

Annual Report

2022-2023



Parish Church of
St John the Baptist,
Danbury

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE
Revd Canon Jacqui Jones

CHURCHWARDENS
Katie Bird
Alex Cooper

AUTHORISED LOCAL PREACHERS
Janet Arthurs
Jenny Molyneux-Berry

TREASURER
Alan Dixon

PARISH SECRETARY
Nicola Telling

DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES
Steve Arthurs
Alex Cooper

MMU COMPASS CHURCHES REPRESENTATIVE
Alex Cooper

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Arthurs	Michael Green
Sylvia Beckett	Jonathan Telling
Alison Cooper	Paul Walton
Stephen Farrow	

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Sort 20-19-95 Account 90982571

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REGISTERED CHARITY
1130296

Report compiled by Alex Cooper, thanks to all contributors

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AmazonSmile

Unfortunately Amazon has stopped its AmazonSmile programme that gave the church a small donation for purchases made by congregants, similar to easy fund raising. This officially ended on 20th February this year with a final donation payment later in the summer. Since 2021 it has raised over £150, which we wouldn't have had otherwise. A big thank you to everyone who used it.

- Alex Cooper

Authorised Lay Preachers

Nearly 10 years ago we were authorised as Local Preachers by the Diocese following a period of training. That authority has been periodically renewed with the support of the Priest and PCC.

Now that the church has been able to resume live services, we have both preached a total of 9 times at the Eucharist service, and twice at Services of the Word since the last Annual Report.

We have also led Café Praise and given 10 talks at those services, which are referred to in a separate report.

The Diocese emphasises that Authorised Local Preachers are part of the preaching ministry within the church. We are very pleased to be able to exercise this ministry during a Eucharist or Service of the Word, and to be able to work with and support Revd Jacqui in this way.

We continue to attend Preacher Training courses, either in person or online.

A Sermon at any service would usually be based upon the lectionary readings, and in preparation we pray our words have meaning according to God's word. We endeavour to give those who hear us some food for thought for the week ahead, or for discussion in Café Praise, and encouragement in faith.

Last year we also led a Lent Group and there is a separate report on this. In all our work we are grateful for the support of Revd Jacqui, the Churchwardens, Paul Hagger and the PCC.

- Jennifer Molyneux-Berry and Janet Arthurs.

Bell Ringers

2022 has been a very busy year for the Bell Ringers, practices have returned to normal except that practices start at 7.30pm with earlier practices for learners starting from 5.30pm, Mike and Cathy also organise practices with tied bells during the week. Ringing on Sundays is generally call changes, plain hunt or bob doubles. There have been several learners during the year including three D.O. E. students. The Association has requested that towers hold a recruiting campaign to "ring for the King", i.e. the Coronation of King Charles III on 15 May 2023.

During the year 2 quarter peals have been rung, one on Saturday 28 May to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Tony Spurgeon, the second on Sunday 18 September, rung fully muffled with the tenor open, In memory of Queen Elizabeth II. Congratulations to Stuart Bird on his first quarter. Both quarter peals arranged and called by Ann Woolley. The Danbury ringers also won the Call Change competition - with thanks to Ann Woolley.

June was the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, with many festivities and Bell Ringing when all Towers were requested to ring. The tower was also opened for the Patronal Festival at the end of June, the weather was kind and several visitors climbed to the top to admire the view

An afternoon outing was organised by Emily Watts on Saturday 13 August, 3 towers were visited in the Northern District - a good afternoon was had by all.

Thursday 8 September it was announced that Queen Elizabeth II had died, immediately flags were flown at half-mast and bells were muffled. Saturday 10 September Prince Charles was pronounced King Charles III - Sunday flags to be flown and bells rung open, Sunday September by 1.00pm bells to be muffled and flags flown at half-mast until after the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II. A lot of hard work for the Steeple Wardens Nick Steinke and Stuart Bird. The Danbury Bell Ringers were pictured on the cover of the ringing world that week.

The ringers were also requested to ring for several weddings during the year, one being on Stephanie Ovenden when 2 quarters were rung by the Sussex ringers. Thanks to Sarah for arranging Wedding Ringing

During the autumn a new St. Georges flag was purchased by the PCC, the flag has the ensign of the Chelmsford Diocese on it - Our Rector Jacqui blessed the flag in the belfry on Christmas Morning

On Thursday 8 December members were told of the death of Mark Spurgeon, son of Tony and Sue, Mark was 51 and leaves a wife and two young daughters, he had been taught to ring by Tony whilst in his teens and had continued ringing at Writtle and Bedford, On December 21st. the ringers heard of the death of Tom Roast, Tom aged 81 had continued his ringing in Norwich where he had lived for several years and was the brother of Joe Roast and had been taught in Danbury by their Father E.W. Roast.

A social Evening was held at the home of Katy and Stuart Bird at the beginning of December members supplied food and a bottle and a good time was had by all.

The bells were rung half muffled for the Remembrance Service in November and open on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Morning.

Grateful thanks to Mike and Cathy for their extra time spent teaching learners during the sit week and on practice night.

Hand Bells 2022, practices began at the beginning of December with two new ringers, 4 venues were visited which included St. Josephs, Julia Wilson and New Riffhams on Christmas Eve. £350.00 was raised and it was agreed to send £400 to Farleigh Hospice.

- Sue Spurgeon

Café Praise

It has been wonderful that in this past year we have been able to return to “live” services in the Meeting Room, instead of recorded services on line. Those who are regulars will know that this is an informal service during which we are served tea or coffee, cakes and sometimes bacon rolls. It makes a change to sit around a table facing others, rather than seeing the back of somebody’s head in the pew in front.

Despite its informality it is still a service which includes Bible readings, a time to reflect on our actions of the previous week, a Declaration of Faith, hymns, prayers and talks. So whilst the service has no set liturgy, unlike the services in church, all the elements of a service are still there. With an added extra – an opportunity for discussion on the readings or the talks. As we are sitting in small groups people are not so shy of asking questions or contributing to the general discussions, and we love the feedback. We all learn something from each other.

Now that we are back in our stride, other people have contributed by reading, leading prayers, a little bit of acting etc. And the children, encouraged by Jenny Hagger, always have a contribution to make, showing us the things they have been making or drawing.

We are enormously grateful to Paul for the music, Alex for the technology whereby you can join us by zoom if you cannot get to the service, and all the numerous people, particularly the Hagger and Cooper families, who prepare the room, make and serve refreshments.

Café Praise is very much a team effort, and it wouldn’t happen without them. It is also a varied service, no two services being the same. So it is flexible enough to be open to new ideas. Please share any thoughts you might have on what you would like to see included, or what you don’t think works, and we will consider any ideas for changes. It’s your service, so don’t be shy, please share your thoughts with us.

- Janet Arthurs, Jenny Molyneux-Berry & Alex Cooper

Chalice & Serving

It is unfortunate that just as we had new volunteers joining the team of Chalice Assistants, a shared chalice during the Eucharist had to cease due to Covid. We have moved on slightly insofar as the bread is now intincted in the wine, so communicants may receive communion in two kinds. However, with the prevalence of Covid still around, I cannot do not know if or when it will be possible to share a chalice. Therefore, there is not a need in the foreseeable future for Chalice Assistants.

So, I would plead with all those who plucked up the courage to become Chalice Assistants, and are frustrated and disappointed to not be able to do so, to now consider being a server. There is, in fact, less for the server to do now that there is no shared chalice.

My heartfelt thanks go to Brian, David, and Samantha who serve at the 930 services, and to Barbara and Sheila who serve at the Thursday and 8am Sunday services. But none of us is getting any younger, and there will come a day when one or more of us are no longer able to serve. It is very difficult now, when it comes to holidays, to be able to cover all the services, so we desperately need more people to share this ministry.

It is a privilege to take part in the service from a different viewpoint and support the Priest in giving Communion. It is really not difficult. Like any new skill, it just needs a bit of training and practice. I would welcome anyone to come and sit with me when I serve to see how it looks and I can explain what being a server entails. You would not need to do it alone and would receive every encouragement from the existing servers and Revd Jacqui. If you are feeling a little niggles of God calling you to volunteer, please come and have a chat to me any time, absolutely without obligation!

- Janet Arthurs – Sacristan

Charity Giving

In April 2015 Anne Alderton and Michael Green put a paper to St John the Baptist PCC looking at the outcomes of a Review of Grants to Charities at that time.

A small committee, made up of PCC members and congregation members, formed a Charity Giving Committee under the chairmanship of Anne Alderton. The purpose being to look at those charities receiving funds from the Church and whether they were still appropriate or whether there would be others more deserving.

The chairmanship was taken over by Rev Clive Ashley, after the sad death of Anne Alderton, and the committee continued to meet to draft a Policy document. The main theme of this document was as follows:

- The appointment of a Charity Sub-Committee
- A long term commitment to give a sum equivalent to 8% of budgeted total of stewardship income
- All donations would be published by the PCC and made known/available to the congregation
- Will endeavour to support charities with a declared Christian foundation
- Monies will be distributed to the chosen charities at the same point in the year
- There will be an annual review of our six chosen charities

This policy was finally agreed at the PCC meeting in September 2016.

The Charity Sub-Committee was reconvened in early 2018 when Sylvia Beckett took over the chairmanship after the departure of Rev Clive Ashley. The 'review' for the current year, 2022, has taken place and the sub-committee decided that the following charities would receive the funding – equal payments have been offered to the following.....

- Friends of Essex Churches
- C.H.E.S.S.
- World Vision
- Janet Muhindo
- St John's Discretionary
- Safer Places (the care of men and woman at risk)



- Sylvia Beckett

Child Sponsorship

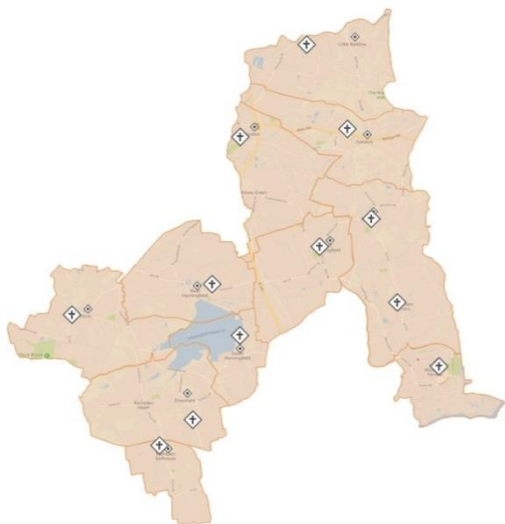
Last September we said farewell to Lakshmi our beautiful girl in Vaishali, India. We had sponsored her for about 6 years from age four. Her letters reports & pictures have been delightful. In her farewell letter which thanked us, she said that her wish for us is that we always help the poor. Her ambition is to become a doctor & we wish her every success.

As one area development project matures & the community left to manage, World Vision moves on to change lives elsewhere. we were given our chance to sponsor Glory who is 4 years old & lives in Thundu, Malawi one of Africa's poorest nations. There aren't enough schools, safe drinking water or doctors, & parents find it hard to grow enough food to feed their children. Our sponsorship will make a significant difference to Glory's life.

Thanks to our PCC for its generous gift of £550 last October to the children & their communities. It was divided equally between Falancia in Mozambique, Jiyaul in Nepal & Glory in Malawi. Thanks too to our regular sponsors & supporters who share this amazing journey with me, changing lives in communities around the world.

- Suzanne Gaywood

Compass Churches



Compass Churches is made up of Little Baddow, St Mary the Virgin, Danbury, St John the Baptist, Sandon, St Andrew, East Hanningfield, All Saints, Bicknacre, St Andrew, Woodham Ferrers, St Mary the Virgin, South Woodham Ferrers, Holy Trinity, Stock Harvard, All Saints, West Hanningfield, St Mary & St Edward, Downham, St Margaret, South Hanningfield, St Peter and Ramsden Bellhouse, St Mary the Virgin.

Since being commissioned in 2018, we have continued to have quarterly meetings to discuss ways we can move our faith forwards together. The weekly morning services on Thursdays have continued, and we are looking forward to more joint services in the future. For details of events at the churches and services we hold together, please visit www.compasschurches.org.uk

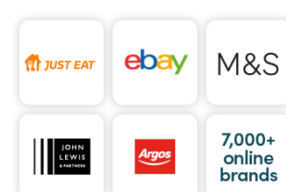
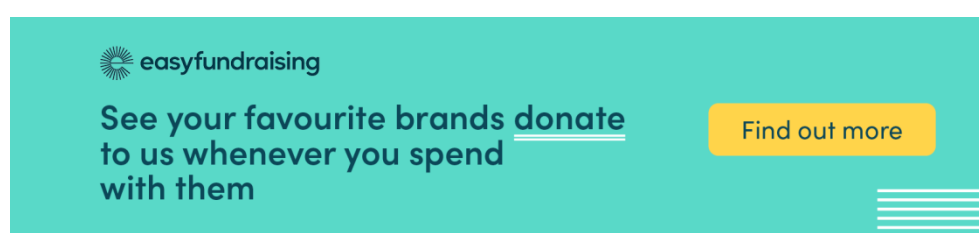


- Alex Cooper

Coop Community Cards, Easy Fundraising

The Chelmsford Star Community Card continues to provide the church with funds which accrue each time we produce our card in local Star Coop stores or in the Quadrant store in Chelmsford High Street. It is such an easy way to help the church.

Our usage seems to have dropped considerably which is reflected in the amount of funds we have been able to claim. Please ask me for a card if you would like to help or if you have lost yours. I have a few available; but unfortunately the Coop is not supplying any new cards. But DO please continue to use the card as much as you can whilst it is still possible to do so.



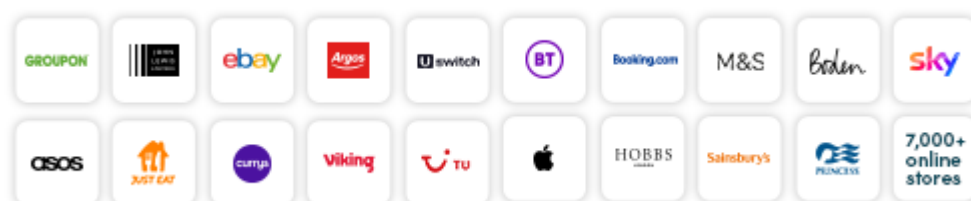
Can I remind you that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for Danbury St John Baptist Church with easyfundraising.

There are over 4,000 shops and sites on board ready to make a donation – including eBay, Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/danburystjb/> and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, the retailer will make a donation to Danbury St John Baptist Church at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

There are no catches or hidden charges and Danbury St John Baptist Church will be really grateful for your donations.



- Sue Ferguson

Deanery Synod

Chelmsford Deanery now consists of the combined North and South Chelmsford Deaneries these constitute a large number of churches of various followings from evangelical to romano/catholic., centred around Chelmsford City centre.

Our four meetings per year are held at various parishes around the Deanery providing an opportunity to meet with members of other churches and compare notes. The final meeting of 2022 took place at the Church of St. Francis, Beaulieu where the old parish of Boreham is being subsumed by the huge new Beaulieu development of thousands of houses. The church there exists as part of a



community centre and is a base for its ever-expanding area and ministry.

Other meetings during the year have introduced us to charitable and missionary organisations providing help for the homeless and less advantaged of the area. We also greatly enjoyed a frank and informal discussion with Bishop Guli where we learned of her early life and her difficult journey to Britain, and her guiding faith.

Deanery Synod and the MMU's control the apportionment of Parish Share (that amount each Parish pays towards funding of the churches within the Deanery). This important part of the mutual support of churches and their Clergy is an essential function of the Deanery Synod, it is becoming fairer but needs to be less opaque. Let's hope that all will be revealed during the next twelve months.

- Stephen Arthurs

Duke of Edinburgh Volunteers

St John's Church has provided supervised volunteering opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh award at bronze (3 months) and gold level (18 months).

The young volunteers and supervisors have helped to remove excess ivy from hedges around the churchyard, clear the ground level gutters and remove leaves and weeds near the meeting room. They also vacuumed the pew cushions and swept the church thoroughly. A volunteer is assisting with Sunday morning services, learning the duties of sidesman and assisting with children's club. They also played the trumpet for Remembrance Sunday and read a lesson at the Christmas Carol service.

These contributions are very much appreciated by the PCC.

- Katie Bird

Events

Summer Fayre and Open Tower.

Thanks to all who helped make this event a success, despite the wind I think everyone had a good time. Well done Jacqui for beating my marble count! Rematch in June? Let's hope for clear skies and sunshine this year.

Church Family BBQ

A sharing of fellowship and food outside in the July evening sunshine.

Jumble Sale

Thanks to all the helpers who set up tables, chairs, sorted clothes, books, toys, bric-a-brac and auction items and helped clear up after the event. There are no plans for another going forward due to my difficulty obtaining helpers. If you would like to run one for our Church, please let me know.

Crib Festival

Our thanks go to Joan Graham for suggesting and running this event. There were a wonderful variety of cribs on display in church and our visitors enjoyed wandering amongst them and reading the descriptions beside each.



Thank you to Father Christmas and helper elf for visiting the meeting room with a gift of a bible story book for each child. Craft activities were undertaken by several children and some older but young of heart. Thanks to the refreshment team for keeping us all hydrated and fed.

Events planned for this year are:
Monthly Lunchtime concerts, see Music Report.
24th June - Open Tower and Summer Fayre.
21st July - Church Family BBQ - TBC
9th and 10th December - Christmas Tree Festival.

If you would like to organise an event for our Church, please let me know.
(See me after a church service or email: alisonjcooper@aol.com or mobile: 07968796805)

- Alison Cooper

Food Bank

12 years of austerity, the pandemic and current cost of living crisis has led to a huge increase in demand for food banks nationwide, currently over 2500% from 12 years ago (Trussel Trust & FullFact). There are now more than 2 foodbanks in the UK for every McDonald's restaurant.

Many individuals and families are struggling to afford basic necessities, including food, due to rising prices and stagnant wages. As a result, more people are turning to food banks for support.

The Church's food bank was started to help this increased demand, but it relies on donations to do so. Without your support, it is difficult to keep up with the growing need for assistance.

All donations to the Church's food bank are taken to Chelmsford Food Bank. Chelmsford Food Bank is a registered charity that provides emergency food and essentials supplies to people in crisis throughout the Chelmsford area. By working with Chelmsford Food Bank, the Church's food bank can ensure that all donations are distributed to those who need them most in a coordinated and effective way.

At our harvest festival, all the items brought and cash from the fresh produce sold after the service was all donated to the Chelmsford Food Bank.

The Church's food bank is doing important work to support those in the community who are experiencing food insecurity. Donations are needed now more than ever to help meet this need. Check in the porch for a recent list of in demand items, but any shelf stable food, toiletries and cleaning products are welcome.

- Alex Cooper

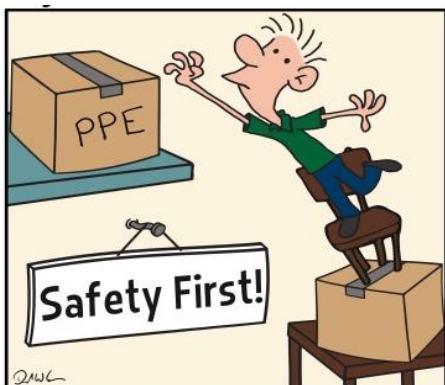
Flower Arrangers

Our challenge in the last year has been learning to arrange using chicken wire for mechanics, instead of water retaining foam like Oasis which does not biodegrade for about 100 years! Following the lead of our cathedral flower guild with advice from the diocese we are being as ecological as we can be, but the angling of stems is impossible. Our congregation may have noticed the change in style due to this element, which is a small sacrifice to make towards saving our planet. We warmly welcomed Teresa & Diane who have joined us, & warm welcome back Jill! We look forward to starting again at Easter. Thanks to the PCC for our flower allowance and to generous donors for topping us up.



- Suzanne & the team

Health & Safety



St. John's continues to be a very safe place to visit. If we consider the number of people who use and visit our church, our safety record is one to be admired. We review any accidents or incidents each month at our Parish Church Council meeting and (if possible) modify the way we do things to minimise the chances of a repeat accident.

During the past year we have only had one incident that was serious enough to require medical

intervention. This involved a parishioner who fell in the Meeting Room. In this instance we improved access by increasing the number of handrails in the area. Since the reduction in covid restrictions, we continue to monitor the rate of infection and reduce contact among our congregation to keep people healthy. One of our Church Wardens, Alex Cooper has been instrumental in keeping us as free from infection as far as possible. We should be grateful to him for his efforts over the last three years.

We should also commend the work of our volunteers', stewards and helpers who keep our congregations safe throughout the year. Their 'special time' and period of greatest worry is Christmas with several very busy services taking place by candlelight. This requires extra vigilance and care to ensure the safety of the increased congregation in low light conditions and the safety of our very flammable building. We are assisted in this by our library of Risk Assessments which catalogue the risks and list measures to mitigate and reduce the hazards, we are still reliant on our people to keep us safe.



The use of the Meeting Room increased during the last year and we now have village organisations and Church sponsored groups using the room for meals and refreshments much more than previously. All users of the Meeting Room have been provided with guidance on the use of the facilities and means of avoiding risk.

St. John's Health and Safety Policy is reviewed, updated, and approved by the PCC each year, the policy aims to be user friendly and not prescriptive, keeping it up to date and relevant needs much thought and research, especially when it seems that government regulations and requirements are constantly changing.

Our quarterly inspections and checks of safety equipment, lighting and access routes continue. These ensure our safety systems are in place and capable of use in an emergency. We also maintain regular checks by external specialists, some of which are a legal requirement. Included are our electrical installations, portable equipment, lightning protection, fire extinguishers and gas and heating systems.



Let's make 2023 a safe, happy, and enjoyable year.

- Stephen Arthurs

Ladies who Lunch

We were very pleased to meet all through the year. We often had lunch at The Bell in Woodham Walter, we also met at The Bell and The Griffin in Danbury, numbers range between six and twelve, all ladies are welcome.

- Ann Poulard

Landisdale Charity

Our Almshouses on Church Green Danbury continue to offer shelter and good quality housing to the needy of the parish. Our constitution requires that only long-term residents of Danbury qualify for this housing. The Landisdale Trust has maintained four Almshouses on Church Green Since 1313.

Based on local need we aim to build a further 10 Almshouses on land off Maldon Road adjacent to Littlefields. The land was bequeathed to the charity many years ago in support of the people of Danbury. Only a small part of the area will be used for the Almshouses, leaving the remainder in agricultural use. This area is known as Sandpit Field. We hope the proposal will be included in the forthcoming 'Danbury Neighbourhood Plan'. Our proposal was well received by the village when it was included in the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire three years ago. The plan is due to be published to the whole village for its approval and comment later this year before it can formally be put forward for adoption.

The Trust welcomes applications from people who have been a Danbury resident for at least 10 years and who are in need of somewhere to live.

The charity also owns and runs allotments on Ludgores Lane. These are used by many local residents to enhance their fresh food provision. Each year half of the small annual rental income from the allotments is donated to St. Johns.

The incumbent of St. John the Baptist, Danbury, is always invited to sit on the board of trustees. All our trustees are local people who try to provide and service to the village.

The address of the charity is:

The Clerk to the Charity.,
Danbury Landisdale Charity,
P. O. Box 933,
Colchester.
Essex. CO3 3TQ.

Applications for consideration for Almshouse accommodation or allotments are welcome to the address above.



- Alison Cooper and Stephen Arthurs

Lent Group

With the generous hospitality of Tiggy Farrow, we were able to run a Lent study group over 6 weeks enjoyed by 7 people. Not everybody could attend every week, but it was good to be able to talk, study and exchange ideas in a relaxed setting.

The book we studied was "40 Women" by Ros Clarke with chapters on 40 women from the Bible. The book looked at some of the lesser known women in the Bible, many from the Old Testament, and some that none of us had ever heard of or knew

anything about! Whilst the book was about women, it was definitely not just for women, and we would have liked to have had some input from a male point of view.

It was certainly a challenging book and interesting to study and discuss.

At the time of writing this report in mid-January, I do not know if this church or St Mary's Little Baddow will be running Lent Courses this year.

- Jennifer Molyneux-Berry and Janet Arthurs

Men's Group

From our Burns Night celebration in January to our Pre-Christmas dinner in November St. John's Men's Group gatherings travel through the year following a seasonal and varied menu.

The Cricketers Arms in Penny Royal Road continues to provide delicious food to our varied tastes. We encourage Eugene the chef to show off his culinary skills and inventiveness. We haven't been disappointed yet.

We select our menu a month in advance to give chef a chance to assemble his thoughts and source the necessary ingredients, which recently included haggis from the Shetland Isles. Although the group usually small in number we are a social bunch and welcome guests and new members who like good food.

Our choice of main course is dependent on an event or the season, and locally sourced food is a favourite. With then number of events coming in 2023 some fine celebrations are on their way.

Our convivial group meet on the last Thursday of each month (except December) to enjoy good food, good ale, good company and good conversation. We are definitely not politically correct and few subjects are closed from discussion.

Our numbers vary between 6 and 12 so we are never overwhelmed, ages range between teens and eighties.

All gentlemen of the parish, their friends and guests will be most welcome.



- Stephen Arthurs

Music

It has been good to return to normality, with our choir back in the choir stalls, singing un-masked. We have continued to provide a solid musical offering week by week with a motet most weeks and, of course, our usual closing voluntaries.

Highlights (and lowlights) of 2022 included:-

- The resumption of monthly lunchtime concerts on the 2nd Friday of each month. We have had some excellent performances by very talented musicians throughout the year. The concerts are regularly very well supported by the village (and beyond). We now have musicians approaching us, asking for the opportunity to come and perform for us;
- A full and exciting programme of music for Holy Week and Easter, extending across the whole triduum;
- Uplifting music during the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This included a lunchtime concert consisting entirely of music that had been performed at the coronation service in 1953;
- An extended choir performing solemn and reflective music at both our Sunday Eucharist and also at a special service marking the passing of Her Majesty the Queen;
- The return of Not the Last Knight of the Proms in November. A large audience attended including quite of a lot of youngsters who were both bemused and entertained by the high jinks taking place;
- A very well attended candlelit service of lessons and carols at Christmas. This service was also live streamed.

The musical offering at St John's continues to be varied, exciting and professional. This is especially gratifying in what is, after all, a small village church in a semi-rural setting. We are lucky to be surrounded by a talented and committed group of musicians that can enhance our worship week in, week out, be it in services or at concerts.

As always, we welcome anyone to our friendly choir, so if you have an inclination to sing, then do step forward. Also, if you have any suggestions of music that you would like to see included in our programme – either at services or lunchtime concerts – then do say.

- Paul Hagger

Mother's Union

We had nine meetings in 2022, June and July meetings were cancelled as it was so hot. We had two meetings about MU, David Whiting took us around Madagascar, we sang our favourite hymns, and heard about Power of Attorney, and had Carols, Readings and Cake in December.

Very sadly John Negus died and is greatly missed.

We have 17 members, most of whom come to every meeting, we welcome visitors to any of our meetings.

- Ann Poulard

Online Presence

Over the past few years, we have all come to realise that "Church" is not just a physical building or a location on a hill in Danbury. It is wherever the congregation of St John's is gathered to think about God. While we recognise that not everyone is comfortable with technology and social media, we have learned that faith can be practiced in new and innovative ways.

In March 2020, when places of worship across the country were forced to close their doors, we found ourselves in an unprecedented situation. As a church that is open 7 days a week, it was a difficult adjustment. As someone who regularly spends time working in the church during the week, you would be amazed how many people just pop in for a brief time.

Initially, we struggled to adapt, but we persevered. We started with a few videos of Jacqui's sermons and gradually worked our way up to a remote service with voice and music recordings. We even spent months with just Jacqui, Paul, and me sitting in a locked church on Sunday mornings. But we never gave up. I hope what people experience now is a relatively slick, livestreamed weekly service, where the at home/on holiday/generally elsewhere congregant can join in, and feel fellowship without feeling the technology getting in the way.

During lockdown we continued to find new ways to connect with our congregation, such as Elaine Mason setting up the St John's WhatsApp group, which is still active today and can be joined by contacting Tiggy Farrow. Jacqui and Nicky continued to email the pew leaflet, which included a reflection from Jacqui each week. And we even started using Facebook as a way to reach more people.

Through all of this, we have learned that the church is not just a physical space, but a community of people who come together to support one another in their faith journey. We may have had to adapt to new circumstances, but we have emerged stronger and more connected than ever before.

With the recent addition of the updated sound system, there are even fewer barriers between us and our worship.

- Alex Cooper

Quadrant Trust



Canon Janet Muhindo is a resident of Kinyamaseke village in South Rwenzori.

She was a teacher by profession, clergy by calling.

Having served the Church of Uganda for over twenty years has now retired to this village.

Janet continues to support the church in Kasese district and she reports over 450 students have now passed through our hands. They come to us when they have lost hope, some rejected by parents, boyfriends, in a real mess, some with malnourished babies abandoned with their mothers! They exit with joy most

having received Jesus as their Saviour others having got one or two skills!!! What joy for me in my old age to see hopelessness turn into unending joy!!

The Covid epidemic greatly affected the education system; closing schools for two complete years. Some classes attended for only about 3 months others for two and that was counted as a complete year.

Following the rain in September many people lost their homes in a mud slide in Kigoro parish just North of Kasese.

I am so much thankful to you and to God who is working through you in a wonderful way.

Rosie Giles shall be visiting Uganda for three weeks in February 2023 and will be working with the Children's Ministry team, will visit Janet Muhindo in Kasese, and Bishop Amos Magezi in Northwest Ankole.

She will be sending us a detailed report in the Spring!

But Janet asks that we pray for them.

She Thanks God for:-

- Your generous continuous support
- Abundant provision of rain and harvest
- The girls who have finished their skills.
- The tanks for harvesting rain water.

- Sue Ferguson

Sound System Upgrade

The church has recently updated its sound system to provide better quality sound for our worship services and events. The updated system includes a new mixer and wireless microphones that enhance the clarity and volume of the sound, making it easier for all to hear and enjoy. It also includes new wired microphones in the nave and chancel to help the immersion of our hearing loop.

The sound system upgrade was completed in a timely and efficient manner by the installers from SFL, with minimal disruption to the church's activities. The new sound system has been well received by the congregation and has helped to enhance the worship experience.

In addition to the sound system upgrade, the church has also updated its audio and video recording capabilities. This allows us to record and share our services and events online, making them accessible to those who are unable to attend in person. The new recording equipment has also made it easier to live stream our services and events, reaching a wider audience.

This has been made possible by the generous donation from the family of Pam Walton, in her honour.

In conclusion, the sound system upgrade and recording capabilities have greatly improved the audio quality and accessibility of our worship services and events. We look forward to continued use and improvement of these resources to serve our congregation.

- Alex Cooper

Sunday Club

Our Childrens' Club continues to be well supported by a core group of children and their guardians on the 2nd Sunday of the month. We also make a similar provision at the Café Praise service on the 4th Sunday of the month. On the 2nd Sunday the service in church is projected onto a screen in the meeting room so that parents can participate in the service whilst attending to their children. We try to ensure that the childrens' activities reflect the liturgy on any particular Sunday. The children do enjoy joining the congregation in church at communion, staying until the end of the service.

If you want to join our worship but are concerned about keeping your children occupied, then do come along to the club. If you know of anyone with children that might be interested, then do invite them along. Everybody is welcome!

- Jenny Hagger

Tea & Coffee

We continue to provide refreshments after the main Sunday service each week despite the number of volunteers being rather thin on the ground.

In the past year we have replaced our stock of mugs with bone china mugs that are much prettier and pleasing than those which we previously had.

As always, we are pleased to welcome new volunteers onto the rota. The current group is very small and this is placing quite a strain on that group. Please do come forward and help out if you can.

- Jenny Hagger

Wilding churchyard



Churchyards are important for their habitats and as refuges for wildlife and plant life.

PCC has agreed to leave an area of the churchyard unmown for the benefit of nature until after the Patronal festival in late June. The area will be rotated each year. This year an area to the south of the church was cordoned off with signs explaining why the area was left uncut.

Wild flowers were identified including several plants known for healing properties such as lady's bedstraw, self-heal and yarrow. We also found rough hawkbit, ox eye daisies, ragwort, dandelions and

buttercups, these attracted insects.

Several families joined a summer Bug Hunt event, the adults and children found caterpillars, spiders, wasps, bees, slugs and used Field Studies cards and the iNature app to try to identify them.

Old grave stones offer surfaces for lichens and in autumn fungi can be found in parts of the churchyard.

If you would like to get involved in future please contact the churchwardens.



- Katie Bird



Sidesperson List

Samantha Ball
Clare Collier
John Douthwaite
Steve Farrow
Tiggy Farrow
Jean Hunt
Rachel Perry
Ann Richardson
Nicola Telling

Updated March 2023

Thanks are given to Jamie Morley who has been helping with sidesman's duties as part of his volunteering work for the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

MISSION STATEMENT

Since we have received God's reconciling love through Jesus Christ as Lord, we seek to reach out into the community in love, welcoming all without discrimination into God's family; to proclaim the Gospel faithfully in word and deed; to nurture all in faith and understanding; and to encourage each one to recognise and exercise their gifts, to the praise and glory of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit

Electoral Roll

As of March 2023 there are 98 people on St John's electoral roll, with 38 being non-resident in the parish.

- Nicky Telling

Fabric

2022 began with a backlog of maintenance work due to the impact of the pandemic. Despite the efforts of dedicated volunteers, certain tasks requiring professional expertise and specialised equipment or qualifications remain unfinished. Finding skilled professionals has been a challenge, but we were able to secure the services of a local roofer to repair the church roof and replace the felt on the equipment shed roof.

On May 21st, 2022, our annual workday took place and various tasks were accomplished, reducing our Quinquennial workload. However, larger tasks, such as the high level gutter above the boiler room, require a contractor and scaffold, which we are still seeking quotes for.

Churchyard Volunteer Team

Every Wednesday morning, our Churchyard Volunteer Team takes care of the open spaces and hedges. They have recently expanded the Memorial Garden and have plans to promote wildlife by creating fallow areas for bees, butterflies, and other insects as they did last year. Anyone with an hour to spare is welcome to join the team.

Churchyard Hedges and Fencing

The volunteers maintain the hedges to a high standard and regular trimming keeps the paths accessible and the area attractive. The fence to the north of the church, where an elderly Rowan tree was removed last year, has been filled with a silhouette of a First World War soldier, dedicated in time for Remembrance Sunday. The dwarf wall at the foot of the fence will be re-installed once the base of the Rowan has fully decomposed.

Woodworm Inspection

A Diocesan approved timber expert conducted a thorough inspection of the church roof last year, producing a list of repairs and treatments for affected areas. We are glad to say that these appear to be a lot easier, and somewhat cheaper, than was initially feared. The only part of the church not inspected was the spire, which requires a rope access specialist. Finding such specialists has been difficult, but we are continuing to try and complete the survey to have a comprehensive

understanding of the necessary work which will be done all at once, to minimise disruption. This is made more difficult by having to avoid large portions of the year to protect the bats.

Workdays

We are grateful for the support of Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme volunteers who have assisted with churchyard maintenance. At least one of these volunteers now joins our congregation regularly.

Faculty Applications

2 Faculties have been applied for in 2022/23–

- A one off Faculty to allow for a vertical monument in the current open churchyard, 1B.
- A new faculty is currently being considered by the diocese, replacing the current faculty on what monuments are allowed in churchyard 1B, to allow vertical monuments as well as flat ones.

Future Improvements

Restoring the clock and renovating its face is a major task, but is not currently within our financial capacity and will have to be postponed for the time being.

Finally, our Priest-in-Charge, the Churchwardens and PCC wish to thank our Fabric Officer, Steve Arthurs, our Churchyard Officer Clive Willey and our Treasurer Alan Dixon who work so hard to keep our church and churchyard in such an excellent condition. Visitors to the church frequently praise its appearance and upkeep, with the latest quinquennial report receiving positive remarks from the Archdeacon about its outstanding maintenance.

- Alex Cooper

Safeguarding

There were no reported safeguarding incidents.

The Church of England takes safeguarding seriously and we have a diocesan safeguarding officer see:

<https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts>

The Diocese of Chelmsford is committed, as part of the Christian Church living in the spirit of the Gospel, to protect and care for everyone and aims to be a beacon of best practice in safeguarding. Looking the other way is not an option.

- Ensuring that its volunteers, clergy, advisers and lay people achieve the standards laid down in the Safeguarding Policies of the Church of England.
- Working with individuals who have criminal convictions, or where other safeguarding risks are identified, to ensure that they, and all members of the church community are safeguarded.
- Holding to account all persons responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in the Diocese.

I have completed my Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction Training, as has Katie Bird.

Katie kindly volunteered to help so she can check my and Alex's DBS forms when they are due for renewal.

- Alison Cooper

Accounts

Parochial Church Council of Danbury St John the Baptist

Financial Statements

Year ended 31st December 2022

Summary

Total income for 2022 was £115,044, which exceeded the expenditure of £94,233 by £20,812.

Much of the income comes from the Parish Giving Scheme

Events, which include the Friday lunchtime concerts, the Summer Fayre, Not the Last Knight and the Crib Festival raised over £6,000.

Meeting Room bookings are very healthy raising income of almost £10,000.

Fees for weddings and funerals remain steady at around £9,500

Rental income from the house in Millfields remains steady at £13,200

Donations and Bequests amounted to around £15,000

Our main expenditure is to the Diocese for our Parish Share - £58,662. This will reduce in 2023 to £54,500.

Energy costs, whilst high at over £5,000, are protected at 2021 rates by fixed term contracts which run until September 2024 for electric and December 2025 for gas.

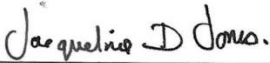
Alan Dixon

Treasurer

Parochial Church Council of Danbury St John the Baptist
Financial Statements for the year ended Dececeember 31st 2022

<u>2021</u>		<u>2022 Funds</u>		
<u>Statement of Financial Activities</u>			Restricted	Unrestricted
	Note	Total Funds		
Income				
£48,059 Planned Giving, collections etc	1	£49,443		£49,443
£3,884 Village Friends	2	£3,500	£3,500	
£734 Events	9	£6,039		£6,039
£1,560 Grants Received	3	£1,560	£1,560	
£9,515 Fees		£9,518		£9,518
£4,407 Meeting Room Income	4	£9,990		£9,990
£13,200 40 Millfields - Rental Income	5	£13,200		£13,200
£2,750 Garden of Remembrance		£3,294		£3,294
£5,905 All Other Income	6	£18,500	£11,515	£6,985
<u>£90,014</u>		<u>£115,044</u>	<u>£16,575</u>	<u>£98,469</u>
Expenditure				
-£2,600 Grants to Charities	7	-£2,561		-£2,561
-54000 Parish Share		-£58,662		-£58,662
-£6,302 Meeting Room Expenses	4	-£6,082		-£6,082
-1129.6 40 Millfields Expenses	5	-£457		-£457
-£1,053 Garden of Remembrance		-£1,338		-£1,338
-£23,075 Other Church Expenses	8	-£25,133	-£5,065	-£20,069
<u>-£88,159</u>		<u>-£94,233</u>	<u>-£5,065</u>	<u>-£89,168</u>
£1,855 Net Surplus/Deficit		£20,812	£11,510	£9,301
Balance Sheet				
Net Assets				
£84,360 Cash at Bank and on deposit	10	£100,303	£83,615	£16,688
-£4,869 Net liabilities due within 1 year	11	£0	£0	£0
£92,000 Property, 40 Millfields	5	£92,000	£92,000	
<u>£171,491</u> Total Net Assets		<u>£192,303</u>	<u>£175,615</u>	<u>£16,688</u>
Funds				
7603.61 Endowment Funds	12	£7,604	£7,604	
64501.14 Restricted - Other	12	£76,012	£76,012	
7386.77 Unrestricted funds	12	£16,688		£16,688
79491.52 Total Cash funds		£100,303	£83,616	£16,688
92000 Restricted - Clergy Housing	12	£92,000	£92,000	
<u>£171,492</u> Total funds	12	<u>£192,303</u>	<u>£175,616</u>	<u>£16,688</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on February 13th 2023
and signed on its behalf by:


Canon Jacqui Jones (Chairman)


Alan Dixon (Treasurer)

Parochial Church Council of Danbury St John the Baptist
Financial Statements for the year ended Deceemember 31st 2022

<u>2021</u>			<u>2022</u>
Total	Statement of Financial Activities		
	Note 1: Planned Giving, collections etc		
		Total	Restricted
			Unrestricted
£38,683	Parish Giving Scheme	£42,625	£42,625
£5,996	Non PGS	£1,766	£1,766
£3,381	General Collections	£5,052	£5,052
<u>£48,059</u>		<u>£49,443</u>	<u>£49,443</u>
	Note 2: Village Friends		
£3,884	Parish Giving Scheme	£3,500	£3,500
	Note3: Grants		
£1,500	Danbury Parish Council: Churchyard	£1,500	£1,500
£60	War Graves Commission: Churchyard	£60	£60
<u>£1,560</u>		<u>£1,560</u>	<u>£1,560</u>
	Note 4: Meeting Room		
£4,407	Fees from Letting	£9,990	£9,990
	Expenses:		
-£1,280	Cleaning	-£1,816	-£1,816
-£2,151	Electricity & Water	-£2,297	-£2,297
-£1,783	Repairs & Mtce	-£66	-£66
-£330	Glebe Rent	-£330	-£330
-£747	Insurance	-£786	-£786
-£10	Sundry	-£787	-£787
<u>-£1,895</u>		<u>£3,908</u>	<u>£3,908</u>
	Note 5: Millfields		
	The PCC owns the curates house at 40 Millfields, purchased in 1989 for £92,000		
	The capital value is restricted to the clergy fund; net operating surplus /deficit is General Fund		
£13,200	Net Rental Income	£13,200	£13,200
-£322	Insurance	-£355	-£355
-807.6	Maintenance	-£102	-£102
<u>£12,070</u>		<u>£12,743</u>	<u>£12,743</u>
	Note 6: Other Income		
£5	Interest	£813	£813
	Donation - Sound System	£10,000	£10,000
	Donation - Majumdar bench	£1,350	£1,350
£2,109	Other Donations/Bequests	£2,615	£2,615
£19	Wall Safe	£132	£132
	SumUp	£1,283	£1,283
£168	Landisdale Charity	£165	£0
£1,400	Covid Volunteers	£0	£0
620	Church Heating Fees	£0	£0
1584	Rectory Car Park Income	£2,142	£2,142
<u>£5,905</u>		<u>£18,500</u>	<u>£6,985</u>
	Note 7 : Grants to Charities		
-£500	Friends of Essex Churches	-£550	-£550
-£500	CHESS	-£550	-£550
-£500	World Vision	-£550	-£550
-£500	Safer Places	-£550	-£550
-£500	Quantock Christian Trust	-£550	-£550
	Discretionary fund, reverse	£564	£564
-£100	RBL Poppy Appeal	-£100	-£100
	The Childrens' Society (Christingle)	-£275	-£275
<u>-£2,600</u>		<u>-£2,561</u>	<u>-£2,561</u>

Parochial Church Council of Danbury St John the Baptist
Financial Statements for the year ended Deceemember 31st 2022

<u>2021</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>
Note 8 : Other Church Expenses			
-£2,990 Insurance	-£3,143		-£3,143
-£2,092 Maintenance/cleaning			
-£2,393 Gas	-£1,812		-£1,812
-£578 Electricity/Water	-£613		-£613
Beetle Costs	-£2,044		-£2,044
-£645 Organ & Choir	-£724		-£724
-£608 Daisy. Telephone and WiFi	-£613		-£613
-£220 Bank Charges	-£267		-£267
-£657 Clergy Expenses	-£1,167		-£1,167
-£4,460 Churchyard & Green	-£2,953		-£2,953
-£4,474 Secretarial	-£4,599		-£4,599
-£300 Church Flowers	-£536		-£536
-£328 Copyright Licence	-£370		-£370
Replacement Sound System	-£5,065	-£5,065	
-£1,270 Glebe Rent & Liability	£650		£650
-£2,059 All Other	-£1,877		-£1,877
<u>-£23,075</u>	<u>-£25,133</u>	<u>-£5,065</u>	<u>-£20,069</u>
Note 9: Events Committee			
Jumble Sale	£318		£318
FOEC Ride & Stride	£53		£53
Summer Fayre	£1,396		£1,396
£629 Tree Festival/Crib Festival	£575		£575
Last Knight Proms	£277		£277
Fri Lunchtime Concerts	£3,421		£3,421
£105 CoOp Star			
<u>£734</u>	<u>£6,039</u>		<u>£6,039</u>
Note 10: Cash on Deposit			
£61,822 Deposit A/C Cent Bd of Finance	£62,635	£75,605	-£12,970
£22,538 Current A/C Barclays	£37,668		£37,668
<u>£84,360</u>	<u>£100,303</u>	<u>£75,605</u>	<u>£24,698</u>

Note 11: Liabilities

The accounts are prepared on a 'Receipts and Payments Basis. Unrecorded liabilities at 31/12/22 relate to uninvoiced gas, electricity and water usage amounting to less than £1200. The outstanding system costs are mainly met by donation.

Note 12: Funds				
	At Jan 1 2022	Income	During 2022 Exp	At Dec 31 2022
Endowment Funds				
Wigan Grave	£6,580			£6,580
Turner Gift	£1,024			£1,024
Sub Total Endowment	£7,604			£7,604
Restricted Funds				
Church Building & land	£33,346			£33,346
Village Friends	£30,736	£3,500		£34,237
Other Restricted Transactions	£418	£13,075	-£5,065	£8,429
Sub Total	£72,105	£16,575	-£5,065	£83,615
Clergy Housing Fund	£92,000			£92,000
Total Restricted Funds	£164,105	£16,575	-£5,065	£175,615
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	£1,327	£98,469	-£89,732	£10,064
St John's Discretionary Fund	-£564		£564	£0
Church Building & land	£6,624			£6,624
Total Unrestricted	£7,387	£98,469	-£89,168	£16,688
Total: All Funds	£171,492	£115,044	-£94,233	£192,303

TRUSTS: WIGAN GRAVE & TURNER GIFT. In 2017 at the instigation of Chelmsford Diocese, the PCC applied to have the capital in these trusts transferred from the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance to the PCC. Sums of £3700.71 (Wigan Grave) and £705.20 (Turner Gift) were transferred in April 2017 and were included as income in the 2017 accounts.

WIGAN GRAVE: The capital sum (originally donated in 1966 by Aline Wigan, widow of Brigadier General J T Wigan) is now held by the PCC. It is for the maintenance of the Church & churchyard so long as the Wigan Grave is kept in good order and repair.

TURNER GIFT: capital sum is for the upkeep of fabric or internal adornment of the Church or any special object relating thereto which may require the raising of special funds; not for ordinary church expenses. The decision as to manner of use is with the Rector and churchwardens.

Church building/land: private donation, bequests, gifts (inc fund raising) given or raised specifically for the purpose

Village Friends: During 2014 the Rector wrote to all households in the parish requesting financial support. The resulting income, much of which is in the form of PGS Direct Debits, which are ongoing into the future, is to be used exclusively for the maintenance and restoration of the Church building.

Other specific grants and donations that have been used for the purpose given. Danbury Parish Council & War Graves Commission (Churchyard), special collections etc

Clergy Housing Fund: Represents value of the curate's house at 40 Millfields at purchase in 1989

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of Danbury St John the Baptist

I report on the attached accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2022, which are set out on pages 1 to 5

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner:

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Act)
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145 (5)(b) of the Act) and
- State whether particular matters have come to our 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 an audit and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has 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 section 130 of the Act and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

Have not been met; or

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



11 Feb 2023

Michael Ovenden
10 Hyde Lane
Danbury