

The Parish of Neston

Charity No 1129453

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

For the year ended 31st December 2024

**Incumbent
Fr. Kevin Crinks**

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 31st December 2024

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Endowment Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2024	2023
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS							
Voluntary Income	2(a)	99,039	4,400	0	0	103,439	83,558
Church activities	2(b)	7,726	5,638	1,220	0	14,584	19,251
Activities For Generating Funds	2(c)	27,859	4,766	0	0	32,625	36,540
Income From Investments	2(d)	0	2,500	0	0	2,500	9,917
TOTAL INCOME		<u>134,624</u>	<u>17,304</u>	<u>1,220</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>153,148</u>	<u>149,266</u>
EXPENDITURE							
Raising funds	3(a)	197	0	0	0	197	601
Church activities	3(b)	130,594	59,603	0	0	190,197	145,822
Other Expenditure	3(c)	1,055	0	0	0	1,055	1,361
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>131,846</u>	<u>59,603</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>191,449</u>	<u>147,784</u>
NET INCOME/(-EXPENDITURE)		2,778	-42,299	1,220	0	-38,301	1,482
Gross Transfers between funds - In		800				800	1,642
Gross Transfers between funds - Out				-800		-800	-1,642
Gains on Investment Assets					4,999	4,999	6,952
Other Recognised Losses						0	0
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>3,578</u>	<u>-42,299</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>4,999</u>	<u>-33,302</u>	<u>8,434</u>
Balances b/fwd 1st January		37,652	209,457	4,704	266,574	518,387	509,953
Balances c/fwd 31st December		<u>41,230</u>	<u>167,158</u>	<u>5,124</u>	<u>271,573</u>	<u>485,085</u>	<u>518,387</u>

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

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

BALANCE SHEET at 31st DECEMBER 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Fixed Assets		25,001	25,001
Investment Assets	9	301,975	296,976
	4	<u>326,976</u>	<u>321,977</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock on Hand		330	330
Debtors	6	15,206	6,482
Short Term Deposits		154,288	202,578
Cash		148	32
		<u>169,972</u>	<u>209,422</u>
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR			
	7	11,863	13,012
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>158,109</u>	<u>196,410</u>
TOTAL ASSETS			
		<u>£485,085</u>	<u>£518,387</u>
FUNDS			
	5		
Endowment		271,573	266,574
Unrestricted - Designated		5,124	4,704
Restricted		167,158	209,457
Unrestricted		41,230	37,652
		<u>£485,085</u>	<u>£518,387</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 8 May 2025 and signed on its behalf by

Vicar
Fr Kevin Crinks



Trustee
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 2024

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 2019

version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2nd Edition(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 2024 (Continued)

2	INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
2(a)	<i>Incoming Resources From Donors</i>					
	Planned Giving	62,376			62,376	57,614
	Collections in Church and Boxes	11,302			11,302	5,286
	Gift-Aided Gifts				0	0
	Regular Gift Days				0	0
	Donations and Appeals	8,879	3,270		12,149	2,953
	Planned Giving Tax Refunds	16,482	130		16,612	12,704
	Legacies		1,000		1,000	5,000
	Chester Diocesan Board Grant				0	0
	Vision Income				0	0
	Gas and PRounding				0	1
		99,039	4,400	0	103,439	83,558
2(b)	<i>Incoming Resources From Church Activities</i>					
	Wedding and Funeral fees PCC	7,250			7,250	13,971
	Stay & Play			1,220	1,220	600
	Grants and VAT Refunds	476	5,638		6,114	764
	Assistant Staff Costs refunded by Diocese				0	3,916
		7,726	5,638	1,220	14,584	19,251
2(c)	<i>Activities For Generating Funds</i>					
	Wedding and Funeral fees Diocese	3,826			3,826	6,802
	Parish Fellowship	545			545	374
	Rent - Neston Centre	3,300			3,300	3,550
	Rent - 99 The Ringway	1,767	4,766		6,533	6,934
	Comrade's Field	730			730	720
	Room Hire	4,853			4,853	9,685
	Wall Safe	19			19	227
	Shop Income	1,005			1,005	1,195
	Village Fair	3,454			3,454	2,580
	Christmas Fairs	3,316			3,316	1,825
	Events	4,794			4,794	2,648
	Other Income -Gas & Power Compensation	250			250	0
2(d)		27,859	4,766	0	32,625	36,540
	<i>Investments</i>					
	Income from Investments		2,500		2,500	9,917
	Bank interest etc				0	0
		0	2,500	0	2,500	9,917

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024 (Continued)

3	EXPENDITURE	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	TOTAL	TOTAL
		Funds	Funds	Funds	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£	£
3(a)	<i>Fundraising Trading: Costs of Sale & Other Costs</i>					
	Costs of Stewardship Campaign	99			99	485
	Shop Expenses	98			98	116
	Investment Management Costs				0	0
		<u>197</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>197</u>	<u>601</u>
3(b)	<i>Church Activities</i>			Designated		
	Outward Giving				0	0
	Secular Charities				0	0
	Weddings & Funeral Fees Diocese	3826			3,826	6,802
	Parish Share	75344			75,344	71,757
	Assistant staff costs	422			422	6,187
	Vicar's Working Expenses	1460			1,460	304
	Curate's Working Expenses				0	0
	Vicarage Expenses	3534			3,534	3,093
	Education				0	0
	Insurance	7624			7,624	7,315
	Organ, piano tuning	936			936	936
	Repairs & Maintenance Churches	4874	40,969		45,843	4,550
	Cleaning	3591			3,591	3,122
	Altar requisites	199			199	567
	Service books	0			0	264
	Robes & chalices	0			0	76
	Music licences	808			808	756
	Organist's fees	5640			5,640	6,565
	Choir fees	0			0	360
	Bell fees	0			0	200
	Upkeep of churchyard	540	1,249		1,789	384
	Equipment hire				0	45
	Equipment servicing/ usage charges	526			526	518
	Heating, Lighting & W Rates	14936	5,904		20,840	15,207
	Repairs & Maintenance Neston Centre	4404	2,756		7,160	12,648
	Vision Expenditure	0	7,690.00		7,690	674
	Youth Matters General Expenditure	0			0	0
	Miscellaneous Expenditure	1461	1035	0	2,496	2,995
	Bank charges	469			469	497
		<u>130,594</u>	<u>59,603</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>190,197</u>	<u>145,822</u>
3(c)	<i>Other Expenditure</i>					
	Other Ordinary PCC Expenditure	50			50	0
	Parish Office & Administration	483			483	815
	Parish office equipment				0	0
	Software subscriptions	522			522	546
		<u>1,055</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,055</u>	<u>1,361</u>

NESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024 (Continued)

	2024	2023
4 FIXED ASSETS		
Freehold Land and Buildings	25,000	25,000
Equipment Written down	1	1
Investment in Ringway property : The Hillcrest Curacy Trust Fund.	112,393	112,393
Invested Legacy re Betty Smith Endowment	189,582	184,583
	<u>326,976</u>	<u>321,977</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 2024 £	Gains & Losses £	Movement in Year £	At 31st Dec 2024 £
Endowment Funds				
Betty Smith Endowment	184,583	4,998		189,581
Hillcrest (including Robert Hamilton) Fund Endowment	81,991			81,991
	<u>266,574</u>	<u>4,998</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>271,572</u>
Designated Funds				
3 Churches Repairs from £10,000 designated	2,104			2,104
Chester Diocesan Board	0			0
Crump Legacy	2,000			2,000
Stay and Play	600		420	1,020
	<u>4,704</u>		<u>420</u>	<u>5,124</u>
Restricted Funds				
Garden Fund Bishops Trust	596			596
Lighting Fund	1,441			1,441
Neston Centre And Comrade's Field Fund	25,000			25,000
St Thomas's Donations	1,000			1,000
Vision Fund	88,074		-16,018	72,056
Miss Morris Legacy for Parish Church	60,131		-31,494	28,637
Hillcrest (including Robert Hamilton) Fund	24,320		4,766	29,086
Beazley Legacy for St Mary & St Helen's Church	4,000			4,000
Dr Evans' Legacy for St Mary & St Helen's Churchyard	1,000		-549	451
Donation for Organ			650	650
Flower Festival 2025			250	250
Houghton Legacy			1,000	1,000
Neston Town Council Grant for Xmas Lights			2,500	2,500
Betty Smith Investment income for Parish Church	3,895		-3,404	491
	<u>209,457</u>		<u>-42,299</u>	<u>167,158</u>
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	37,652		3,578	41,230

6 DEBTORS	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	0	0
Other Debtors	15,206	6,482
Tax and VAT refunds due	0	0
	<u>15,206</u>	<u>6,482</u>

7 LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

Accrued Expenses	7,208	8,357
Neston Centre Deposits	275	275
Agency Collections		
Parish Church Bells	4,302	4,302
cash reimburse	78	78
	<u>11,863</u>	<u>13,012</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 £7,245

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

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024, 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

24 April 2025

**Neston Parochial Church Council
Trustees' Report for 2024**

Parish of Neston

2024 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 4AD;
- St Thomas'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 Christian 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.

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 Kevin Crinks started work in the Parish of Neston in September 2023, with the assistance of local, retired priests, especially Revd Maureen Hobbs, Revd Frances Skinner, and Revd Richard Skinner.

Work with elderly people continues with CAFÉ (Community and Friendship for Everyone), meeting monthly in the Neston Centre. Work with the recently bereaved continues through OASIS in the Blue Bicycle coffee shop.

Our pre-school gatherings continued during 2024: Stay & Play met in term-time on Friday mornings at the Parish Church, offering Christian teaching in a creative and well-received way. It is over-subscribed.

Children from the High School and primary schools made visits during the year and held their carol concerts in 2024. Experience Christmas and Experience Easter workshops were held for local schools.

Most of our activities in all three churches 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

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2024

want to thank those many people who are contributing their time and talents to our work.

The PCC is reasonably placed to address its financial position and manage budgets, but in 2024, it was only possible to work within our agreed working funds by drawing on other reserves. While there are large capital reserves for projects that are yet to be designed and delivered, day-to-day income is not covering day-to-day expenditure such as the Parish Share, Insurance, utilities, maintenance etc. A Stewardship group of the PCC is working on a new campaign. We acknowledge particularly the skill and commitment of the Treasurer, Lucy Brooks.

The PCC established three subgroups to address: stewardship, communications and events. The Events Group has delivered many events throughout the year that have enhanced fellowship within our congregations and improved contact with the wider community. The Communications Group is making steady progress, and the Stewardship Group will start its work in 2025.

Churchwardens' reports

Linda Haigh has continued to work on the energy contracts throughout the year. We are still with EDF. However, the contracts are up for renewal in 2025.

Five of the 8 meters have been changed to smart meters. The Parish church electric meter can't be changed until they can access the safety switch, which is under the grass area to the side of the church. The area will be excavated in 2025 to complete the work

The gas meter in the Parish Church is too big to change to a smart meter, as is the gas meter in the Neston Centre

An exhibition based on the Twelve Days of Christmas was held in the first week of December 2024 in the Parish church. It consisted of 12 fabric banners created by Meryl Abel which took two years to complete. The banners were created by stitching, embroidering, painting and with a touch of appliqué work. They were mounted on stands which were supplied by her husband Terry Abel.

Over £1,000 was raised for parish funds from donations, and sales of refreshments and craft work.

Marion Forshaw helped lead a number of Civic outreach services:

- **Civic Service.** The Service in February was well attended by the Deputy Lieutenant, the Lord Mayor of Chester, Mayors of a number of adjoining areas and Civic leaders from Neston Town Council and elected representatives from Cheshire West and Chester Council.
- **Neston Female Society.** The Society held their Annual Walk through Neston on 6th June. This was attended by over 100 children and the adult members of the Society plus various civic dignitaries. Their Ecumenical Service was held at the Parish Church and outside at Neston Cross led by Revd Crinks. It included a presentation by Open the Book which delighted the children present.
- **Armistice Day.** The outside service and wreath laying at the war memorial was on 11th November, was well supported and led by Revd Crinks.

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2024

- **Remembrance Sunday.** The parade and the Service was well attended by the British Legion, Members and Veterans of the armed forces, Civic Leaders and local Cadet and Youth Groups. The Service was led by Revd Crinks.
- **Christmas outreach events**
 - The Parish Church hosted Christmas carol concerts for the University of Liverpool Leahurst Veterinary School, Neston Primary School, Parkgate Primary School and Neston High School.
 - Outdoor carol singing was held in Mostyn Square, Parkgate and in the Blue Bicycle courtyard in Neston. Both events being well attended and enjoyed by local residents.
- Approx. 115 people (including children) attended our three churches in person on those Sundays in October 2024 – a slight increase on 2023;
- Approx. 178 people attended our three churches on Easter Day – an increase of over 30 on 2023;
- Advent and Christmas services were held in all three churches:
 - Approx. 745 people attended a range of services including carol services etc.;
 - Approx. 175 attended services on Christmas Day in person.
 - A children's party - Jesus's birthday party – was held in St Michael's Church instead of a Christingle service.

Worship and prayer

The Principal Sunday Service is streamed live from the Parish Church each week.

Services are held every Sunday in all three churches. Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday in the Parish Church, and twice a month on Sundays in St Michael's and St Thomas's churches.

The mid-week Communion service continues in the Parish Church, now on Wednesday mornings. A weekly mid-week Communion service has started in St Michael's Church on Thursday afternoons.

Prayers for healing are included once a month, and the Mothers Union hold their monthly meeting in the Parish Church after a Communion service.

In 2024, our annual return to Statistics for Mission indicated:

- The number of views of streamed services on YouTube fluctuated through the year. Approx. 80 views were made of each of the live services streamed in October 2024;
- 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 6-8 people attending each Friday evening;
- Ten people were baptised. Baptism services are usually celebrated separately after our main Sunday services;
- There were three weddings in our churches;
- There were twenty-one funerals held during the year, either in our churches or at crematoria / cemeteries.

At St Michael's Church

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2024

- St Michael's has continued to hold Sunday services during the year, with Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sunday and Sunday Praise on the 2nd and 4th Sunday. There is also Communion on Thursday afternoon, followed by tea and coffee and a Warm Space during the winter months.
- The services are fairly well attended, and some children who come along and join us with their mums.
- Bluetooth has been installed which gives more flexibility with music should an organist be unable to play.
- New lighting has been installed in the building.
- Daniel Wakefield has played the organ for services on most Sundays after Jim Wilcock died earlier in the year.
- There was Alternative Carol Service at Christmas. It was well attended and enjoyed by those who came along.
- The Patronal Festival was on Sunday 29th September and was well attended. On the evening before, there was a Scouse and Quiz night for 60 people.
- The Communion and Carols united service on Sunday 29th December was well attended. It included an Adult Nativity, where some members of the congregation recreated the nativity.
- There are a number of groups who hire the Church buildings on a regular basis.

At St Thomas's Church

- There is a thriving congregation despite a number of regular members dying during the year.
- Throughout the year there were two Taizé Services which were well attended thanks, in part, to advertising on social media.
- The Patronal Festival was a great success, bringing church and

community together. Our Saturday event, The Parkgate Village Fair, had stalls, a BBQ and a sporting Revd Crinks who allowed people to throw water sponges at him in the stocks. The Café Church the following day was one of our Parish United Services. Breakfast was enjoyed by many from our congregations coming together from across the parish.

- The first Pet Blessing Service was held one Sunday afternoon in August. This attracted people from across several communities and charities, in addition to church people and over 20 extremely well-behaved dogs of all shapes and sizes.
- There was a Parish Harvest Supper for 60 people, with table quizzes, a raffle and were entertained by Gabriel, the local guitar player and singer.
- Together, the Harvest Supper and the Patronal Festival raised over £1,000 for PCC Funds.
- There was another Café Church Service (Come and have breakfast) on Advent Sunday.
- In December the St Thomas' front garden was packed for the annual Open-Air Carols with the Port Sunlight Lyceum Band, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
- As well as occasional hirers, a weekly Art Class is now running successfully.
- The congregation continues to clean the building and maintain the gardens.

- Music plays an important role within acts of worship across the parish.
- Daniel Wakefield is our Organist and Choirmaster in the parish church.
- Currently there are about 16 regular members of the choir. The choir leads singing at our principal Sunday Service and other services.

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2024

- The bell-ringing band continued to ring prior to every 10.45am service and the joint services held at the parish church during 2024, as well as additional Sunday afternoon and evening services.
- Twenty-four quarter peals were rung at Neston in 2024, a mixture of ringing for the additional services, by visiting bands and for training and development by our band. One of the band members and one of our regular visitors on both Fridays and Sundays both rang their first quarter peals during the year.
- Quarter Peals were rung prior to the Ascension Day, Remembrance Sunday and Crib services. Quarter peals were also rung to mark the Patronal Festival, 80th Anniversary of D-Day, the Village Fair, the visit by Revd Richard Coles, the Neston High School Carol Concert, and the Carol Concert by Candlelight.
- Although there are ten members in the band and regular visitors both for our Friday evening practice and on a Sunday morning, due to a couple of regular ringers retiring for health reasons, the band is looking to recruit new ringers. The band has continued to attract ringers from elsewhere who see Neston as a supportive place to develop their ringing skills.
- Progress in both method ringing and the quality of ringing has been made during 2024, and we hope that you have enjoyed the improvement of the ringing throughout the year.
- A small sub-committee was formed in 2024 to make progress with the much-needed bell restoration project.

- Our three churches are decorated with flowers, especially at festivals.
- In the Parish Church, there are six people working on arrangements for

the Nave Dais and for the main porch. There are similar arrangements in St Michael's and St Thomas's churches.

- For the Festivals of Easter, Harvest, Christmas and also Remembrance and Heritage Open Days a larger group of volunteers come together to produce more arrangements to decorate the churches.
- The PCC acknowledges this offering to our worship.

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 Kevin Crinks, who has become the Chapter Clerk.
- Two lay representatives were elected in 2023 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.
- Revd Beth Glover (Eastham parish) retired as Rural Dean and was succeeded by Revd Vicky Barrett (Thornton Hough).
- Deanery Synod met three times in 2024 and learned about the Wirral Waters initiative in Birkenhead Docks, Dementia-friendly activities as well as deanery-wide worship at Thornton Hough and at Ellesmere Port.

Electoral Roll

- There were 201 people on the Electoral Roll for the parish.

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- The post of Electoral Roll Officer was unfilled until late 2024, following the death of Jim Wilcock in January 2024.
- Marion Forshaw was elected as Electoral Roll Officer by the PCC in late 2024.

Buildings and services

Our churches have been used by the wider community for civic and other purposes which help us to meet our objectives. (see Wardens' Report – above)

We have continued to maintain our buildings and grounds.

Parish Church of St Mary & St Helen

- Contractors were called in to remove vegetation, and repoint gables on the roof.
- The process of building a new disabled ramp at the south door (ramp door) is still ongoing. A design has been approved, and a contractor has been assigned. There is a delay in the Faculty Application due to there being two ancient graves within the area of the site build.
- There was consideration given to the installation of automatic glass doors at the south entrance from the proposed new ramp. At the time of investigation the design proved difficult and the cost with the ramp was too expensive, The decision was to go with just the ramp with the view of addressing the doors at a later date.
- The continuing need to repair and rebuild the West Wall of the churchyard (on Church Lane) is nearing its commencement date in May 2025. Public notices have been posted at graves, public noticeboards and media outlets advising that a number of graves adjacent to the wall are

required to be exhumed. This will be done professionally. The work will be a combined effort between The Vicar, Wardens, Diocese, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Architect, and contractor.

- The four main rainwater roof outlets (Gargoyles) were improved for better water escape.
- A plan has been drawn up to incorporate the Parish Office into the Vestry including installing Wi-Fi for the Parish Church.
- A problem with the sound system occurred and a commercial sound engineer was called in.
- Lightning conductor on the Parish Church Tower inspection failed, but will be upgraded in April 2025.
- The annual Hardwire and PAT Tests were carried out in the Parish Church.

St Michael's

- The exterior of the building was repainted, and new rainwater furniture replaced the original cast iron furniture. The wooden outside patio hand rail was replaced with new.
- Hedge and shrubs were cutback and pruned.
- A new notice board was erected on the south wall adjacent to the main entrance doors.
- New replacement LED lights were installed in the Chapel and the Helen room.
- The sound system was improved, and a Bluetooth connection was installed

St Thomas

- Two new dog fouling signs were erected in the access gates.

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- An area of the internal east wall was re-plastered and painted following severe signs of dampness.
- A condensation trap with water outlets was fitted to the east wall windowsill.

The Neston Centre

- The smoke detection system was upgraded to the present British Standard.
- A quote was received for redecorating the rear committee room, toilet and adjacent hallway. No action taken.
- An investigation is under way looking in to re-instating the Parish Hall to a social amenity that may include winter services to reducing the cost of heating the Parish Church.

In addition,

- New church information notice boards were designed and installed at all three Churches.
- Two memorial benches were erected, one at St Michael's and one at St Thomas', both at no cost to PCC.

Village Fair

- The 2024 Village Fair was held on the first Saturday in July.
- Despite mixed weather on the day, the event was well attended by the people of Neston, who were able to enjoy a good family afternoon out for the whole family.
- Entertainment was provided throughout the afternoon with the usual mix of local acts.
- The Parish made a total of approx. £2,000, which included income from the Grand Raffle, the gate money, craft and toy stalls, and from the teas and cakes in the church.

Winter Fair

A Winter Fair was held in November 2024 to avoid the clash of Christmas events. It was held in the Parish Church and was well attended by the wider parish and local school choirs. Approx £3,300 was raised for church funds. Of this, a substantial element was due to a raffle for a gold and diamond pendant, generously donated by Balducci, the Jewellers.

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.
- Where appropriate and permitted, Home Communion is offered and taken out from the Church.
- Revd Kevin Crinks coordinates funerals with local retired priests and Readers. Funeral ministry extends to many years after initial contact and the immediate impact of bereavement. This includes follow up information, OASIS support group, making connections and visiting with particular attention to isolation. There is an annual Memorial Service on the Sunday closest to All Souls' Day.
- 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.
- Healing Eucharists have continued and are now part of a monthly principal Sunday service.

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CAFÉ group

- CAFE stands for Community and Friendship for Everyone and meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month in the Neston Centre. It is open to anyone, with games, Scrabble, Rummikub, Dominoes and Painting, plus tea, coffee and cake. It is also a Warm Space for the winter months. There are a number of regulars who come along each month.

OASIS group

- OASIS meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Blue Bicycle. It is for people who are bereaved and want to meet up and chat. It is not a counselling group, but a friendship group, which has a group of regulars who come along most months and is open to anyone.

Knit And Natter Group

- In 2024, the group had another successful year full of friendship, knitting and nattering. They were able to give knitted donations to:
 - Claire House
 - The Salvation Army
 - The Seamans Mission
 - The Hedgehog Society
 - Brimstage Hall Care Home
 - The Ark
 - Arrowe Park Hospital Maternity Unit
 - Charles Thompson Mission.
- They also had an Easter coffee morning and stalls at the Summer Fair, the Winter Fair and the Christmas Exhibition. From these we were able to give a donation of over £700.00 to the church.
- In June we had our annual "Afternoon Tea" party in order to thank all our

members for all their work during the year.

Bible Study Group

During the year, Revd Crinks has led weekly bible studies with up to two dozen parishioners in the Blue Bicycle coffee shop.

GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) groups

Two 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.

- The GG7 GIFT house group facilitated by Beryl and Robin Hughes, continued, during its tenth year, to gather monthly at their home, for Bible study, prayer and enjoyment. It majored in video-supported studies of St Paul's Journeys and St Peter's journey to Rome, and we all learned a lot about the geography of the Eastern Mediterranean and the very early church.
- The second group, coordinated by Carol Stott, met throughout the year. During the darker nights, meetings were held over Zoom and reflected on St Mark's Gospel in particular. During the lighter evenings, the group met socially in the Parish.

Mission and evangelism with schools

- Revd Crinks has made contact with Neston schools and visits them.
- Children from Parkgate, Woodfall, St Winefride's and Burton Road Schools attended Experience Easter and

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Experience Christmas events at St Michael's and St Thomas's churches.

- We are praying that more leaders will be found to help with this vital work with children and young people.

Mothers' Union

- MU have met every month in 2024, except August, after the 1.30 Communion Service in the Parish Church. They enjoyed many excellent speakers and hosted a Deanery Advent Service and afternoon tea in December. Prayer is at the heart of all MU does, including participating in the MU worldwide wave of prayer in May.
- MU gave a children's Bible to every baptism candidate and a Wedding Bible to couples getting married in our Parish.
- Proceeds of £200 from our Lent lunches went to the MU Relief fund.
- For Mothering Sunday, MU raised money in all three churches to purchase five Gifts of Dignity in grateful thanks for our much-loved mothers. The 5 gifts were: Literacy and business skills training; Helping communities build resilience against natural disasters; Empowering women to reach their full potential; Enabling families to pay school fees and support their futures; Supporting income generation and agricultural enterprises. The total amount raised for the worldwide Mothers' Union was £226.
- MU supported the MU Summer of Hope Appeal. The Christmas Appeal benefitted from our Advent Deanery Raffle. This Appeal was to empower literacy amongst women. (480 million women around the world can't read or write. Which means they can't register the birth of their child, read a medicine

bottle, open a bank account and gain independence.)

- 43 baby hats (including 21 special premature baby hats) were delivered to the Maternity Unit at Arrowe Park Hospital.
- Mothers' Union worked in partnership with Kidsbank in Chester, which is a local faith-based registered charity supporting families. They collect new and pre-loved items for babies and children, distributing them to families in Cheshire and Flintshire. These families face challenges like homelessness, unemployment, high living costs and domestic violence.
- Neston Mothers' Union now have 29 members for 2025. We welcome new members.
- Angela Klabou has now stood down after 6 years as Branch Leader and Diane Millington has taken over.
- The MU Stay & Play team run this ever-growing group. There are 25-30 children attending regularly with parents and grandparents. The aim is to share the love of Jesus with these families in all we do with them. It's a wonderful, friendly outreach for the Church and Mothers' Union. Friday morning is their church. We have a Bible story, action songs and prayers. At Easter and Christmas, MU gives them children's books about these events.

Outward Giving

- Neston PCC was unable to give unrestricted gifted income to local and overseas charities in 2024.
- The Parish Website: Neston PCC continued to maintain our web presence with information about our services and activities on

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

- Prayer & Action pew sheets are a valuable, informative, and important weekly flyer of group activities, and weekly service information keeping everyone updated. Approx. 90% of these are now emailed weekly or posted to members of the congregation and others interested in our work, mainly in the town.
- During 2024, we were assisted by retired priests in holding our services including Revd Maureen Hobbs, Revd Frances Skinner and Revd Richard Skinner.
- Lesley Irvin continued her work as Licensed Pastoral Worker.
- Elizabeth Joyce is a Reader Emeritus and leads services in all our churches.
- Tony Cooke is a Reader, working in the parish for about 6 months each year.
- Richard Lewis and John Hart are Readers and lead services, in all our churches.
- Val Johnson and Carol Stott were trained by Chester Diocese and qualified as OWLs (Occasional Worship Leaders) – an initiative by the diocese that started in 2024.

Ecumenical work

Neston and District Churches Together (NDCT)

- We have continued in our support of NDCT and have attended their regular meetings and their Service for Christian Unity in January, the Christian Aid Service in May and the Service for One World Week in October. We have also hosted in rotation a number of prayer breakfasts at St Michael's.
- Open the Book taking Bible Stories back into school assemblies is gaining

strength and the teams include members of our congregations.

- Christian Aid is promoted and maintaining the Fair-Trade status of Neston is encouraged.
- Member churches operate Warm Hubs on a number of days through out each week.
- NDCT also have a representative on the Neston and Willaston Community Partnership Steering Group. This group focuses on mental wellbeing, children and young people and the wellbeing of our older citizens.

ANNUAL REPORT 2024: FINANCES

The funds available to the parish consist of:

1. Our General Fund where general income and expenditure go in and out. The overall balance of this is our "General Reserve."
2. Other "Restricted" Funds which are reserves which can only be used for particular purposes.

It is the policy of the PCC to hold enough General Reserves to cover three months' running costs.

SUMMARY

Our running costs exceeded our general income by more than £22,400 (2023 £16,500). This excludes significant repairs to the Parish Church roof costing £28,200.

Other funds have been used to subsidise the running costs of the parish, as explained later in these notes.

The PCC's largest item of expenditure is Parish Share which is paid to Chester Diocese:

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Trustees' Report for 2024**

2022	£69,666.60
2023	£71,756.64
2024	£75,344.40
2025	£77,604.72

19 provided £26,195 (50% of the total)

The average standing order was £46 per month.

Electricity, gas & water is the third largest area of expenditure. The cost of these increased by one third during 2024, and are 82% higher than 2022.

PLANNED GIVING

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

2019	£49,389.84
2020	£47,215.35
2021	£59,001.87
2022	£56,829.32
2023	£57,613.97
2024	£62,375.86

There are around 100 people involved in planned giving, and so far around a third have responded to the request at the end of 2024 to increase giving.

The majority of planned givers use monthly standing orders. A review of the 2024 standing orders revealed:

Monthly Amount	No. of Standing Orders	Total Amount
£0 - £22	32	£5,263
£22 - £43	29	£11,375
£43 - £65	15	£9,306
£65 - £87	8	£7,270
£87 - £130	7	£8,455
£130 - £328	<u>4</u>	<u>£10,470</u>
Total	95	£52,139

Of the planned giving standing orders:

76 provided £25,944 (50% of the total)

GAS, ELECTRICITY & WATER

2022	Parish Church	£8,042.43
	St Michael's	£2,475.73
	St Thomas'	<u>£934.93</u>
		<u>£11,453.09</u>

2023	Parish Church	£10,337.53
	St Michael's	£2,923.22
	St Thomas'	<u>£1,945.65</u>
		<u>£15,206.40</u>

2024	Parish Church	£13,336.19
	St Michael's	£5,921.96*
	St Thomas'	<u>£1,582.58</u>
		<u>£20,840.73</u>

*includes gas of £4,048.78 from 2 July 2023 to 31 May 2024

USE OF OTHER FUNDS TO SUBSIDISE THE GENERAL RUNNING COSTS

1. Part of the Parish Church's energy & water costs have been paid using monies totalling **£5,904.30** withdrawn from the Betty Smith legacy investment.
2. Significant repairs to the Parish Church roof totalling **£28,191.95**, and other repairs to the building of **£3,301.99**, were paid for by the Morris Legacy.
3. Repairs to buildings and car parks, pruning of trees, and improvements to sound systems totalling **£16,017.57** were paid for by the Vision Fund.

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This subsidising of the General Fund from other funds results in a picture as follows:

Income	£134,624.26
Expenditure	£131,846.23*
Surplus	£2,778.03

* Expenditure excludes amounts paid from other funds as detailed above.

It is the policy of the PCC to hold enough General Reserves to cover three months' running costs. Based on expenditure during 2024, excluding the Parish Church roof repairs, this threshold is £39,500.

In the course of 2024, the General Reserve increased from £37,500 to £41,000, by using restricted legacies and the Vision Fund where possible to subsidise the running costs of the Parish.

BETTY SMITH LEGACY INVESTMENT

The value of the investment at the end of December 2024 was £189,582, an increase of 2.7% compared to the December 2023 value of £184,584.

Lump sum withdrawals from this investment are likely in the short term to fund large projects at the Parish Church, such as replacing the external ramp.

OTHER RESERVES

A summary of the PCC's reserves is included in the notes to the accounts.

The largest restricted reserves of the PCC at the end of 2024 were:

- Vision Fund £72,056
- Hillcrest (including Robert Hamilton) Curacy Fund £29,086

- Morris Legacy for the Parish Church £28,637

The Vision Fund is available for a 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

During 2024, in line with Diocese of Chester guidelines, Neston Parish has a Safeguarding Officer for Neston Parish, Liz Ledsham.

- At the beginning of 2024 she arranged and held a basic safeguarding training session with Amanda Donelan, DBS lead recruiter, at St Michaels. The turnout was 23 and the training was well received.

On-line training During 2024, Volunteers accessing the CofE training portal has resulted in 3 volunteers completing the Basic training, 6 people completing the Foundation, 1 Leadership, 6 Domestic Abuse, 1 Safer Recruitment.

DBS Checks 4 DBS checks have been completed locally by the DBS Lead Recruiter. Other Diocese DBS renewals have also taken place

CoE Dashboard system.

- Neston was one of the first of 81 parishes (265 Invited) to sign up to the

Neston Parochial Church Council Trustees' Report for 2024

Safeguarding Dashboard. The Dashboard is designed to make life simpler and provide a way of checking that the parish has everything in place regarding its safeguarding procedures. There are three levels to complete, level 1 being the first. It also has a traffic light system to show if the Parish is succeeding and has everything in place, needs work or is failing. There are 7 different sections, and these are being added to at each level. It is a way of auditing what is already in place, what needs doing and when things need reviewing.

- The PCC agreed and authorised Level 1 Dashboard Safeguarding Action Plan October 2024
- Level One Safer Foundations of the Dashboard has been completed.
- We are currently working through Level 2 and Level 3. Level 2 covers Safer Foundations and Safer Activities
- The Dashboard has thrown up areas that the Parish needs to put in place to complete level 2 and 3. Some of these have already been completed in the past 12 months.
 - A Recruitment of Offenders Policy is now in place and authorised by the PCC.
 - Safer Recruitment Policy, written and awaiting PCCs approval
 - List of 9 Church Activities to be included on the Dashboard agreed by the PCC
 - Insurance Check against listed activities has been completed by the Secretary
 - PCC agreed that all new volunteers will follow C of E Safer recruitment procedures when they start to volunteer in any of the 9 activities, including 2 references plus the other safer recruitment procedures.

Where a DBS is required for the volunteer role, they have to complete the DBS check and Safeguard training before starting in the volunteer role. (Not all roles require DBS checks or Safeguarding Training)

- All 9 listed Parish activities on the Dashboard each need a risk assessment completed for their activity and role descriptions written for volunteer roles. All volunteers should also have a copy of the role description. This is part of Level 2 on the Dashboard and is yet to be completed.
- The Dashboard also alerts the Parish to procedures that need reviewing and has alerted the PCC for the need to review its procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns.

The Hub The Parish was invited and is now registered to use the new Hub. The Hub keeps a record of the Parish Safeguarding training and DBS checks for volunteers and any renewal dates. This will be a very useful tool in the future and will have the ability to run off reports as well as alerts when DBS checks need renewing.

New Organisations using Church Premises St Thomas's has a new organisation using the premises and all the paperwork regarding acceptance of Parish safeguarding policy has been completed and put on file. I haven't been informed of any other new organisations using Church Premises.

Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations In the previous 12 months there were no concerns, allegations or need to make a report to the Diocese Safeguarding Team.

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Audits With the dashboard in place there is no need for future audits.

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 (as amended in 2022)

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 2024, there were 201 people on the Electoral Roll. About 20 members attended the meeting.

The members of the PCC in December 2024 were:

Clergy: Revd Kevin Crinks (Chair)

Churchwardens: Marion Forshaw; Linda Haigh

PCC Secretary: Richard Lewis

PCC Treasurer: Lucy Brooks

Trustees: Terry Abel; Lucy Brooks; Alex Cummins; John Hart; Lesley Irvin (Vice Chair); Val Johnson; Helena Jones; Peter Rossiter; Carol Stott; Sue Thomas.

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

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is Liz Ledsham, who has provided reports to PCC, and attended some meetings.

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 4AD;
- 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.
07464 258372
nestonparishoffice@gmail.com