' Club at St Michael's Church);
- Our churches reopened for Easter 2021, when approx. 120 people attended our three churches on Easter Day;

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2021

- Advent and Christmas services were held in all three churches:
 - 66 people attended in person a service of readings and carols, and a Blue Christmas service;
 - The Christingle service was cancelled as infection levels were high in the town;
 - The pre-recorded Christmas Eve Virtual Crib Service has gained 315 views on YouTube; and
 - Approx. 135 attended services on Christmas Day in person.
- The number of views of streamed services on YouTube fluctuated through the year. On average, approx. 45 views were made of each of the live services streamed in October 2021;
- A prayer group has continued to meet, focussing on praying for the world, the parish, for growth and for achieving our mission. The group has established itself on Zoom, as a weekly prayer group, with up to 15 people attending each week;
- During 2021, we were able to conduct baptisms in our churches. There were 6 baptisms in our churches. Baptism services are usually celebrated separately after our main Sunday services;
- There were 3 weddings in our churches;
- There were sixty-five funerals held during the year, either in our churches or at crematoria / cemeteries;
- CAFÉ (Community and Friendship for Everyone) meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month at the west end of the Parish Church from 2 – 4pm. It is open to all, church and non-church members and their friends, and offers the opportunity to meet with other people to either chat, play games such as Rummikub, Scrabble, dominoes, or try their hand at painting. It is free and there is always coffee, tea and cake on offer;
- The CAFÉ group were visited by the Bishop of Chester, Mark Tanner on Tuesday 30th November 2021 at St Michael's Church. It was a visit enjoyed by everyone as he spent time chatting to all those who were there.
- In June 2021, at the suggestion of the Vicar, we started our OASIS group which

meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 3pm – 5pm at Blue Bicycle coffeeshop. This group was started specifically for those people who had been bereaved in the past 2 years, as a place of calm and safety in which to come together and meet and chat with other people in a similar situation;

- We have a team of volunteers who support the families and friends of those who have died, who maintain a professional approach to this important ministry;
- There were 201 people on the Electoral Roll for the parish. Jim Wilcock continued as Electoral Roll Officer; and
- Two of the house groups have met regularly through the year. One continued to meet regularly using Zoom, whereas the other meets regularly in St Thomas's Church. These GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) groups explored topics in informal ways to grow, strengthen and support the faith of those attending. The three-fold ingredients are prayer, Bible study and fellowship.

At St Michael's Church in 2021,

- We changed to having two Sunday services a month, rather than each Sunday as before. Sunday Praise at 9.30am on 1st Sunday of the month, and Sunday Praise with Eucharist also at 9.30am on 3rd Sunday of the month.
- We have been extremely fortunate to continue the Kids' Club group every Sunday, due to the commitment of the volunteer leader (Lynne Vaughan), who kept in touch with the families each week during the periods of lockdown, in her commitment to the young people and their parents.
- At St Michael's Church, we welcomed the services of the Parish Church organist, Daniel Wakefield, when the regular organist Jim Wilcock was unable to play.
- The congregation at St Michael's Church has continued to look after and decorate the Church for worship. They have accepted the reduction in services and not being able to have refreshments after the services due to the pandemic restrictions.

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2021

At St Thomas's Church in 2021

- We resumed our Sunday Services at St Thomas's Church, sitting in the round.
- We purchased a couple of Choral and Orchestral CD's to enhance the worship, especially when we were not allowed to sing.
- We have not held Taizé Services, Café Style Services and Experience Easter and Experience Christmas for Parkgate School children, nor our Open-Air Carols.
- As the Vacancy started, the number of Sunday Eucharist services was reduced at St Thomas's Church from three to two with Sunday Praise on the alternate Sundays. Sunday Club for children has not yet resumed.

Deanery Synod

Neston is part of the Wirral South Deanery in the Diocese of Chester.

- All our clergy are members of the Deanery Synod: Revd Alan Dawson (Until Nov 15th, 2021,) and Revd Judith Calvert.
- Two lay representatives were elected in 2020 to the Deanery Synod for 3 years: Robin Hughes and Richard Lewis. There are two vacancies.
- Lesley Irvin is an ex officio member as a licensed pastoral worker.
- Richard Lewis is the Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod.
- Deanery Synod met once in October 2021 at St Mary's Church, Eastham, when a service of return following the lockdowns was held. No further meetings were called in 2021.
- Sadly, the Deanery Synod secretary John Lewis of Thornton Hough died during 2020. The Secretary role is unfilled.

Buildings and services

Despite the restrictions in response to the pandemic, our churches have been used – to a limited extent - by the wider community for civic and other purposes which help us to meet our objectives;

- Ladies Club Day was celebrated in different ways in June. The traditional parade, church service and blessing at The Cross could not take place. Instead, parishioners and towns people placed floral displays in the grounds of St Mary & St Helen's Church;
- The annual Remembrance Sunday service and the separate Armistice Day commemoration were held in the Parish Church and at the War Memorial, although no parades were held. Commemorations were held at our churches on Remembrance Sunday. Cascading poppy tributes and silhouettes of soldiers were placed in the grounds of our three churches;
- The nativity scene at the Parish Church was also welcomed, along with an installation of advent candles; and
- From the summer of 2021, St Thomas's and St Michael's Churches were again used regularly by groups and societies in Neston including the Parkgate Society, Art Society, Ukulele Club, Martial Arts and Keep Fit classes.
- We have continued to maintain our buildings and grounds, Some work was postponed during the pandemic, and work resumed in 2021:
- Most of the recommendations made in the Archdeacon's visitation in September 2018 have been implemented. Further work on implementing and managing our health and safety policies is required:
 - At St Mary & St Helen's Church:
 - The electrics have been upgraded and new circuit breaker distribution boards installed replacing old fuse boxes.
 - Problematic roof rain gullies have been cleared and repaired, and the leaking in the north aisle has stopped. However, while we still have adjacent trees, the gully outlets will require constant inspection.
 - Following the Quinquennial report in July 2021, there are no items of

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- note over and above standard recommendations. However, the Churchwarden carried out a review of the church buildings that identified some areas that will require attention.
- In October 2021, a problem occurred with the gas supply to the heating system in the Parish Church. Unfortunately, this happened during an extremely cold spell. The problem was due to low pressure occurring locally in the Neston area and was the responsibility of Cadent (the national gas infrastructure company). Excavations in the church yard and re-siting the gas meter cured the problem.
 - We have applied for a faculty for a steel bell frame in the Parish Church, assuming a replacement steel frame would be acceptable instead of a wooden frame (as now). The PCC has yet to discuss and agree to progress with the restoration of the frame and bells.
 - Progress on the disabled ramp has been slow over the year. A preview 3D image showing the ramp was produced by our appointed Architect and detailed drawings will follow. A faculty and planning permission will follow.
 - Heritage Open Days in the Parish Church were well attended in September 2021. We were able to display some of the church silver within a locked glass cabinet. Sadly, there was no art & craft displayed or refreshments.
 - IT equipment has been updated so that we continue to stream our Principal Sunday services on YouTube;
 - Grass cutting in most of the graveyard at St Mary & St Helen's Church was maintained by Cheshire West and Chester Council, while volunteers from the Church and wider parish maintained the graveyard on the east and south sides of the church;
 - The Northwest entrance wall was damaged in a road incident in September 2019. Repairs started in 2020 and were completed in 2021; and
 - The CCTV recording systems at the Parish Church and at St Michael's Church were serviced and upgraded.
 - At St Michael's Church:
 - The overgrown trees and shrubs on the south side were cut back and pruned. The external painting of the building has not been done since the Church was rebuilt until now. Sticking main doors are to be replaced with new standard doors.
 - At St Thomas's Church:
 - planning permission was sought for the cutting back and pruning of shrubs and trees. After considerable time and intervention by residents and the councillor, permission was granted. A tree surgeon has been engaged to carry out the work.
 - New external flood lighting has been fitted to the underside of the north eaves to floodlight the pathway.
 - Volunteers from Lloyds Banking Group spent a day cleaning the church and doing various small gardening jobs in October 2021.
 - During the period that the church was closed due to the pandemic, St Thomas' was partially redecorated, financed by the remaining balance from The Bishop's Trust which had been transferred to the PCC bank account.
 - Health and Safety issues were addressed by having the stone pathways professionally cleaned and new outside lighting installed

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- down the School Lane side of the building.
- The congregation raised the money for the Latham memorial bench to be restored by Barrie Youde in memory of Jill and Jimmy Pratt.
- John Dixon made a display cabinet for St Thomas's Memorial Book, funded by a donation from the Taylor family.
- The Heritage Open Day in September was quiet.
- We were able to have our Harvest Supper in October with restricted numbers, social distancing, a hot meal with table service followed by quizzes.
- At the Neston Centre:
 - We have two tenants in the Neston Centre, and Parish Office is staffed two mornings a week;
 - At the beginning of 2021, Parish Office work was managed by the PCC Secretary working at home. One of the other tenants has reduced the time they spent in the building by working at home;
 - Subsidence on the north side of the Neston Centre was discovered when plastering work commenced. The wall and lintel at the emergency exit had significantly cracked and signs of cracking are noticeable along the north wall.
 - Structural engineers and Ecclesiastical insurance are involved to propose a solution.
 - The disabled entry ramp is awaiting assessment from Ecclesiastical insurance before repair.
 - Parking remains a problem and while three officers of the church have been accosted by members of the public over parking, PCC have yet to comment about this. The problem continues.
- Music plays an important role within acts of worship across the parish.
- Daniel Wakefield is our Organist and Choirmaster with Christine Schofield supporting in an administrative role.
- Currently there are between 16 and 20 regular members of the choir. During lockdown, the choir continued to meet on Zoom. Once choirs could sing services again, a small choir has led Sunday services in the Parish Church.
- Bell ringing has not been restricted since the relaxation of restrictions in July 2021, and the ringers' schedule of Friday evening practice and service ringing prior to the 10.45am Sunday service has been uninterrupted. There has also been ringing prior to all additional Sunday evening services and for those around Christmas. Ringing has also taken place to mark national events, including tolling for the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh, and ringing as part of a national initiative to coincide with the start of COP26.
- We currently have ten ringers in the band of ringers, two of whom are officially ringers elsewhere but ring regularly with us for services. We are now able to recruit some new ringers.
- The recruitment of new ringers will be a central part of the proposed bell restoration scheme. The Neston Bell Ringers Facebook Page has continued to provide information on the ringing taking place within the tower and has seen an increasing number of followers and those engaging positively with the posts, both from members of the congregation and those in the wider local community.
- Progress on the replacement of the bell frame, refurbishment of the fittings and re-tuning of the bells is slowly progressing, and we are hopeful that we will soon know the final proposed scheme and the cost to be submitted to the PCC for their discussion and final approval. It will be a major project but one that will enable ringing to continue in Neston for at least the next two hundred years with minimal maintenance and will help with the

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training of new ringers and the continued development of the existing ones.

- A report by Adrian Dempster of Ward Cole Structural Engineers was carried out on the structure of the Parish Church tower and he has confirmed that the tower is stable, there is no tower sway and that the existing wooden frame should be replaced with a new metal one. A faculty application has been made to enable us to find out if the project is viable from a diocesan point of view. The ringers are extremely grateful to Terry Abel, Lucy Brooks and Don Poole who have been working on this project with our Tower Captain, David Jones.
- Regular checks on the bells and some routine maintenance have been carried out by the local ringers.
- The bell at St Thomas's Church is rung for Sunday services.
- The Parish Church Flower Rota resumed, after lockdown, on 10th April 2021, and is now led by Janet Rossiter.
- There are a reduced number of only 5 people on the rota for normal time and 2 people are needed every fortnight to provide 1 arrangement for the porch and 1 for the dais altar.
- These people each cover 6 slots on the rota throughout the year for normal weeks, at their own expense. The PCC acknowledges this offering to our worship.
- For the Festivals of Easter, Harvest, Christmas and Remembrance and Heritage Open Days all 5 rota ladies, plus another helper, come together to produce larger and extra arrangements to decorate the church. This year we were given a very generous, one-off donation by one of our church members for these.
- The lockdown periods, the rules on social distancing and the prevailing levels of infection in the town meant that the 2021 Village Fair was cancelled, and the 2021 Christmas Fair did not take place.

Pastoral Care

- Conversations, telephone calls, input to Prayer and Action along with the Guild of

St Luke and St Raphael prayer chain keep the Ministry Team and Church aware of health and isolation issues within the community. Covid19 restrictions permitting, the Clergy, Licensed Pastoral Worker and the wider Church follow this up with hospital visits, visiting in the Parish and surrounding area. This includes local Residential and Nursing Homes. Where appropriate and permitted, Home Communion is offered and taken out from the Church.

- Currently our Pastoral Worker, Lesley Irvin coordinated funeral with local Readers and visiting priests. Funeral ministry extends to many years after initial contact and the immediate impact of bereavement. This includes follow up information, support group, making connections and visiting with particular attention to isolation.
- The Guild of St Luke and St Raphael continued its key ministry of offering regular prayers for healing, daily for many in the local communities and further afield. Again, the Guild's wider prayers for healing ministry has been a monthly focus within Mid-Week Communions.
- The Knit and Natter group includes 38 ladies who meet every fortnight at St Michael's Church. The group provides an opportunity for members developing friendships and caring for each other, as well as knitting goods for church fairs and for charity.
- Knit and Natter's leadership have maintained close and special care of members during lockdown.
- Deliveries of much valued knitwear have continued.

Mission and evangelism

- Sunday Club families were kept in touch and given Bible stories, worksheets and craft materials via email during the early part of 2021.

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- Our Sunday Kids' Club resumed in September 2021 on a weekly 'in person' basis; although we still are only able to join in with the congregation during their fortnightly services. The children have told us how much they miss seeing the rest of St Michael's Church family and having the refreshments and fellowship afterwards.
- Weekly emails were also sent until the end of the year.
- We continue to help Sunday Club members, young and older, to enjoy learning about Jesus and understand stories from the Bible, in an informal way with music and craft sessions. We were delighted to celebrate the confirmation of two Sunday Club members by Bishop Julie at the Parish Church on December 12th, 2021.
- The numbers are still very small; on roll at present are 6 families, giving a total of 10 children altogether. No other families have joined us since before the pandemic.
- We are praying that more leaders will be found to help with this vital work, as we rely on the parents to be there to allow the sessions to take place with the necessary ratio of adults to children.

Mothers' Union

- 2021 was another difficult year. For the first three months we had our MU get-togethers on Zoom including last year's AGM. Then, April to July we were able to come to the 1.30pm Service with MU input. Our first human get together was in August for an Afternoon Tea in aid of the Summer of Hope Appeal. We are now continuing to meet monthly after the 1.30pm Holy Communion in the Parish Church.
- 15 emergency toiletry bags (for patients who go to hospital unexpectedly) were delivered to A&E and knitted items - 7 small blankets and 20 baby hats - to the premature baby unit in Arrowe Park hospital.
- Although most Baptisms last year were postponed, we continue to send Baptism

anniversary cards to Baptism candidates. We also give a children's Bible to each Baptism candidate.

- After meeting on Zoom for the beginning of the year, we restarted **Stay & Play** for pre-school children on the 21st May meeting in the train park behind the Civic Hall. In September we moved back into St Mary & St Helen and continue to meet every Friday (9.15-11.15am) during term time. Special thanks to our Stay & Play team, who do a sterling job running this ever-growing group! We now regularly have 28 children and 25 Adults. It is very popular, and they love the friendly atmosphere. It's a wonderful outreach for the Church and Mothers' Union.
- Mothers' Union now have 34 members for 2022 and we welcome new members and supporters. Many thanks to all who gave so generously to our Appeals in 2021.
- Although we were unable to give unrestricted gifted income to local and overseas charities in 2021, the PCC decided to use a fund which contained income from the sale of refreshments that had built up over some years to make donations. The Mothers Union were asked to nominate which charities to support. Some £3,200 was shared between
 - Northern Lights
 - OAKS (Overseas Aid for the Kids of Sierra Leone)
 - Wirral Churches ARK Project
 - Claire House
 - Neston Hub for Adults with Learning Difficulties
 - Mothers Union charities
 - Christian Aid
 - Alzheimer's Society
 - National Youth Advocacy Service
 - Macmillan Cancer Support
 - Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
- The Parish Website: we continued to maintain our web presence with information about our services and

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activities on
<http://www.nestonparishchurch.org/index.asp>

- Our Prayer & Action pew sheets are a valuable, informative, and important weekly flyer of group activities, weekly service information keeping everyone constantly updated. Approx. 90% of these are now emailed weekly to members of the congregation and others interested in our work, mainly in the town.
- The Shop in the Parish Church reopened during 2021, to provide booklets, cards, and hand-made items for sale.
- Revds. Richard and Frances Skinner – who were Readers in this parish were ordained as priests in June 2021 by the Bishop of Chester. They continue their Curacies at Holy Trinity, Hoylake (St Hildeburgh's Church), and St John's, Meols, respectively. They are assisting this parish during the Vacancy by celebrating Holy Communion and taking funerals and baptisms.
- We are being assisted by retired priests in holding our services including Revd Alan Leach, Revd Ian Urquhart, Revd Ian Davenport, Revd Ray Dent, Revd Peter Froggatt in 2021.
- Lesley Irvin continues in her work as a Pastoral Worker.
- Elizabeth Joyce became a Reader Emeritus in October 2021 and continues to lead services in our churches.
- Richard Lewis completed his training as Reader and was licensed as Reader by the Bishop of Chester in the Cathedral in October 2021. He is leading services, in all our churches, and mainly in the Parish Church.
- John Hart began his second year of training in September 2021. He is leading more services in our churches, and mainly in the Parish Church.

Ecumenical work

Neston and District Churches Together

Despite the impact of the pandemic which meant that churches within Neston and District Churches Together (NDCT) were physically closed for some of the year, we have continued to support the work of NDCT.

Neston Singers 2021

Neston Singers (formerly Neston Ecumenical Singers) restarted rehearsals in September 2021 after a long break due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The pandemic affected a few of our older members who have declined to return to rehearsal for fear of the virus, but we have some new younger members who we are delighted to have joined us.

The Singers had a successful Christmas concert in the United Reformed Church and some of our audience said it was the best Christmas Concert we have ever done.

Christian Aid

Christian Aid is an ecumenical organisation, begun nationally by the churches to provide funds to help the poorest of the poor - victims of natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tsunamis; refugees of war and the homeless; those who are unable to survive without help.

Last May, in 2021, Christian Aid celebrated their 75th Anniversary with a special national service of reflection, celebration and rededication which can still be watched on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS1jsFU5fJ4>

The Christian Aid Conference was again live streamed so that all supporters could attend the sessions. Zoom regional meetings were also held during the Conference, where we were able to meet other groups from the North West, and learn many diverse ways of fund raising.

Our Christian Aid Group have been actively fundraising all year, with the Climate Change Emergency as our focus. Margaret Heibel has been appointed as our Climate Change Co-ordinator.

The Christian Aid Week Service was live streamed at St Winefride's Church; Christel

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Langdon-Griffiths, Christian Aid's Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer for Cheshire, Staffordshire and Wirral, gave an inspiring talk.

Our group are no longer collecting door to door during Christian Aid Week; local churches have been doing their own collections.

The Christian Aid Sponsored walk was held as part of the Climate Coalition Great Big Green Week in September 2021. The Fairtrade Group provided free refreshments for the free Christian Aid film shown at St Michael's - 'Thank You For The Rain' about drought and climate change in Kenya

Our Churches were asked to pray for the young Christians relay walking from Cornwall to Scotland for the COP26 conference and some made origami paper boats to publicise that the climate crisis is a storm but that we are not all in the same boat. The boats made in this area were taken to the Liverpool Cathedral service and sent on to Glasgow where they became part of a giant origami boat. The Parish Church displayed a large mobile installation of origami boats, 249, one for each country of the world, to raise awareness of the problem.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported Christian Aid financially and by giving their time volunteering. Over £8,600 was raised in the NDCT area for Christian Aid in 2021.

World Day of Prayer 2021.

The Neston World Day of Prayer Committee has representatives of every church in the District, including Thornton Hough.

The host Church for March 2021 was the Parish Church, chosen to accommodate the most socially distanced people. However, the decision was made to record the Service prepared by the women of Vanuatu and stream it on YouTube, using members from all the different churches to participate in the Order of Services. A small choir was allowed, and we had a mix of online and organ music as well.

As of March 2022, the streamed service has been viewed over 377 times. The committee has received over £260 in donations, with many others sending a donation direct.

The Committee enjoyed a Face-to-Face Garden Party for the first time in September 2021 when the lockdown restrictions had eased. The weather was kind and we welcomed former members of our Committee who joined us.

Finances

Summary

Huge progress has been made during 2021 to reduce the overspend on day to day running costs of the Parish thanks to the generosity and commitment of planned givers.

The PCC received two substantial legacies during the year. Most of the larger legacy has been invested to provide a monthly income towards the running costs of the Parish Church.

Part of the smaller legacy will be spent on replacing the external ramp at the Parish Church.

Vision funds remain available for a range of future projects.

Increase in giving

Following the request from the PCC to electoral roll members, planned giving increased by 25% during 2021.

The response to the PCC's request was both remarkable and revealing. There are around 200 people on the electoral roll. Of these, around 100 are involved in planned giving, and of these around 50 increased their giving. There appears to be scope to further engage with electoral roll members on the periphery.

General reserves

The increase in planned giving significantly reduced the PCC's overspend on annual running costs of the Parish to around £8,900.

In 2019 (the last pre-covid year) our running costs exceeded our income by £17,800.

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It is the policy of the PCC to hold enough general reserves to cover three months' running costs. Based on expenditure during 2019 the reserves threshold is £37,600.

At the end of 2021 the general reserves of the PCC were £51,500.

From 2022 income from the Betty Smith legacy investment will reduce the need to spend as much from our general reserves however, it is not yet known what increases will apply to energy costs. During 2021 electricity, gas and water for our three churches cost £5,900.

Betty Smith Legacy

Betty was Verger of the Parish Church for around fifty years, and when Betty died her estate was placed in Trust for her son Michael.

During 2021 Michael died, and the Church of St Mary's and St Helen of Neston became the beneficiary of the Trust, worth around £264,000.

The PCC decided to wind up the Trust to enable the monies to be used in accordance with Betty's wishes. In winding up the Trust a tax liability of around £51,000 arises on the gain from when the Trust was created.

The PCC has decided to invest £200,000 to provide an income of £6,000 per year towards the day to day running costs of the Parish Church.

Accountancy and legal costs will be incurred in closing the Trust and the PCC expects to receive the remaining balance during 2022.

Morris Legacy

During the year the PCC received £72,000 from the estate of Miss Morris, for St Mary's and St. Helen's Parish Church.

£9,000 was spent on architect's fees (external ramp), engineer's report (tower), electrical & plumbing repairs, plus chairs, tables and new toys for Stay & Play.

This meant that we did not need to use money from our general reserves for these items.

Going forwards, it is expected that part of the legacy will be spent replacing the external ramp.

Vicar's and Wardens' Trusts – responsibilities transferred to PCC.

When 99 Ringway was purchased and refurbished during 2011 to provide a house for future Curates, two funds managed by the Vicar & Wardens were used (Hillcrest £75,255 and Robert Hamilton £6,736) together with PCC monies of £30,402. Until 2021 only the monies invested by the PCC have been included in the accounts.

To simplify the allocation of the net rental income, during 2021 a Deed of Appointment and Retirement was prepared by Brabners Solicitors which transferred responsibility for the Hillcrest and Robert Hamilton funds from the Vicar & Wardens to the PCC. The accounts now include the full amount invested in Ringway.

Vision Fund - remaining monies

The Vision fund was set up in 2000. Very little of this was spent during 2021 and the balance at the end of the year was £88,900.

This fund is available for a broad range of activities:

- Communications
- Youth
- Ministry Team & Leadership
- Worship for all the Family
- Fellowship and Social
- Prayer and Study
- Giving
- Outreach & Pastoral
- Buildings & Resources

Safeguarding

In line with Diocese of Chester guidelines Neston Parish has a Safeguarding Officer for the parish, Liz Ledsham.

Information and parish contacts for safeguarding in the parish are displayed in all three church buildings in the parish. These have recently been updated (December 2020)

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in a new format and distributed to the churches.

During 2021, no safeguarding issues have arisen or been reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or Rev Alan Dawson.

Structure and governance

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Neston is a corporate body established by the Church of England, and is a Registered Charity registered with the Charity Commission, with the public benefit being for the advancement of religious education promoting the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines of the Church of England.

The governing documents are the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and the Church Representation Rules 2020.

The object of the charity is to promote the whole mission of the Church in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Neston.

The trustees of the charity, being the elected, co-opted, or ex-officio members of the PCC, organise a formal election each year in the run-up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) to fill vacancies on the PCC. New members elected to the PCC automatically become Trustees of the charity.

Elected and co-opted PCC members serve for a period of no more than 3 years after which they may seek re-election. There are no limits to the number of times a person may serve as PCC member. On standing down from the PCC, a member is also removed from the list of trustees of the charity. A full list of the trustees of the charity is available on the Charity Commission website.

At the annual meeting in May 2021, there were 201 people on the Electoral Roll. About 20 members attended the meeting either in person or by Zoom.

The members of the PCC in December 2021 were:

Clergy: Vacant (Chair); Rev Judith Calvert;

Churchwardens: Terry Abel; Marion Forshaw (Lay Chair – Vice Chair)

PCC Secretary: Richard Lewis

Trustees: Alex Cummins; Linda Haigh; Robin Hughes; Lesley Irvin; Val Johnson; David Richardson; Carol Stott.

Deanery Synod – laity: Robin Hughes, Richard Lewis. Lesley Irvin attends as a lay Pastoral Worker in her own right.

The Treasurer is Lucy Brooks who is not a member of the PCC.

Administration and contact details

- St Mary & St Helen's Church: Parish Church, High Street, Neston CH64 9TZ;
- St Michael and All Angels' Church: Marshlands Road, Little Neston CH64 0SN;
- St Thomas the Apostle's Church: School Lane, Parkgate CH64 6SR; and
- Neston Centre: High Street, Neston CH64 9TZ.
- The Parish Office is at the Neston Centre and is staffed on Monday mornings and Wednesday mornings. (0151 336 5346 (incl. answerphone)
nestonparishoffice@gmail.com)