

THE DEANERY CHURCH
OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN,
BOCKING

Parish Office:	St Mary's Church Office, Church Street, Bocking, Braintree CM7 5JY
Incumbent:	The Very Reverend Canon Rod Reid, The Deanery, 59 Bridle Crescent, Bocking, Essex CM7 5XY
Bank:	Barclays Bank PLC, Bank Street, Braintree, Essex.
Independent Examiner:	Jan Stobart

The Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Bocking
is registered with the Charity Commission. Registered No. 1131205

ANNUAL REPORT
AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
For the year ending 31st December 2024

THE DEANERY CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, BOCKING
THE ANNUAL VESTRY
and ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS
May 18th 2025
11:15am

AGENDA

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

- 1. Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting 2024**
- 2. Election of Churchwardens (2) for one year**

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

- 1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024**
- 2. Matters arising**
- 3. Elections:**
 - a) Parochial Church Council members (3)**
 - b) Deanery Synod**
 - c) Sides people**
 - d) Appointment of Independent Examiner**
 - e) Appointment of Responsible Officer – Safeguarding**
- 4. Reports:**
 - a) Churchwardens' Fabric report**
 - b) Church organisations' reports PCC report**
 - c) Electoral Roll Officer's report**
 - d) Deanery Synod Report**
 - e) PCC Report & The Dean's Reflections**
 - f) Annual Accounts for year ending 31st December 2024**

The Deanery Church of St Mary the Virgin, Bocking
Minutes of the Annual Vestry meeting – May 19th 2024

Item	Notes
Welcome	Fr. Rod opened the meeting at 11:38 am and welcomed everyone Present: 31 Apologies: 2
1.Minutes 21.05.2023	The proposal to accept the minutes was made by Steve Johnson and seconded by Alysson Nolan. There were no abstentions or votes against. All in favour.
2.Appointment of Churchwardens	Fr. Rod expressed his appreciation of the support given by both Wardens over the past year and thanked them on behalf of all at St. Mary's. The appointment of Churchwardens for 2024-25: Gill Hunt and Stephen Johnson, both having been duly proposed and seconded in accordance with required procedures, were voted in by all present for the year.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Council meeting – May 19th 2024

Item	Notes
Welcome	Fr. Rod (RR) opened the meeting at 11:45 am. Present: 31 Apologies: 2
1.Minutes 21.05.2023	It was noted that PN had remarked on the state of the Hall windowsills and not of the Church. The proposal to accept the minutes was made by Dave Francis and seconded by Pat Thomas. There were no abstentions or votes against. All in favour.
2.Matters arising	None.
3. Elections	<p>a) 3 members elected last year to sit on the Deanery Synod for the term 2023-2026</p> <p>b) The election of 2 members to sit on the PCC for the term 2024-2027:- Irene Brewer and Jo Mallows having been duly proposed and seconded in accordance with required procedures, were voted in by all present.</p> <p>c) The election of Sidespersons: RR thanked everyone who volunteers for this vital role. All of those who had agreed to remain on or volunteered to join the rota, were nominated by RR and seconded by Nicola Jaynes. All in favour.</p> <p>d) The appointment of an Independent Examiner: The PCC is very grateful for the support of Jan Stobart FCCA, who has agreed to continue in the role of Independent Examiner at St. Mary's, having been nominated by Sheila Johnson and seconded by Monica Cook. There were no abstentions or votes against. All in favour.</p> <p>e) The election of the Safeguarding – Responsible Officer and Assistant RO: Nicola Jaynes and Alysson Nolan were nominated by Fr. Rod and seconded by Tony Everard. The PCC is very grateful to them both for ensuring we are up to date in fulfilling our legal responsibilities as legislation changes over time. They also oversee all GDPR requirements. All in favour.</p> <p>f) C. Barker, Architect, carried out the Quinquennial Inspection of the fabric of the Church.</p>
4.Reports	<p>a) Electoral Roll: As reported on p7 of the Annual Report by Monica Cook, Electoral Roll Officer, the Electoral Roll currently stands at 134, 52% of whom are resident in the Parish. The Roll will be renewed in 2025.</p> <p>b) Churchwardens' Fabric Report: can be found on p.5 of the Annual Report document. It was also reported that an application for a Faculty seeking permission to extend the area for the burial of ashes across the full width of the south wall and to plant a new hedge, is in progress.</p>

Item	Notes
	<p>c) Reports from Church organisations and Deanery Synod: can be found on pages 5-9 of the Annual Report. Additional information was given at the meeting regarding:- p6 a new heating system for the Hall could cost £15,000. Jacqui Hogger suggested that some funding could be available from the Diocese Eco project; p7 RR explained the differences between the roles of the National, Diocesan and Area synods. He then expounded on the coverage and work of the Braintree Area Deanery Synod; p7 RR expressed his gratitude for the hard work and commitment that has gone into making the Friendly Friday Café such a success.</p> <p>Questions raised: i) Is there any news regarding the provision of toilets on site? A feasibility study (a grant is available for this) has to be carried out by an architect, into whether they could be sited within the Church before any application for a new building at the rear.</p> <p>ii) Is there anything to be done about the state of the drainage on the North side of the building? The French drain needs to be cleared and re-instated and the proper provision of downpipes made from the roof. Costs?</p> <p>iii) Could the contact details for those involved in leading the Eco Church initiative be posted on the board in the Hall? Yes. Jacqui will do this.</p> <p>iv) Has the drain from the toilets be cleared? Yes, by a volunteer using locally owned rods.</p>
5)Dean's Report & Review of 2023	<p>Fr. Rod's report and review can be found on pages 9&10 of the Annual Report. He expressed his sincerest thanks to members of the PCC and everyone who has worked to keep the church life at St. Mary's such a strong part of the community. Unfortunately, our link with the parish of St. Mary in Newala has fallen through since the death of Dr. Lawi Issa who was the instigator of the connection.</p> <p>Average attendance by members at the six meetings of the PCC held in 2023 was 60%.</p> <p>He reported that St. Mary's had again met its financial obligations to the Diocese. Also, that the making of prompt and efficient Gift Aid claims has benefited our work considerably. The Dean concluded by thanking everyone for their continued support and commitment to the life and service of St.Mary's.</p>
6)Annual Accounts for the year ending Dec 31 st 2023	<p>Fr. Rod expressed his thanks to Sheila Johnson for her management of the Church's finances in her role of Treasurer and for devoting such a lot of time to keeping things running smoothly. He pointed out that not having a full-time Director of Music during 2023 saved St. Mary's £2,000.</p> <p>He went on to present the Annual Accounts produced by Sheila, to be found on p12-16 of the Annual Report, preceded by the Independent Examiner's statement on p11. He pointed out the £8,000 annual increase in the Parish Share has had to be found from within our resources. Also, that the previous practice of crediting 50% of the fees paid to the Diocese back to the Parish, no longer happens.</p> <p>Total Income and Investments for 2023 equalled £104,101.12 (£153,152.59 in 2022) and total expenditure was £136,839.41 (£118,945.46 in 2022).</p> <p>Carry forward = £385,783.55 (£401,948.31 in 2022)</p> <p>The Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Nicola Jaynes and seconded by Sheila Johnson. There were no abstentions or votes against. All in favour.</p> <p>Graham Shaw proposed a vote of thanks to Sheila on behalf of St. Mary's congregation.</p>

Item	Notes
A.O.B.	<p>a) Bridie asked whether an organ recital might be organised to raise funds? It was agreed that this would require quite a lot of organisation with potentially only small return. It could be an idea for the future.</p> <p>b) Julie asked whether the new hymn books were available yet? The 'Revised English Hymnal' is being appraised but the full set of options for the contents and size of the books hasn't yet been published. The PCC will be appraised of them before any decision is made.</p> <p>c) Pat remarked that the sound system is poor and that people at the back find it very hard to hear what is being read/said. An engineer is going to be invited to quote for an up-grade to the system.</p> <p>d) Monica raised the issue of the cost of flowers having gone up by at least a third. It was reported that ways of supporting the cost of maintaining at least two arrangements would be discussed with the Flower Team, as well as with the PCC.</p>
Closure of the meeting	There being no further questions, Fr. Rod thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 12:45 pm.

CHURCHWARDENS' FABRIC REPORT 2024

The church is a Grade 1 listed building. As noted in our 2024 Fabric Report the Quinquennial Report (QR) advised that the church is "generally in very good condition apart from some minor maintenance work." The Annual Register of Services and Overhauls records that all of our responsibilities are either up to date or actively in hand. This applies to both the Church building and the Hall. This record is available on request.

Church Maintenance -We have followed the (QR) recommendations to ensure the clearing of hopper heads down pipes and gullies, however this is an iterative seasonal task. The church doors have received a weatherproofing treatment of Tung Oil on their external faces and frames. The Bees continue to be a presence in the fabric of the building.

New Church Asset - We have a new church asset which is a Digital Giving Device. As part of the Chelmsford Diocese digital roll-out we applied for and won, one of only 6 of this type of device available in the diocese. We received the device at no cost to us though there are running costs. In an increasingly cashless society the device is more than covering these costs

Church Faculties - A faculty for extending the Garden of Remembrance was applied for on 18/01/2023 and was 'duly authenticated by the Diocesan Court' on 06/08/2024. The area is to be extended to align with the east wall of the Sanctuary and the old hedging renewed. For specific details refer to document : Bocking: St Mary the Virgin (608421): Notification of DAC Advice ref 2023-081442].

Attention is drawn to the detail of the requirements in the faculty which states, The Diocesan Advisory Committee recommendation for acceptance included the proviso, that the Churchyard Policy is to be revised to ensure that the use of artificial flowers, temporary markers, vases etc. is to be disallowed whilst recognizing the need to lay floral tributes which are to be removed after an appropriate time. In addition : The works must be completed within 12 months and the certificate of practical completion is to be sent to the Registry within the period allowed.

We are presently seeking appropriate options for the satisfactory implementation of the DAC Recommendations for acceptance, whilst having all due regard to this sensitive matter, ahead of drafting revisions to the Churchyard Policy which will be referred to the PCC ahead of implementation.

Church Hall Fabric Report - The hall stair smoke alarm has been replaced. The new unit issues a verbal alarm in English and has a 10 year asset life though the batteries will need periodic replacement. The Hall windows have become a priority. Many of the windows are original and single glazed. Many have ceased to open and some are decayed. We invited two local window replacement companies to provide quotations for the replacement of all the windows with double glazed UPVC replicas. Alongside this we were required to apply to Braintree District Council Planning Department. Following our application we were advised by BDC Planning Officers that replacement on a 'like for like' basis is specifically required for this building; UPVC is not acceptable. Following detailed discussions we sought quotations for the restoration and repair of the windows and their subsequent re-decoration. We will seek to spend on the most prestigious windows that fall within our budget. The Samuel Courtauld & Co stained glass window glass is in need of restoration and the frame supporting it is in poor condition. We will seek to find a local specialist firm to advise us regarding the restoration of this window. Hall Electrical works continue to be upgraded in preparation for an all-electric facility. The principle here is to be powered by renewable electricity and continue our sustainable green journey. We anticipate requesting the gas supply is terminated by June 2025.?

The Churchwardens on behalf of St. Mary's PCC

ST MARY'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP 2024

The Fellowship group has had another wonderful year welcoming church members, friends and many from the village to our monthly meetings. We had 10 meetings with a wide range of talks. In June, we had a wonderful coach trip to Bury St Edmunds, everyone had a fantastic time. Our sessions are open to everyone and we would love to see you, every third Thursday in the month, meeting at the Church Hall and this year's outing taking place in September.

Ann Lanham

ST MARY'S BELL RINGERS 2024

St Mary's Guild is part of the Northern District, one of five districts of The Essex Association of Church Bell-ringers which in turn is part of the Central Council of Church Bell-ringers.

We are fortunate enough to have a ring of 10 bells (the majority of village churches has 8, 6 or fewer), the heaviest of which is 18 cwt. or 914kg. They were augmented from 8 in 1973 after many years of fund-raising by the then band of ringers. Sadly, now we rarely ring the 10, usually managing 8 ringers for Sunday service and frequently insufficient attendees for our Thursday practice night. However, we gather bands for weddings and other special occasions but sometimes have to rely on help from other local towers.

While our Steeple-keeper and other ringers undertake ongoing maintenance of our bells regularly we have discovered that work by skilled bell hangers needs to be done to prevent damage, repair existing damage and to improve the "bell-handling" to help make them easier to ring. Some of the urgent work has already been done and some is planned but if we are to contract experts then the costs are prohibitive and we would need to do some serious fund-raising and may need your help. If you would like further information or want to "have-a-go" please contact our Ringing Master, Alan May, on 01376 345290, or 07935344038, or just come up and see us in the ringing room when you next hear the bells ringing. We would love to see you soon.

This last year we rang at several weddings, had welcomed visiting bands. Ringing practise has now become once a month on a Thursday but this has helped increase numbers.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S REPORT 2024

In the last year the Friends of St Mary's have continued to develop the fellowship and friendship within our community and raise funds to support the fabric of St Mary's Church. We started the year with the AGM, a free afternoon tea for all catered by our fantastic committee. That was followed by the usual array of events which included a proposed Barn Dance which unfortunately due to timing we had to cancel, however we plan to bring that back for 2025. The usual array of events followed, many of which will also be returning for 2025, all of which were well supported and all raised money to help look after and improve our buildings.

We were really happy to collaborate with Bocking Theatre Club in their production of Manifesto for Murder and are really grateful for the contribution received from that collaboration. The Friends committee has also been really helpful in assisting with a number of events that weren't necessarily badged as Friends Events. All in all, a great year of fundraising and entertainment.

We've been quite frugal with our spending this year though we do have some significant commitments ahead. As previously mentioned we are to contribute to the re-ordering of the Garden of Remembrance, we also have committed to assisting with the costs of external repairs and redecoration of the hall and the costs of moving away from the continually failing Gas heating to more sustainable electric heating. As usual we have another great year of entertainment planned with concerts, a quiz, the harvest supper and other fantastic social events for your entertainment. I am continually grateful for the help and support of the Friends committee without whom none of this would be possible.

Graham Shaw
for the Executive Committee Friends of St Mary's

CHURCH HALL REPORT 2024

St Mary's Church Hall is thriving with the Hall lettings continue to be strong. We have a number of long-standing regular lessees to which, in recent years, we have added the uniformed organisations of Scouting and Guiding. Both groups are happy to commit to twelve months hire in advance which gives continuity and some security to the ongoing longevity of the Church Hall.

The Hall also provides a venue for the weekly meetings of St Mary's parent and toddler group and the monthly meetings of the Fellowship group. Add in the various occasional hire for Weddings, Baptisms, Birthday Parties etc. we manage to keep the hall occupied and a financial asset to the Church. We are fortunate to be the custodians of a valuable community asset.

The recent works completed, and to continued in the coming year, to maintain the hall will help to strengthen our position as a desirable local venue. Thanks go to the Hall Management for their hard work in ensuring that the hall is kept clean, well maintained and regularly let throughout the year.

Ann Shaw
Church Hall Secretary

FRIENDLY FRIDAY CAFE

The Café continues to be a success and meeting the needs of the local community and further afield. The number of attendees has been increasing this year and towards December the core number reached 35 each week and occasionally more. This is mostly due to word of mouth and advertising through Facebook and Church notices.

The Café runs, every Friday from 12noon until 2.30/3pm and is free. There is a short break for Easter and Christmas periods. A slightly longer break is had in the summer months. A variety of hot drinks can be made as well as squash with plenty of biscuits available throughout the session. Lunch is

served from 12.30pm to 1.30pm with the addition of fresh fruit, yogurts and other desserts offered. From 1.30pm onwards a variety of cakes are available including Hot Cross Buns at Easter and Mince Pies for Christmas as well as occasional donated homemade cakes. We are very conscious of dietary needs; we try to never have foods that contain nuts but always keep the packaging to show anyone who asks.

When we break for the Easter, Summer and Christmas we offer a free raffle which is always popular. This Christmas we decided to do a Lucky Dip Raffle it was great fun. Poor Father Rod was the MC, it went on for quite a while! Various lunch options have been offered over the time as well as soup and rolls, jacket potatoes, toasted sandwiches, beans/spaghetti on toast and pasties.

The Café is not funded, those attending decide to make donations each week, which are used to buy provisions for future weeks. Due to the generosity of those attending a chest freezer was purchased, so not only are we able to buy foods in bulk, saving funds, we are also able to provide ice creams when the weather is warmer.

We had another successful visit from the 6th Form students from Tabor Academy. The students eagerly assisted in getting hot drinks and serving lunch, as well as talking with those who attended. The Café continues to be popular, which shows in the increasing numbers. There is always a 'friendly buzz' in the room with much laughter and arrangements to meet the following week. This is great to hear knowing that this service meets a need in the community. If you want to find out know more come and join us on a Friday 12noon onwards.

ST MARY'S CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER REPORT 2024/25

The Electoral Roll has been renewed in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The Roll at April 2025 consists of a total of 127 persons.

57% (72) of these are resident in the Parish 43% (55) are non-resident

Monica Cook on behalf of St Mary's P.C.C.

BRAINTREE DEANERY

Braintree Deanery Synod is a council of church members drawn mainly from the clergy and congregations in each of the Deanery's parishes. It provides the communication link between congregations, the Diocese of Chelmsford and the Church of England nationally. During 2024, St Mary's Bocking was represented in the House of Clergy by The Very Rev'd Canon Rod Reid and in the House of Laity by Dr Celia Coulson, Jacqui Hogger, and Isabel Adcock. The Synod met three times, chaired jointly by the Area Dean, The Very Rev'd Canon Rod Reid, Assistant Area Dean, The Rev'd Alex Shannon, and the Joint Lay Chair, Canon John Turton. Meetings held in March and October in St Michael's Church Braintree, and in July at Black Notley Church.

Diocesan Elections took place in Summer 2024, following those, Braintree Deanery's representatives for the next triennium are The Rev'd Tayrina Ferguson, The Rev'd Nigel Adams (House of Clergy), and Jacqui Hogger, Isabel Adcock (House of Laity).

Issues considered in 2024

- In March, we welcomed our recently appointed Archdeacon, The Venerable Kate Peacock. Kate gave a little insight into her own journey and roles in ministry before joining the Diocese. She spoke about the power of 'story' and also led some breakout sessions which developed our thinking on church attendance.
- Many will remember that a Motion from this Deanery has previously been shared at Diocesan Synod with a view to it being presented to General Synod. This took place in February 2024, led by The Rev'd Dr Sara Batts-Neale and supported by others from the Diocese. Wonderfully the motion was received incredibly well and went on to pass in all

three houses. Work will now begin on how to bring a PCC Code of Conduct into reality. Members would like to thank The Rev'd Dr Sara Batts-Neale advocating so effectively on our behalf.

- Also in March we began seeking to fulfil a Chaplaincy presence at Wethersfield Reception Centre based at the former RAF base. Following securing Mission Opportunities Funds, we were able to put a role together. We successfully appointed, The Rev'd Melanie Shillito to the role who has an incredible impact in post. Despite facing many challenges, not least from the lead contractors on site, the role has supported many, bringing a number to baptism and a deeper connection with their faith. Further updates have followed through the year including a fuller presentation at our meeting in October.
- Finally, through the meetings last year Synod tasked the Standing Committee with making progress to fulfilling a Deanery Strategic Co-Ordinator. Following sub meetings, and hard work led by the Assistant Area Dean on this, job and person specifications were outlined and we hope to bring this role to fruition in 2025.
- A presentation on the Diocesan Youth Synod in July.
- Updates to each meeting on environmental matters, with many Deanery Churches either working towards an Eco Church award or having already obtained one.
- Regular reports of proceedings at Diocesan Synod and General Synod, and updates on news and events from parishes across the Deanery.

The Very Revd Rod Reid, May 2025

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Members of the PCC are either *ex officio*, are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (ACPM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules or co-opted for a set term.

Ex Officio Members

The Very Revd. Canon Roderick Reid	Dean of Bocking
Rev. Dr. Ian Mitchell	Associate Priest
Gillian Hunt	} Churchwardens May 2024-25
Stephen Johnson	
Isabel Adcock	} Deanery Synod & Diocesan Synod Rep
Celia Coulson	
Jacqui Hogger	
Sheila Johnson	} Deanery Synod Reps 2024-2026
Nicola Jaynes	
Alysson Nolan	
Joanna Mallows	
	Treasurer
	Safeguarding Officer
	Assistant Safeguarding Officer
	PCC Secretary

Elected Members

Irene Brewer	}	until May 2027
Joanna Mallows		
Alysson Nolan	}	until May 2026
Paul Nolan		
Graham Shaw		
Monica Cook	}	until May 2025
Ann Shaw		

The PCC operates through meetings of all its members and through Standing Committee meetings occasionally between PCC meetings. This committee consists of the Incumbent, the Wardens, the Treasurer and PCC Secretary. It has power to transact business of the Council between meetings.

PCC Meetings

The Church Council met 6 times for business meetings during 2024, with a 60% average attendance. All PCC members are required to complete Church of England Safeguarding courses. Financial matters, Safeguarding matters, maintenance of the Church building, special events and outreach activities are among regular agenda items for discussion.

The Church

We continue to be dedicated to using St Mary's Church in the most creative ways we can to worship God and draw others to him through the ministries of stewardship, prayer, teaching and welcome, whilst continuing to develop our overseas link with the Parish of St Mary's Newala and other aspects of the wider Church.

General Finance

In the year 2024, we again met our obligations to the Diocese and parish in full and as usual, the Gift Aid Scheme has continued to benefit our work considerably. We are grateful to those who have completed a Gift Aid Declaration for their giving and to all who contribute regularly and generously through Standing Orders and Weekly Envelopes. If you are a Tax Payer we cannot afford for you not to be in the Gift Aid Scheme!

Dean Rogers Million Penny Fund

St Mary's Church continues to be grateful to the Dean Rogers Million Penny Fund for the payment of the Insurance Premium, details of which are included in the accounts. In what has been a very difficult year, not least financially, these funds were even more important.

Grateful Thanks

The P.C.C. wishes to thank the many, too numerous to mention by name, whose hard work and dedication has meant another successful year for St Mary's Church. We continue to thrive and flourish only because so much is done by so many people in a huge variety of ways and we truly value the contributions made by each and every one. Without so much being done to clean and decorate the Church, provide flowers, music, singing, bells, pastoral care, ministry to the sick and bereaved, take minutes, make coffee, soup and many other meals our parish and its fellowship would be the poorer.

The Dean's Reflections

In September last year, I marked ten years as Dean of Bocking. It struck me that so much has happened to us all in this last decade. Throughout, it has been, and continues to be a privilege to serve you, and the wider parish as Dean.

Each year, we never rest on our laurels, tempting as that might be, but continue to push on by seeking to live out our mission to build up one another in faith, to encourage others into faith, and to be at the centre of this wonderful community. This is a mission led by God, and in partnership with so many. At the very heart though is our rhythm of prayers and services, which are integral to the sacramental nature of our church. It has been particularly encouraging then to continue to see numbers grow, and new people regularly attending. Those special services in the year marked at Easter and Christmas as well as Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance Sunday all being very well attended.

Alongside our worship, deepening our faith and connecting with our faith has been a real theme of the last year. Building on the Steppings Stone course that led to Confirmations in late 2023, Stepping Stones sessions have continued to grow and seen a range of folk coming along from regular attenders of similar style Lent groups, to those who have never engaged with topics in that way before but been regular congregation members. This has been really exciting and encouraging and I look forward to developing that further in 2025.

Being good stewards of our finances continues to be a priority. I am delighted then, not least as Area Dean, that the parish has continued to pay parish share in full. At nearly £60,000 this is clearly a significant part of our expenditure in

a year, and so I am grateful for all the hard work behind the scenes. We have been blessed in this last year to have received a legacy of £15,000 from Angela and Brian Comfort's estate, we have also worked hard to apply for grant funding where possible, receiving £2000 from our local Braintree District councillors, and £1600 from the owners of Braintree Village, previously Braintree Freeport. This has helped considerably, alongside being able to appoint a Gift Aid Officer, to which I am thankful to Paul Nolan for stepping into this role. The quarterly returns that he prepares from HMRC are also helping our finances.

Last year, we also bid for a digital contactless card reader through the Diocese and were successful. The cost of the device would have been over £1000, but it came to us free other than installing Wi-Fi in the church. Since it has been in operation last June we have seen a positive uptick in donations. All that said, we continue to live under financial pressures, costs have continued to rise, and though congregation numbers are increasing, many newcomers are not yet giving at the levels that longer standing congregation members were giving, so we will continue to keep a close eye on our figures.

In the early Spring, our Director of Music, Gareth Bennett moved away to Wiltshire. It was sad to see him go, but we were delighted that he would be nearer loved ones. Since then, we have had a rolling programme of regular organists which has worked well. As yet, we haven't had anyone step forward to take the role on permanently, but for this in between time I am pleased with how it is going.

Our big annual events continued to be successful with another wonderful total from the May Day weekend, we also raised one of our highest totals for the Children's Society with the Christingle Service, and other events like the Heritage Open Day were also well supported.

Of course, in the last year we have also had a number of people from the parish, or those deeply connected to the parish, that have passed away. We remember with thanks; Agnes McCallin, Edna Hurford, Sue Lord and Noreen Watkinson. May they continue to rest in peace and rise in glory.

You will have read about the works to the fabric of the church building in an earlier report from the churchwardens which shows just how well kept our building is. Unfortunately, this has not been the case at The Deanery. In 10 years, there have been three significant periods of work on the house to stabilise it, none have been successful. The most recent works in the Summer 2023 were abandoned part way through leaving bare breeze block walls, cracks in those walls and around doors, some of which large enough for a whole range of wildlife to get through! With partial ceiling damage, damp and very cold, it hasn't been the easiest place to live. All this is in the hands of the Diocese and their Insurers. After much arm twisting a little work was done early in 2024 to reduce the effect of the gaps and try to keep us warmer. We were then promised that the Diocese would not allow us to stay another winter in such conditions. As the insurers continued to slow things down, by early Autumn the Diocese felt they had no choice but to look at alternatives. As a result, in early December we moved to a new property just half a mile away, which has become the new permanent home for the Deans going forward.

This aside, it has been another wonderful year. Seeing Friendly Friday Café continue to grow, expanding the number of care homes we visit with Home Communion services, to the madness that was not only meeting Rick Wakeman but hosting his charity concert late last year. In amongst all of that has been so many of you, but not least the Standing Committee and PCC members who have once again been an incredible support, and offered so much of their own time too, for which I am incredibly thankful.

2025 will be a chance to continue to build on all the success of the last year and I am looking forward to every moment.

The Very Revd Rod Reid, Dean of Bocking, April 2025

NOTES ON THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER FOR THE ACCOUNTS WHICH FOLLOW

We are grateful to Jan Stobart who is our Independent Examiner.

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Parochial Church Council
of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Bocking
(Charity number 1131205)**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Bocking for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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



J Stobart FCCA
19 Westfield Drive, Coggeshall, Essex CO6 1PU
14th March 2025

The Deanery Church of St Mary the Virgin Bocking
Fund movement summary
Selected period: 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Fund	Fund Balances brought forward	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Transfers	Gains and Losses	Journal Entries	Fund balances Carried forward
Buildings - Buildings Capital	1,600.24	—	—	—	—	—	1,600.24
Choir - Choir Fund	280.00	—	—	—	—	—	280.00
Hall - Church hall	(8,304.16)	14,920.00	9,254.97	200.00	—	—	(2,439.13)
DeanRoger - Dean Rogers Million Pennies Fund	112,050.88	281.68	281.68	(15.00)	100.89	—	112,136.77
Fabric - Fabric Fund	251,467.01	—	—	—	5,755.69	—	257,222.70
Fellowship - Fellowship Fund	1,765.22	1,723.38	585.00	(200.00)	—	—	2,703.60
Flowers - Flower Fund	419.94	1,100.83	982.12	—	—	—	538.65
Mission - Funds collected on behalf of other charities	253.53	—	—	—	—	—	253.53
Grants - Grants and Donations	17,757.69	—	—	—	—	—	17,757.69
Retreats - Parish Retreats	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
* Outings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
General - General fund	8,493.20	102,198.14	102,493.25	15.00	—	—	8,213.09
Totals	385,783.55	120,224.03	113,597.02	—	5,856.58	—	398,267.14

The Deanery Church of St Mary the Virgin Bocking
Statement of Financial Activities - summary
For the period from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Total income	102,198.14	14,920.00	3,105.89	—	120,224.03	104,101.12
Total expenditure	102,493.25	9,254.97	1,848.80	—	113,597.02	136,839.41
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	5,755.69	100.89	—	5,856.58	16,573.53
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	(295.11)	11,420.72	1,357.98	—	12,483.59	(16,164.76)
Gross transfers between funds - in	384.94	200.00	369.94	—	954.88	10,435.00
Gross transfers between funds - out	(369.94)	—	(584.94)	—	(954.88)	(10,435.00)
Net movement in funds	(280.11)	11,620.72	1,142.98	—	12,483.59	(16,164.76)
Total funds brought forward	8,493.20	244,763.09	132,527.26	—	385,783.55	401,948.31
Total funds carried forward	8,213.09	256,383.81	133,670.24	—	398,267.14	385,783.55
Unrestricted						
General fund	8,213.09	—	—	—	8,213.09	8,493.20
Designated						
Buildings Capital	—	1,600.24	—	—	1,600.24	1,600.24
Church hall	—	(2,439.13)	—	—	(2,439.13)	(8,304.16)
Fabric Fund	—	257,222.70	—	—	257,222.70	251,467.01
Restricted						
Choir Fund	—	—	280.00	—	280.00	280.00
Dean Rogers Million Pennies Fund	—	—	112,136.77	—	112,136.77	112,050.88
Fellowship Fund	—	—	2,703.60	—	2,703.60	1,765.22
Flower Fund	—	—	538.65	—	538.65	419.94
Funds collected on behalf of other charities	—	—	253.53	—	253.53	253.53
Grants and Donations	—	—	17,757.69	—	17,757.69	17,757.69

The Deanery Church of St Mary the Virgin Bocking

Statement of Assets and Liabilities (by fund)

As at: 31 December 2024

		Balance	Previous balance
Investments			
6420: Dean Rogers Million Penny - Asset			
Dean Rogers Million	Restricted	112,136.77	112,035.88
Pennies Fund			
		<u>112,136.77</u>	<u>112,035.88</u>
6450: CBIFS 11362.08 Units 608264001S - Asset			
Fabric Fund	Designated	257,222.70	251,467.01
		<u>257,222.70</u>	<u>251,467.01</u>
	Investments	369,359.47	363,502.89
Cash at bank and in hand			
6501: Bank current account - Asset			
Buildings Capital	Designated	1,600.24	1,600.24
Choir Fund	Restricted	280.00	280.00
Church hall	Designated	(2,439.13)	(8,304.16)
Dean Rogers Million	Restricted	—	15.00
Pennies Fund			
Fellowship Fund	Restricted	2,703.60	1,765.22
Flower Fund	Restricted	538.65	419.94
Funds collected on behalf of other charities	Restricted	253.53	253.53
Grants and Donations	Restricted	17,757.69	17,757.69
General fund	Unrestricted	8,213.09	8,493.20
		<u>28,907.67</u>	<u>22,280.66</u>
	Cash at bank and in hand	28,907.67	22,280.66
	Grand Total	398,267.14	385,783.55

The Deanery Church of St Mary the Virgin Bocking

Analysis of income and expenditure

Selected period: 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Income and endowments						
<i>Donations and legacies</i>						
0101 - Gift Aid - Bank	19,212.14	—	—	—	19,212.14	16,289.68
0110 - Gift Aid - Envelopes	6,527.71	—	—	—	6,527.71	10,128.22
0301 - Loose plate collections	7,774.20	—	—	—	7,774.20	4,891.55
0410 - Giving through church boxes	768.81	—	—	—	768.81	983.42
0550 - Donations appeals etc	820.79	—	231.68	—	1,052.47	5,650.03
0601 - Tax recoverable on Gift Aid	17,041.32	—	50.00	—	17,091.32	—
0701 - Legacies	2,000.00	—	—	—	2,000.00	—
08A1 - Non-recurring one-off grants	2,500.00	—	—	—	2,500.00	1,140.00
0901 - Other funds generated	2,130.53	—	1,723.38	—	3,853.91	8,985.87
<i>Donations and legacies Totals</i>	58,775.50	—	2,005.06	—	60,780.56	48,068.77
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>						
1101 - Fees for weddings and funerals	19,731.00	—	—	—	19,731.00	18,367.67
1110 - Activities to generate funds	450.00	—	712.83	—	1,162.83	1,861.82
1230 - Church hall lettings - objectives	—	14,920.00	—	—	14,920.00	14,334.00
<i>Income from charitable activities Totals</i>	20,181.00	14,920.00	712.83	—	35,813.83	34,563.49
<i>Other trading activities</i>						
0910 - General Fundraising	10,261.17	—	388.00	—	10,649.17	8,430.47
1220 - Bookstall sales - fund raising	—	—	—	—	—	6.75
<i>Other trading activities Totals</i>	10,261.17	—	388.00	—	10,649.17	8,437.22
<i>Investments</i>						
1001 - Dividends	6,980.47	—	—	—	6,980.47	7,020.64
1002 - DRMPF Contribution to Insurance Costs	6,000.00	—	—	—	6,000.00	6,000.00
<i>Investments Totals</i>	12,980.47	—	—	—	12,980.47	13,020.64
<i>Other income</i>						
1201 - Church shop	—	—	—	—	—	11.00
<i>Other income Totals</i>	—	—	—	—	—	11.00
Income and endowments Grand totals	102,198.14	14,920.00	3,105.89	—	120,224.03	104,101.12
Expenditure						
<i>Raising funds</i>						
1730 - Costs of fetes & other events	1,158.27	—	982.12	—	2,140.39	2,776.03
<i>Raising funds Totals</i>	1,158.27	—	982.12	—	2,140.39	2,776.03

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Expenditure on charitable activities						
1830 - Giving - relief and development agencies	25.00	—	—	—	25.00	25.00
1850 - Home mission	510.32	—	866.68	—	1,377.00	2,483.37
1910 - Ministry parish share etc	57,662.52	—	—	—	57,662.52	56,234.04
2001 - Assistant staff costs	170.00	—	—	—	170.00	280.00
2130 - Parsonage house expenses	—	—	—	—	—	800.40
2301 - Church running - insurance	7,640.77	—	—	—	7,640.77	7,307.63
2310 - Church office - Phone & internet	1,932.80	—	—	—	1,932.80	1,619.80
2311 - Church office Photocopier	4,438.92	—	—	—	4,438.92	4,240.20
2312 - Church office maintenance	75.00	—	—	—	75.00	—
2320 - Organ / piano tuning	478.00	—	—	—	478.00	956.00
2330 - Church maintenance	1,483.32	—	—	—	1,483.32	1,685.42
2331 - Cleaning	879.08	—	—	—	879.08	844.80
2340 - Upkeep of services	3,220.07	—	—	—	3,220.07	3,496.58
2341 - Director of Music & organists	6,370.00	—	—	—	6,370.00	5,680.00
2345 - Bellringers	—	—	—	—	—	100.00
2360 - Administration	923.05	—	—	—	923.05	982.60
2362 - Fees paid to Diocese	9,683.00	—	—	—	9,683.00	24,167.00
2370 - Visiting speakers / locums	108.80	—	—	—	108.80	253.00
2401 - Church running - electric	4,364.33	—	—	—	4,364.33	8,946.24
2410 - Church running - gas	—	—	—	—	—	295.00
2501 - Magazine expenses	—	—	—	—	—	585.00
2521 - Hall Running - Cleaning	—	2,583.40	—	—	2,583.40	2,091.75
2530 - Hall running - electricity	—	2,542.49	—	—	2,542.49	1,950.00
2540 - Hall running - gas	—	3,585.14	—	—	3,585.14	2,322.44
2560 - Hall running - maintenance	—	76.20	—	—	76.20	4,578.86
2580 - Hall running - water	—	267.34	—	—	267.34	453.11
2590 - Hall running - heating and lighting	—	200.40	—	—	200.40	763.70
2601 - Governance costs examination/audit fee	200.00	—	—	—	200.00	190.00
2830 - Hall + interior and exterior decorating	846.00	—	—	—	846.00	731.44
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	101,010.98	9,254.97	866.68	—	111,132.63	134,063.38
Other expenditure						
2402 - Church running - Internet	324.00	—	—	—	324.00	—
Other expenditure Totals	324.00	—	—	—	324.00	—
Expenditure Grand totals	102,493.25	9,254.97	1,848.80	—	113,597.02	136,839.41