

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE

England & Wales · Charity number 1131270

Details

Other names	ST PAUL'S PCC, MAIDSTONE
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2009-08-21
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	St. Pauls Church Boxley Road Penenden Heath Maidstone Kent ME14 2AL
Phone	07419583743
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Website	www.stpaulsmaidstone.org.uk

Activities

Objects: Promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church.

Activities: Religious Activities

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Kent

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£77,598	£71,267	-	-
2024-12-31	£81,543	£72,265	-	-
2023-12-31	£84,592	£87,769	-	-
2022-12-31	£74,526	£65,724	-	-
2021-12-31	£70,222	£63,763	-	-
2020-12-31	£63,377	£109,131	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ANN DENISE LEWIS		2013-05-29
Allert Karel Riepma		2020-10-11
BRIAN COLIN BESWICK		2011-06-03
GWYNETH VESTA MCPHERSON		
JENNIFER ANN TURNER		
Janet Margaret Hudson		2021-09-27
MARK WILLIAM TURNER		
Paul David Hudson		2023-05-14
Rev Claudette Red Gayle		2025-03-24
Rosemary Christine Riepma		2021-07-27
SUSAN EDITH WILLMOTT		2014-04-27

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2025

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of cooperating with the Incumbent or during an interregnum, the churchwardens Mark Turner and Brian Beswick, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Our Priest-in-Charge the Rev'd Claudette Gayle's licensing took place at St Paul's Church on 24th March 2025.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable everyone to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve. We are pleased that the church complex was in use every day of the week by some 27 different groups of up to 50 people. We are pleased that since the licensing of Rev'd Claude, we have been able to serve within the educational community in a more meaningful way. Rev'd Claude has become a governor of the local affiliated primary schools, North Borough Junior and St Paul's infant schools. Her role is further expanded by the increased numbers of assemblies and community events, such as World Book day, Summer and Christmas fairs. St Paul's scout group (beavers & cubs) have made use of our clergy and building to complete their "Faith" badge and this is likely to be a yearly event.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 where all authorised clergy, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCCs must have due regard to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practical guidance).

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

We offer a range of services to suit people of different backgrounds, ages and temperaments. We continued to hold one service at 10:30am on Sunday mornings: Café Worship, All Age Family Communion, traditional Holy Communion and Morning Worship. We also hold some services in the Celtic tradition, which makes it possible to refer to the natural world and our impact on the world around us. On the third Sunday of every month at 9:30am we continued to hold Bubble Church. Those families that have joined us have been really engaged in this short puppet packed Jesus –centred service. Numbers have continued to vary throughout the year.

At present there are 46 parishioners on the Electoral Roll, of which 18 live within the parish.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. The average Sunday attendance in 2025 was 31 adults and 4 children, but this number increased significantly at Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

We are also here to mark the milestones of life through worship. There have been 2 baptisms, no weddings and 1 funeral during the year. Our priest has also conducted one cremation for a local parishioner. Each service in different ways gives people the chance to thank God and ask for his blessing, so bringing human concerns before the divine.

Those who are no longer able to come to church are not forgotten. A dedicated pastoral team visits the housebound in their homes. We have one care home in our parish which is visited when permitted, with residents being offered services at special times. Home Communion is offered to our local housebound members.

Gwyn McPherson ALM (Worship Leader) leads the Café Worship team and some lay services, and has significant involvement with Maidstone Street Pastors and Maidstone Homeless Care.

Jenny Clifton ALM (Pastoral Assistant) in addition to her pastoral ministry and assisting at Holy Communion has continued to lead some services.

Our prayer life continues to thrive. We have jointly held a monthly prayer meeting with St Nicholas Allington, with whom we share our priest in charge. We are looking to re-imagine this in 2026. We hold a monthly after service prayer time to pray for the life of the Church and for the needs of the local community. Jenny Clifton produces a prayer diary each week which gives the congregation and those who access our web-site a focus for their daily prayer. People are encouraged to include prayers for the environment and how the current situation is impacting the world around us. These prayers can also be included in our Sunday intercessions. We continue to encourage small church groups to pray for current issues and for anyone known to them who is in need of God's love and care.

Ecumenical Relationships

We are open to ecumenical partnerships with non-Anglican groups and churches. Rev'd Claude attends the Maidstone Christian Leaders Group which is responsible for organising the town wide carol concert at All Saints Church. This year 250 copies of The Greatest Story Ever Told by Bear Grylls were distributed amongst the congregation.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church. St Paul's is also represented on the Deanery Environment Group. All churches in the deanery continue to work towards net zero carbon and the Maidstone Mission Mosaic.

Church Fabric

Maintenance of the buildings and equipment has continued to be our main drain on funds after the Parish share. Once again costs were incurred during the year for some minor repair work.

Following the discovery of woodworm infestation beneath the stage a full clean and treatment process was undertaken leaving the area free of woodworm.

Patching of the flat roof above the meeting room has not proved successful so we are pursuing a competitive tendering process for a more substantial repair. This is ongoing at present.

The energy audit subgroup has met with Alyne Godfrey (the carbon net zero advisor for Canterbury Diocese) and Kevin Tucker (the DAC secretary). They are providing information and advice to allow us to continue our drive towards improving the heating reliability at St Paul's church while taking advantage of any and all financial help in pursuing these goals with due regard to the diocesan aims of carbon reduction.

Mission and Evangelism

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. Members of St Paul's have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care food bank through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that a husband and wife from the congregation have continued to allow their house to be used as a collection point and they deliver the donations to the food bank

Also the Penenden Heath Uniform Bank, organised and run by another member, continues to operate from the church hall. A wide range of uniform items suitable for the local primary and secondary schools is available at no cost.

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. A weekly update is published by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access) and on the church website. The website is a vital means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news of events and is expertly managed by our Parish Administrator. Importantly there is a designated email link to our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

A number of church groups meet regularly providing full and varied programmes. Everyone is welcome and details are posted at church or on the church website.

The social committee has provided a programme of social events for church members and the local community. These have been well supported and have provided much needed funds for the church.

The monthly Baby and Toddler Group organised by three church members has become firmly established and provides a safe play space for the toddlers and fellowship for the adults who bring them.

The Craft group, Fellowship and Mothers' Union all continue to meet monthly.

A weekly Home Group provides an evening of fellowship, bible study and discussion and prayer.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in different ways, by standing orders, bank transfer and in envelopes. There are few envelope givers remaining. We are very grateful for all methods of supporting the church financially.

In 2025 the total for planned giving was £25,003. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum. Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, including cashless giving, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using a standing order or envelopes.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving reduced to £25,003 from £28,861 a reduction of 13.4%. Collections at services reduced from £3,447 to £2,911, a reduction of 15.5%. The steep decline is of concern as we are not seeing new givers to replace those that have either passed away or left the area.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £ £7,498 (2024 £6,258). An amount of £549 (2024 £1,768) was outstanding on donations received in the year.

Hall Income was £34,993 (2024 £33,220); a 5.3% increase.

We are very grateful to our social/fundraising committee whose efforts raised a net amount of £1,480 (2024 £1,480).

The most significant item of expenditure is the Parish Share, which was paid in full, at £36,532 (2024 £34,859). The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese.

The payments for utilities were £5,662. The total of £ 9,960 in 2024 included £1,424 as a deposit for electricity and gas, which has been returned in 2026. We had fixed term contracts for both until May 2026. We have renewed with Octopus which provides competitive pricing alongside a greater proportion of green energy than many competitors.

The notes on page 3 of the accounts show details of collections for charities, interest and dividends, being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds. The fabric fund is a designated fund rather than a restricted fund.

Repairs and maintenance to the property and boiler were £4,170 compared with £3,515 in 2024. We are always alive to the fact that our 1970's building requires repairs and maintenance and when this is needed the costs can be substantial. We do not have sufficient unrestricted funds to enable improvements to be made.

Excess receipts were £6,331 (2024 £9,278).

Volunteers

Many members of our congregation take an active role as volunteers in different aspects of church and local community life. In particular we would like to mention Brian Beswick who although he stepped back from the formal role of churchwarden this year, willingly continues to carry out many of the duties and tasks.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The council comprises the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, those elected to the Deanery Synod, and other members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church meeting by those on the electoral roll. The PCC co-opted one member onto the PCC. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish and for all financial matters. The full PCC met seven times during the year with an average level of attendance of 70%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of sub-committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These groups met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric (including Eco church) outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN.

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission. Registered Charity Number 1131270.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2025 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Priest-in-charge Rev'd Claude Gayle Chair from 24th March 2025

Churchwardens Mr B Beswick until July 2025
Mr M Turner Vice-Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs R Riepma

Elected members:

Mrs J Clifton ALM Pastoral Assistant
Mr C Gillespie until 11th May 2025
Mrs J Hudson Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson
Mrs A Lewis Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs G McPherson ALM Worship Leader, Parish Disclosure Officer from
21st May 2025
Mr A Riepma
Mrs J Turner PCC Secretary

Co-opted Member:

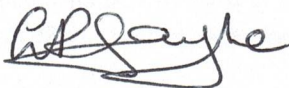
Mrs S Willmott Treasurer

Non PCC member:

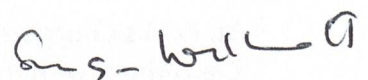
Mrs C Kirrage Parish Disclosure Officer until 21st May 2025

Approved by the PCC on 20th April 2026 and signed on its behalf by

PCC Chair



PCC Treasurer



THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE (Charity Registration No. 1131270)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

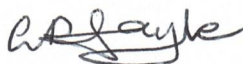
For the year ended 31 December 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2025	2024
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts regular giving						
Planned giving		£25,003.50			£25,003.50	£28,861.00
Collections at services		£2,911.30			£2,911.30	£3,447.40
Gift Aid recovered		£6,729.95			£6,729.95	£5,491.84
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme		£768.01			£768.01	£766.61
		£35,412.76			£35,412.76	£38,566.85
Other voluntary receipts						
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a)	£205.00			£205.00	£790.00
Dontions for flowers		£166.00			£166.00	£303.09
		£371.00			£371.00	£1,093.09
Receipts from activities for generating funds						
Fund raising		£1,678.00			£1,678.00	£1,918.80
Sale of Hymn Books		£1,025.00			£1,025.00	£2,570.00
Hall Income		£34,993.68			£34,993.68	£33,219.92
		£37,696.68			£37,696.68	£37,708.72
Receipts from church activities						
Parochial Fees & Charges		£169.00			£169.00	£448.00
Collection(s) for charity	3b)		£193.30		£193.30	£80.60
		£169.00	£193.30		£362.30	£528.60
Income from investments						
Interest	3c)	£1,408.08	£40.55	£35.39	£1,484.02	£1,461.75
Dividends	3d)	£126.63	£2,109.78		£2,236.41	£2,183.89
		£1,534.71	£2,150.33	£35.39	£3,720.43	£3,645.64
Miscellaneous		£35.00			£35.00	
Total receipts		£75,219.15	£2,343.63	£35.39	£77,598.17	£81,542.90
PAYMENTS						
Parish Share		£36,531.99			£36,531.99	£34,859.00
Clergy expenses		£374.32			£374.32	
Mission giving and charity donations	3e)	£3,144.20	£193.30		£3,337.50	£3,211.10
Administration and cleaning personnel		£12,384.79			£12,384.79	£11,516.16
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.		£687.00			£687.00	£620.00
Photocopier		£815.34			£815.34	
Upkeep of Services		£1,162.92			£1,162.92	£1,296.36
Children's work		£140.51			£140.51	£148.99
Flowers		£122.44			£122.44	£56.70
Gifts/subsidies		£25.00			£25.00	£101.34
Fund raising expenses		£198.24			£198.24	£438.99
Heating, Lighting, etc	3f)	£5,661.65			£5,661.65	£9,960.85
Insurance		£3,174.32			£3,174.32	£3,082.61
Repairs & Maintenance	3g)	£4,170.15			£4,170.15	£3,514.80
Hall Expenses etc		£1,259.75			£1,259.75	£1,780.00
Fees for contactless giving and selling books		£13.99			£13.99	£308.63
Administration & sundries		£706.52			£706.52	£926.91
Parish website		£182.23			£182.23	£142.53
Independent Examiner fee		£318.00			£318.00	£300.00
Total payments		£71,073.36	£193.30	-	£71,266.66	£72,264.97
Excess of Receipts over Payments		£4,145.79	£2,150.33	£35.39	£6,331.51	£9,277.93

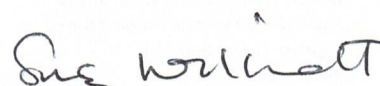
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2025	2024
Opening balances		£37,167.80	£10,544.66	£795.06	£48,507.52	£39,229.59
Movement above		£4,145.79	£2,150.33	£35.39	£6,331.51	£9,277.93
Endowment fund		£35.39		(£35.39)		
Closing Balances		£41,348.98	£12,694.99	£795.06	£54,839.03	£48,507.52
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
Cash Funds						
Current Account		£1,453.16			£1,453.16	£6,626.03
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£131.42)
Cash in Hand					-	-
Fabric Fund		£943.94			£943.94	£849.55
Contingency Reserve Fund	4	£29,133.30			£29,133.30	£27,871.94
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£936.47			£936.47	£895.92
Lloyds deposit account		£9,013.53	£12,694.99		£21,708.52	£11,600.44
		£41,348.98	£ 12,694.99	£ 795.06	£ 54,839.03	£48,507.52
Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable		£549.12			£549.12	£1,767.52
CCLA Interest and Dividends		£304.55	£9.48	£8.05	£322.08	£361.04
Investment Assets at market value						
Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£72,892.78		£72,892.78	£75,928.24
Fabric Fund		£1,916.16			£1,916.16	£1,995.95
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,448.69			£2,448.69	£2,550.67
	1	£4,364.85	£72,892.78		£77,257.63	£80,474.86
Net Assets		£ 46,567.50	£ 85,597.25	£ 803.11	£ 132,967.86	£ 131,110.94

Approved by the PCC on 20 April 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Rev C Gayle
PCC Chairman



Susan Willmott
Treasurer



Notes

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The valuation of investment assets are shown at market value.
- 2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.
- 3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

- 3a) There were no legacies received in 2025 (2024 Nil)

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2025	2024
3b) Collections for charities					
Licensing service		£20.00		£20.00	
Ride and Stride		£140.00		£140.00	
The Children's Society		£33.30		£33.30	
	-	£193.30	-	£193.30	£0.00

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2025	2024
3c) Interest					
Fabric Fund (Designated fund)	£38.64			£38.64	£40.63
Contingency Reserve Fund	£1,261.36			£1,261.36	£1,236.28
Balston Endowment Fund			£35.39	£35.39	£41.39
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£40.55		£40.55	£45.15
Lloyds deposit account	£108.08			£108.08	£98.30
	£1,408.08	£40.55	£35.39	£1,484.02	£1,461.75
3d) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£2,109.78		£2,109.78	£2,060.51
Fabric Fund (Designated fund)	£55.75			£55.75	£54.16
Contingency Reserve Fund	£70.88			£70.88	£69.22
	£126.63	£2,109.78	-	£2,236.41	£2,183.89

Payments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2025	2024
3e) Mission giving and charity donations					
The Childrens Society	£96.70	£33.30		£130.00	£186.10
Bishop's Justice Appeal	£317.50	£20.00		£337.50	
Maidstone Deanery	£200.00			£200.00	
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Ride and Stride	£5.00	£140.00		£145.00	
Homeless Care	£850.00			£850.00	£1,250.00
Maidstone Street Pastors	£500.00			£500.00	£250.00
Princess Project	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
Family Trust (including CAST)	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
Vinters valley Park Trust	£150.00			£150.00	£250.00
Growing Hope Maidstone	£250.00			£250.00	
	£3,144.20	£193.30	-	£3,337.50	£3,211.10
3f) Heating and Lighting payments 2024 included £1,424.67 deposit held by Octopus Energy Ltd for electricity and gas.					
3g) Repairs & Maintenance includes					
D Hudson Advice	£900.00			£900.00	
Woodworm removal	£1,683.60			£1,683.60	
Electrical repairs and maintenance	£292.92			£292.92	
Walling and building repairs					£2,068.80
Boiler repairs	£1,293.63			£1,293.63	£1,446.00
	£4,170.15	-	-	£4,170.15	£3,514.80

- 4 Interest and dividends from the Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds, and interest on the Vicar and churchwardens fund have built up in the current account and have been included in the Lloyds deposit account part of which has been allocated to restricted funds.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2025, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

1 May 2026

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2024

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Church continued to be without a priest in charge throughout 2024. The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent or during an interregnum, the churchwardens Mark Turner and Brian Beswick, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Rev Anthea Mitchell (our part-time non-stipendiary assistant curate) supported the churchwardens until 29th September 2024. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Church Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable ordinary people to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve. We are pleased that the church complex is in use every day of the week by 26 different groups of up to 50 people.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 where all authorised clergy, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCC's must have due regard to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practical guidance).

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

We offer a range of services to suit people of different backgrounds, ages and temperaments. We continued to hold one service at 10:00am on Sunday mornings: Café Worship, Holy Communion and traditional Holy Communion and morning worship. We also hold some services in the Celtic tradition, which makes it possible to refer to the natural world and our impact on the world around us.

This was changed in March when the PCC agreed that the Sunday services would move to 10:30am to enable us to launch Bubble Church on the third Sunday of every the month at 9:30am. Those families that have joined us have been really engaged in this short puppet packed Jesus –centred service. We have even had a Bubble Church baptism and taken a modified service to one of the schools in the parish. Numbers have varied throughout the year but a total of 15 families have come to at least one service.

At present there are 64 parishioners on the Electoral Roll, of which 21 live within the parish. Three names were added during the year and one person moved away to be near his family.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. The average Sunday attendance at the 10:30 am service was 35 adults and 4 children, but this number increased significantly at Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

We are also here to mark the milestones of life through worship. There has been 1 Baptism, no weddings and 3 funerals during the year. Each in their different ways gives people the chance to thank God and ask for his blessing, so bringing human concerns before the divine.

Those who no longer are able to come to church are not forgotten. A dedicated pastoral team visits the housebound in their homes. We have one care home in our parish which is visited when permitted, with residents being offered services at special times. Home Communion is offered to our local housebound members.

Our non-stipendiary assistant curate Rev'd Anthea Mitchell (who is also a minister in secular employment) was very proactive in leading the worship team and implementing much of the worship. She also produced a weekly newsletter which covered a wide range of interests and concerns. Since Revd Anthea's licensing at St Andrew's Barming we have been reliant on a small team of visiting priests to preside at Holy Communion and the worship team has continued to produce a monthly newsletter.

Gwyn McPherson ALM (Worship Leader) leads the Café Worship team and some lay services, and has significant involvement with Maidstone street pastors and Maidstone homeless.

Jenny Clifton ALM (Pastoral Assistant) in addition to her pastoral ministry and assisting at Holy Communion co-led the Celtic services with Revd Anthea. She has continued to lead these services.

Our prayer life continues to thrive. We hold a monthly after service prayer-time to pray for the life of the Church and for the needs of the local community. Jenny produces a prayer diary each week which gives the congregation and those who access our web-site a focus for their daily prayer. People are encouraged to include prayers for the environment and how the current situation is impacting the world around us. These prayers can also be included in

our Sunday intercessions. We continue to encourage small church groups to pray for current issues and for anyone known to them who is in need of God's love and care.

We are very fortunate that we have been able to maintain the life of the church during the interregnum but wish we could do more. Another round of interviews took place at the end of November 2024 and at the end of this reporting period we were still waiting to be told the outcome. St Paul's and St Nicholas held joint prayers asking that after this long wait we would be welcoming a shared priest-in-charge early 2025 and our prayers have been answered.

Ecumenical Relationships

We are open to ecumenical partnerships with non-Anglican groups and churches. Maidstone Street Pastors continues to hold their licensing service at St. Paul's.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church. St Paul's is also represented on the Deanery Environment Group. All churches in the deanery are working towards net zero carbon and the Maidstone Mission Mosaic concept: 'together we are more than the sum of our separate parts'.

Church Fabric

Maintenance of the buildings and equipment has continued to be our main drain on funds after the Parish share. Significant repair costs were incurred during the year for boiler repair and for attention to persistent electrical faults including power feed to the forced convection heaters, one of which needed a full motor rebuild.

Water leaks from some of the flat roofs have been patched and the external baptistry wall has been partially repaired by a builder recommended by our new inspecting architect. We hope this relationship will develop in the future so that small and large repairs as they become necessary can be addressed quickly.

St Paul's registered as an Eco Church through the charity A Roche UK, and this year gained its Bronze award. Following the Church of England's drive towards net zero by 2030 will prove to be challenging but we hope to explore steps towards reducing our carbon footprint wherever we can.

Mission and Evangelism

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. Members of St Paul's have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care food bank through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that a husband and wife from the congregation have continued to allow their house to be used as a collection point and they deliver the donations to food bank

Also the Penenden Heath Uniform Bank, organised and run by another member, continues to operate from the church hall. A wide range of uniform items suitable for the local primary and secondary schools is available at no cost.

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. A weekly update is available by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access) and on the church website. The website is a vital means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news of events and is expertly managed by our Parish Administrator. Importantly there is a designated email link to our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

A number of church groups meet regularly providing full and varied programmes. Everyone is welcome and details are posted at church or on the church website.

The social committee has provided a programme of social events for church members and the local community. These have been well supported and provided much needed funds for the church.

The monthly baby and toddler group organised by three church members has become firmly established and provides a safe play space for the toddlers and fellowship for the adults who bring them.

The Craft group, Fellowship and Mothers' Union all continue to meet monthly.

A weekly Home Group provides an evening of fellowship, bible study and discussion and prayer.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in different ways, by standing orders, bank transfer and in envelopes. There are few envelope givers remaining. We are very grateful for all methods of supporting the church financially.

In 2024 the total for planned giving was £28,861 of which £2,515 was in envelopes. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum. Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, including cashless giving, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using a standing order or envelopes.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving reduced to £28,861 from £29,550 a reduction of 2.3% (2023 increase 6.6%). Collections at services increased from £2,542 to £3,447 an increase of 35.6%.

The total for giving was £32,308 compared with £32,092 in 2023; an increase of 0.7%.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £6,258 (2023 £8,524). £1,768 (2023 £626) was outstanding on donations received in the year.

Hall Income was £33,220 (2023 £32,912); a 9.4% increase.

We are very grateful to our social/fundraising committee whose efforts raised a net amount of £1,480 (2023 £1,421).

The most significant item of expenditure is the Parish Share, which was paid in full, at £34,859 (2023 £34,457). The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese.

The payments for utilities at £9,961 include £1,424 as a deposit for electricity and gas. We have a fixed term contract for both until May next year.

The notes on page 3 show details of collections for charities, interest and dividends, being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds. The fabric fund is a designated fund rather than a restricted fund.

Repairs and maintenance to the property and boiler were £3,515 compared with £18,168 in 2023 when the car park was resurfaced. We are always alive to the fact that our 1970's building requires repairs and maintenance and when this is needed the costs can be substantial. We do not have sufficient unrestricted funds to enable improvements to be made.

Excess receipts were £9,278 (2023 excess payments £3,177).

The second page of the accounts identifies the movement of funds. At 31 December 2024 there was £48,508 (2023 £39,230) in current and deposit accounts.

Fortunately the value of our investments increased to £80,475 (2023 £78,674) an increase of 2.3%.

Adding gift aid recoverable and some delayed interest from CCLA, our total assets at 31 December 2024 amounted to £131,111 (2022 £118,696).

Volunteers

Members of our congregation take an active role as volunteers in many aspects of church and local community life. In particular we would like to mention our Churchwardens and the worship team who have taken on extra responsibilities during the interregnum.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The council comprises the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, Assistant Curate, those elected to the Deanery Synod, and other members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church meeting by those on the electoral roll. The PCC co-opted one member onto the PCC. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish and for all financial matters. The full PCC met seven times during the year with an average level of attendance of 71%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of sub-committees dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These groups met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric (including Eco church) outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN.

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission. Registered Charity Number 1131270.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2024 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Priest-in-charge Rev'd Claude Gayle Chair from 24th March 2025

Assistant Curate Rev'd Anthea Mitchell until 29th September 2024

Churchwardens Mr B Beswick
Mr M Turner Vice-Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs R Riepma

Elected members:

Mrs J Clifton ALM Pastoral Assistant
Mr C Gillespie
Mrs J Hudson Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson
Mrs A Lewis Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs G McPherson ALM Worship Leader
Mr A Riepma
Mrs M Thomas Reader Emeritus until 12th May 2024
Mrs J Turner PCC Secretary

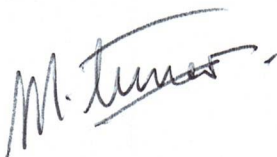
Co-opted Member:

Mrs S Willmott Treasurer

Non PCC member:

Mrs C Kirrage Parish Disclosure Officer

Approved by the PCC on 23rd April 2025 and signed on its behalf by



PCC Vice-Chair



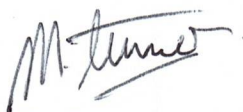
PCC Treasurer

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
For the year ended 31 December 2024

Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2024	2023
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary receipts regular giving					
Planned giving	£28,861.00			£28,861.00	£29,550.00
Collections at services	£3,447.40			£3,447.40	£2,541.80
Gift Aid recovered	£5,491.84			£5,491.84	£7,932.88
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme	£766.61			£766.61	£590.92
	£38,566.85			£38,566.85	£40,615.60
Other voluntary receipts					
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a) £790.00			£790.00	£2,515.50
Dontions for flowers	£303.09			£303.09	£296.50
	£1,093.09			£1,093.09	£2,812.00
Receipts from activities for generating funds					
Fund raising	£1,918.80			£1,918.80	£1,551.10
Sale of Hymn Books	£2,570.00			£2,570.00	£1,681.01
Hall Income	£33,219.92			£33,219.92	£32,912.04
	£37,708.72			£37,708.72	£36,144.15
Receipts from church activities					
Parochial Fees & Charges	£448.00			£448.00	£279.00
Collection(s) for charity	3b) £448.00	£80.60		£80.60	£48.00
	£448.00	£80.60		£528.60	£327.00
Income from investments					
Interest	3c) £1,375.21	£45.15	£41.39	£1,461.75	£442.68
Dividends	3d) £123.38	£2,060.51		£2,183.89	£2,150.50
	£1,498.59	£2,105.66	£41.39	£3,645.64	£2,593.18
Grant	3e)				£2,100.00
Total receipts	£79,315.25	£2,186.26	£41.39	£81,542.90	£84,591.93
PAYMENTS					
Parish Share	£34,859.00			£34,859.00	£34,457.00
Clergy expenses					
Mission giving and charity donations	3f) £3,130.50	£80.60		£3,211.10	£2,687.00
Administration and cleaning staff	£11,516.16			£11,516.16	£11,031.42
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.	£620.00			£620.00	£769.00
Energy Audit					414.00
Upkeep of Services	£1,296.36			£1,296.36	£557.10
Children's work	3g) £148.99			£148.99	£1,879.28
Flowers	£56.70			£56.70	274.80
Gifts/subsidies	£101.34			£101.34	
Fund raising expenses	£438.99			£438.99	£129.77
Heating, Lighting, etc	3h) £9,960.85			£9,960.85	£10,020.20
Insurance	£3,082.61			£3,082.61	£3,035.82
Repairs & Maintenance	3i) £3,514.80			£3,514.80	18,168.04
Hall Expenses etc	£1,780.00			£1,780.00	£2,783.62
Fees for contactless giving and selling books	£308.63			£308.63	£238.01
Administration & sundries	£926.91			£926.91	£905.28
Parish website	£142.53			£142.53	£142.53
Independent Examiner fee	£300.00			£300.00	£276.00
Total payments	£72,184.37	£80.60	-	£72,264.97	£87,768.87
Excess of Receipts over Payments	£7,130.88	£2,105.66	£41.39	£9,277.93	(£3,176.94)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2024	2023
Opening balances		£29,995.53	£8,439.00	£795.06	£39,229.59	£42,406.53
Movement above		£7,130.88	£2,105.66	£41.39	£9,277.93	(£3,176.94)
Endowment fund		£41.39		(£41.39)		
Closing Balances		£37,167.80	£10,544.66	£795.06	£48,507.52	£39,229.59
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
Cash Funds						
Current Account		£6,626.03			£6,626.03	£2,322.62
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£131.42)
Cash in Hand					-	-
Fabric Fund		£849.55			£849.55	£754.76
Contingency Reserve Fund	4	£27,871.94			£27,871.94	£26,635.66
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£895.92			£895.92	£850.77
Lloyds deposit account		£1,055.78	£10,544.66		£11,600.44	£8,002.14
		£37,167.80	£ 10,544.66	£ 795.06	£ 48,507.52	£39,229.59
Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable		£1,767.52			£1,767.52	£626.34
CCLA Interest and Dividends		£340.96	£10.64	£9.44	£361.04	£165.44
Investment Assets at market value						
Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£75,928.24		£75,928.24	£74,229.25
Fabric Fund		£1,995.95			£1,995.95	£1,951.29
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,550.67			£2,550.67	£2,493.59
	1	£4,546.62	£75,928.24		£80,474.86	£78,674.13
Net Assets		£ 43,822.90	£ 86,483.54	£ 804.50	£ 131,110.94	£ 118,695.50

Approved by the PCC on 23 April 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Mark Turner
PCC Vice Chairman



Susan Willmott
Treasurer

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.
- 2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.
- 3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

- 3a) There were no legacies received in 2024 (2023 £1,000)

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2024	2023
3b) Collections for charities					
DEC Earthquake appeal				-	£41.00
The Children's Society				-	£7.00
				-	£48.00
3c) Interest					
Fabric Fund (Designated fund)	£40.63			£40.63	£22.38
Contingency Reserve Fund	£1,236.28			£1,236.28	£361.33
Balston Endowment Fund			£41.39	£41.39	£30.41
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£45.15		£45.15	£26.42
Lloyds deposit account	£98.30			£98.30	£2.14
	£1,375.21	£45.15	£41.39	£1,461.75	£442.68
3d) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£2,060.51		£2,060.51	£2,029.00
Fabric Fund (Designated fund)	£54.16			£54.16	£53.33
Contingency Reserve Fund	£69.22			£69.22	£68.17
	£123.38	£2,060.51	-	£2,183.89	£2,150.50

In previous years interest and dividends in the Fabric Fund have been included in Restricted Funds. However these amounts are Designated rather than Restricted and in 2024 have been shown in Unrestricted Funds

- 3e) No grants were received in 2024 (2023 a Grant of £2,100 was received from the Benefact Trust towards the cost of repairs to the car park)

Payments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2024	2023
3f) Mission giving and charity donations					
The Childrens Society	£105.50	£80.60		£186.10	£201.00
DEC - Earthquake appeal				-	£41.00
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Homeless Care	£1,250.00			£1,250.00	£1,000.00
Maidstone Street Pastors	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Church Army				-	£250.00
Princess Project	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter	£500.00			£500.00	£250.00
Family Trust (including CAST)	£500.00			£500.00	£250.00
Vinters valley Park Trust	£250.00			£250.00	£150.00
The United Society (USPG)				-	£20.00
	£3,130.50	80.60	-	£3,211.10	£2,687.00
3g) Children's work includes £137 for equipment for Bubble church (2023 includes £1,762.38) a new service which commenced on Sunday 17/03/24)					
3h) Heating and Lighting payments in clude £1,424.67 held by Octopus Energy Ltd for electricity and gas.					
3i) Repairs & Maintenance					
Car park resurfacing and marking					£16,368.64
Roof repairs and fees					£1,408.20
Electrical repairs					£391.20
Walling and building repairs	£2,068.80			£2,068.80	
Boiler repairs	£1,446.00			£1,446.00	
	£3,514.80	-	-	£3,514.80	18,168.04

- 4 Interest and dividends from the Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds, have built up in the current account and have been included in the Lloyds deposit account part of which has been allocated to restricted funds.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2024, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

25 April 2025

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2023

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) supported our interim Priest in Charge the Revd. Chris Lavender in promoting the pastoral, evangelistic and social mission of the church in the parish. Following his retirement in February 2023, Rev Anthea Mitchell (our part-time non-stipendiary assistant curate) has supported the churchwardens during the interregnum. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable ordinary people to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

Like every church, we are all too aware that we are not all that we could be. That is why our vision is about *"Becoming Christian Community..."* We are a work in progress, seeking always to better reflect the life of Jesus Christ in our life together, and no truly Christian community exists for its own sake. We are not a private club; of course we do our best to look after our own, but it goes much further than that. Hence *"serving the wider community."*

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve.

The PCC has complied with Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 where all authorised clergy, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCC's must have due regard to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practical guidance).

Achievements and Performance

Reviewing our Church Life, Worship and Prayer and Ministry

Those who come to us for the first time describe St Paul's as a welcoming church which is very encouraging as we strive to make everyone who crosses our threshold feel welcomed and have a sense of belonging.

We offer a range of services to suit people of different backgrounds, ages and temperaments. One service is held at 10:00am on Sunday mornings: Café Worship, Holy Communion (light) and traditional Holy Communion and Experimental Sunday. Experimental Sunday has given lay members of the congregation a chance to become involved in leading a service and to try new ways of worshipping. It is also the space where we can invite guest speakers as we have done on a number of occasions. We have Celtic services regularly too, and have even had a pet service.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. The average weekly attendance numbered 36 adults and 4 children

We are also here to mark the milestones of life through worship. Baptisms, weddings and funerals in their different ways give the chance to thank God and ask for God's blessing, and to bring human cares before the divine.

Rev'd Chris Lavender's retirement in February 2023 has increased the pressure on others especially the churchwardens and those leading worship as we entered an interregnum.

Our non-stipendiary assistant curate Rev'd Anthea Mitchell (who is also a minister in secular employment) has been very proactive in leading the worship team and implementing much of the worship. She also produces a weekly newsletter which covers a wide range of interests and concerns.

Gwyn McPherson ALM (Worship Leader) leads the Café Worship team and some lay services, and has significant involvement with Maidstone street pastors and Maidstone homeless.

Jenny Clifton ALM (Pastoral Assistant) in addition to her pastoral ministry and assisting co-leads the Celtic services with Revd Anthea.

We are very fortunate that we have been able to maintain the life of the church during the interregnum.

We are very excited to be one of the churches chosen to pilot Bubble Church: a short puppet packed Jesus-centred service especially for babies, toddlers and young families. A small team of volunteers attended the first training session at Ascension Church Balham in November and are now planning the launch of this service in early 2024.

Rev Anthea has been in to one of the local schools on a number of occasions, and has hosted the whole of year one from that school in church to learn about Christian practices including baptism, weddings and communion. She is also a governor at this school.

Going forward, the PCC have agreed to share a priest in charge with St Nicholas Allington. A small group of people chosen from within the PCC have completed St Paul's parish profile and liaised with St Nicholas' representatives to produce a joint job description and person specification. All documents have been approved by both PCCs and forwarded to the

Archdeacon. The congregations of both St Nicholas and St Paul's churches are praying that a shared priest in charge will be appointed early next year.

Pastoral Care

St Paul's has always believed that care for others must play an important role in the way we live, and that we should reach out not only to our families, friends and church family, but also to the wider community. We have a dedicated pastoral team, led by Jenny Clifton, our ALM Pastoral Assistant, which keeps in touch with those who live on their own or who are unwell or struggling and we offer home communion to members of the congregation who are no longer able to get to church. We have one Care Home in our Parish and residents are offered visits and home communion. Jenny leads services in the Home on a regular basis, especially at special times of the Church year.

Our prayer life continues to thrive. We hold a monthly after service prayer-time to pray for the life of the Church and for the needs of the local community. Jenny produces a prayer diary each week which gives the congregation and those who access our web-site a focus for their daily prayer. These prayers can also be included in our Sunday intercessions. We continue to encourage small church groups to pray for current issues and for anyone known to them who is in need of God's love and care.

Ecumenical Relationships

We are open to ecumenical partnerships with non-Anglican groups and churches, and this year we have invited guest speakers from Church Army and Maidstone Street Pastors. The Street Pastors also held their licensing service at St. Paul's

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. This year has seen the flourishing of a deanery initiative known as the Maidstone Mission Mosaic which seeks to identify and champion pockets of mission across the deanery, and campaign for funding for these projects from the Church Commissioners, made available through the diocese. The deanery action plan for Maidstone has been produced way ahead of any other deanery in this diocese and we are confident that our funding requests will be approved. For some time, we have been working with the diocesan Mission and Growth Advisor which has been instrumental in bringing together the clergy in the deanery who represent the full breadth of Anglicanism across the ten churches for which they have responsibility. The underpinning rationale for the mosaic metaphor is that, as churches, we are all very different but if we step back and look at the missional action in the deanery as a whole, the different 'tiles' of the mosaic make up a unified and coherent picture of the whole story of God which seeks to serve all the people of Maidstone in the best way possible.

The Deanery Environment Group meets at intervals during the year and is committed to finding ways to mitigate climate change within and around their church premises, and to encourage each other in this endeavour. St Paul's is represented on this Group.

St Paul's encourages its congregation by including prayers for the environment and the natural world in Sunday intercessions and the weekly Prayer Diary, and, wherever possible, a reference in sermons and talks of how the situation is impacting the world around us. We hold Sunday services in the Celtic tradition.

A while back, St Paul's registered as an Eco Church through the charity A Roche UK, and this year a small team from the church have worked through the Eco Church Survey. We have now recorded our initial answers onto the online survey sheet but more research is required in order to answer some of the questions more accurately.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

A number of church groups meet regularly providing full and varied programmes. Everyone is welcome, details can be found posted at church or on the church website.

The social committee has provided a programme of social events for church members and the local community. These have been well supported and provided much needed funds for the church.

The monthly baby and toddler group organised by Anne Gillespie, Margaret Hawkes and Wendy Reeves has become firmly established and provides a safe play space for the toddlers and fellowship for the adults that bring them.

The Craft group, Fellowship and MU all continue to meet monthly.

Home Group provides an evening of fellowship, bible study and discussion and prayer.

Use of the Halls

We are pleased to see that the church complex is in use every day of the week by 22 different groups of up to 50 people. The halls are enjoyed in a variety of ways which we believe contribute to the social well-being of our community.

We see the hospitality that we offer to all who cross our threshold as central to our mission and are always looking for ways to make them feel more welcome. Everyone has access to the worship space whilst the halls are in use.

Care of our building

The building and plant continue to be a significant drain on our resources. In the autumn the boiler required a replacement centrifugal fan which could not be sourced so the old unit was taken away to be rebuilt with new windings. This occurred during a cold period so temporary heating using electric fans was employed and once again the fortitude of the congregation was tested.

The front steps were damaged during the local elections and were repaired and repainted along with other outstanding items from the quinquennial inspection including repointing brickwork and waterproofing a leaky flat roof. These issues are ongoing and will be continued into 2024.

The car park was resurfaced and the lines repainted. The costs were met by successful application of a grant from the Benefact Trust, by fund raising from the congregation with the shortfall made up from our reserves.

Communication

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. A weekly update is available by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access) and on the church website. The website is a vital means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news and is expertly managed by our Parish administrator. Importantly there is a designated email link to our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Church members also support each other using a church WhatsApp™ group and house group meetings.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in different ways, by standing orders, bank transfers, envelopes, and cheques. There are few envelope givers remaining. We are very grateful for all methods of supporting the church financially.

In 2023 the total for planned giving was £29,550 of which £2,449 was in envelopes. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum. Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using a standing order or envelopes.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving increased to £29,550 from £27,724 an increase of 6.6% (2022 decrease 7.3%). Collections at services increased from £1,652 to £2,542.

The total for giving was £32,092 (2022 £29,376, 2021 £30,459, 2020 £35,128 and 2019 £38,786), an increase of 9.2% in the year.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £8,524 (2022 £6,132). £626.34 (2022 £1,723) was outstanding on donations received in the year.

Hall Income was £32,912 (2022 £31,579) a 4.2% increase.

We are very grateful to our social/fundraising committee whose efforts raised a net amount of £1,421.

The most significant item of expenditure, the Parish Share, which was paid in full, at £34,457 (2022 £35,385). The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese.

In August we received a grant from The Benefact Group of £2,100 towards the cost of re surfacing our car park, for which we are extremely grateful. We also received donations from

the congregation of £1,195 towards this major expenditure. The cost of resurfacing was £16,369.

The cost of utilities was significantly higher in the year but thankfully costs will be reduced from April 2024 as new fixed term contracts for gas and electricity have been agreed.

The notes on page 3 of the accounts show details of collections for charities, interest and dividends, being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds.

We are always alive to the fact that our 1970's building requires repairs and maintenance and when this is needed the costs can be substantial. Also, we do not have sufficient unrestricted funds to enable improvements to be made.

Excess payments were £3,177 (2022 excess receipts £8,802).

The second page of the accounts identifies the movement of funds. At 31 December 2023 there was £39,230 (2022 £42,407) in current and deposit accounts and cash.

Fortunately the value of our investments increased to £78,674 (2022 £71,908) an increase of 9.4%.

Adding gift aid recoverable and some delayed interest from CCLA, our total assets at 31 December 2023 amounted to £118,696 (2022 £116,018).

Volunteers

Members of our congregation take an active role as volunteers in many aspects of church and local community life. In particular we would like to mention our Churchwardens and the worship team who have taken on extra responsibilities during the interregnum.

St Paul's members have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care food bank through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that Allert and Rosemary Riepma have arranged for their house to be used as a collection point and they deliver the food on agreed dates.

Also the Penenden Heath Uniform bank, organised and run by John Viner, continues to operate from the church hall. A wide range of uniform items suitable for the local primary and secondary schools is available at no cost.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. At present there are 62 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll of which 42 are non-resident in the parish.

St Paul's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the interim priest in charge, the Revd Chris Lavender (until his retirement) in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church Centre complex of St Paul's.

The full PCC met seven times during the year with an average level of attendance of 78%. Committees met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric, outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN. Registered charity number 1131270.

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2023 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Incumbent Interim Priest in Charge Rev Chris Lavender (Retired 19th February 2023)

Assistant Curate Rev'd Anthea Mitchell

Wardens Mr B Beswick
Mr M Turner Vice-Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs J Clifton Pastoral Assistant (Until APCM 2023)
Mrs R Riepma

Elected members:

Mrs J Clifton	Pastoral Assistant (from APCM 2023)
Mr C Gillespie	
Mrs J Hudson	Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson	(from APCM 2023)
Mrs A Lewis	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs G McPherson	ALM Worship Leader
Mr A Riepma	
Mrs M Thomas	Reader Emeritus
Mrs J Turner	PCC Secretary

Co-opted Member:

Mrs S Willmott Treasurer

Non PCC member

Mrs C Kirrage

Parish Disclosure Officer

Approved by the PCC on 29th April 2024 and signed on their behalf by



PCC Vice Chair

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE (Charity Registration No. 1131270)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS (1)

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023	2022
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts regular giving						
Planned giving		£29,550.00			£29,550.00	£27,724.00
Collections at services		£2,541.80			£2,541.80	£1,652.05
Gift Aid recovered		£7,932.88			£7,932.88	£5,816.76
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme		£590.92			£590.92	£315.68
		£40,615.60			£40,615.60	£35,508.49
Other voluntary receipts						
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a)	£1,320.50	£1,195.00		£2,515.50	£563.00
Dontions for flowers		£296.50			£296.50	£195.00
		£1,617.00	£1,195.00		£2,812.00	£758.00
Receipts from activities for generating funds						
Fund raising		£1,551.10			£1,551.10	£961.00
Hall Income		£32,912.04			£32,912.04	£31,579.40
		£34,463.14			£34,463.14	£32,540.40
Receipts from church activities						
Parochial Fees & Charges		£279.00			£279.00	£400.00
Collection(s) for charity	3b)		£48.00		£48.00	£529.20
		£279.00	£48.00		£327.00	£929.20
Income from investments						
Interest	3c)	£363.47	£48.80	£30.41	£442.68	£170.93
Dividends	3d)	£68.17	£2,082.33		£2,150.50	£2,138.68
		£431.64	£2,131.13	£30.41	£2,593.18	£2,309.61
Grant	3e)		£2,100.00		£2,100.00	£2,450.00
Miscellaneous	3f)	£1,681.01			£1,681.01	£30.00
Total receipts		£79,087.39	£5,474.13	£30.41	£84,591.93	£74,525.70
PAYMENTS						
Parish Share		£34,457.00			£34,457.00	£35,485.00
Clergy expenses						-
Mission giving and charity donations	3g)	£2,639.00	£48.00		£2,687.00	£3,019.70
Administration and cleaning staff		£11,031.42			£11,031.42	£10,539.50
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.		£769.00			£769.00	£702.00
Energy Audit		£414.00			£414.00	-
Upkeep of Services		£557.10			£557.10	£800.54
Children's work	3h)	£1,879.28			£1,879.28	£53.44
Flowers		£274.80			274.80	51.96
Gifts/subsidies						£98.90
Fund raising expenses		£129.77			£129.77	£112.26
Heating, Lighting, etc		£10,020.20			£10,020.20	£6,573.45
Insurance		£3,035.82			£3,035.82	£2,759.74
Repairs & Maintenance	3i)	£14,873.04	£3,295.00		18,168.04	-
Hall Expenses etc		£2,783.62			£2,783.62	£2,944.50
Fees for contactless giving and selling books		£238.01			£238.01	£4.55
Administration & sundries		£905.28			£905.28	£1,171.95
Parish website		£142.53			£142.53	£68.33
Signs						1,074.00
Independent Examiner fee		£276.00			£276.00	£264.00
Total payments		£84,425.87	£3,343.00	-	£87,768.87	£65,723.82
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(£5,338.48)	£2,131.13	£30.41	(£3,176.94)	£8,801.88

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023	2022
Opening balances		£35,303.60	£6,307.87	£795.06	£42,406.53	£33,604.65
Movement above		(£5,338.48)	£2,131.13	£30.41	(£3,176.94)	£8,801.88
Endowment fund		£30.41		(£30.41)		
Closing Balances		£29,995.53	£8,439.00	£795.06	£39,229.59	£42,406.53

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Cash Funds

Current Account		£ 2,322.62			£2,322.62	£28,818.91
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£131.42)
Cash in Hand		-			-	£146.25
Fabric Fund			£754.76		£754.76	£679.05
Contingency Reserve Fund	4	£26,635.66			£26,635.66	£11,274.33
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£850.77			£850.77	£824.35
Lloyds deposit account		£317.90	£7,684.24		£8,002.14	
		£ 29,995.53	£ 8,439.00	£ 795.06	£ 39,229.59	£42,406.53

Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable

		£626.34			£626.34	£1,723.19
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CCLA Interest

		£154.04	£11.40		£165.44	
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Amount owed to USPG

						(£20.00)
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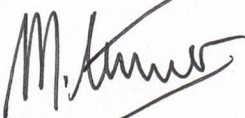
Investment Assets at market value

Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£74,229.25		£74,229.25	£67,846.05
Fabric Fund			£1,951.29		£1,951.29	£1,783.49
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,493.59			£2,493.59	£2,279.16
	1	£2,493.59	£76,180.54		£78,674.13	£71,908.70

Net Assets

		£ 33,269.50	£ 84,630.94	£ 795.06	£ 118,695.50	£116,018.42
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Approved by the PCC on 29 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Mark Turner
PCC Vice Chairman



Susan Willmott
Treasurer

Notes

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.
- 2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.
- 3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

- 3a) A legacy of £1,000 was received from the Estate of the late Mrs G Baker (2022 Nil).
Donations totalling £1,195 were received towards the cost of repairs to the car park.

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023	2022
3b) Collections for charities					
USPG (Ukraine Appeal)				£0.00	£529.20
DEC Earthquake appeal		£41.00		£41.00	
The Children's Society Christingle		£7.00		£7.00	
	-	£48.00	-	£48.00	£529.20

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023	2022
3c) Interest					
Fabric Fund		£22.38		£22.38	£8.57
Contingency Reserve Fund	£361.33			£361.33	£146.37
Balston Endowment Fund			£30.41	£30.41	£5.29
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£26.42		£26.42	£10.70
Lloyds deposit account	£2.14			£2.14	
	£363.47	£48.80	£30.41	£442.68	£170.93
3d) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£2,029.00		£2,029.00	£2,017.84
Fabric Fund		£53.33		£53.33	£53.04
Contingency Reserve Fund	£68.17			£68.17	£67.80
	£68.17	£2,082.33	-	£2,150.50	£2,138.68

- 3e) A Grant of £2,100 was received from the Benefact Trust towards the cost of repairs to the car park (2022 Grant of £2,450 from the Diocese of Canterbury towards heating costs)

- 3f) Miscellaneous comprises the sale of surplus hymn books gross (Net £1,453.93 net of fees of £227.08 which are included in fees payments) (2022 Sale of projector £30)

Payments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023	2022
3g) Mission giving and charity donations					
The Childrens Society	£194.00	£7.00		£201.00	£235.50
DEC - Earthquake appeal		£41.00		£41.00	
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Homeless Care	£1,000.00			£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Kent Workplace Mission				£0.00	£0.00
Maidstone Street Pastors	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Church Army	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Princess Project	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
CAST	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
Vinters valley Park Trust	£150.00			£150.00	£0.00
The United Society (USPG)	£20.00			£20.00	£509.20
	£2,639.00	£48.00	-	£2,687.00	£3,019.70

£20 for USPG had been received in 2022 but not transferred until 2023

- 3h) Children's work
Includes £1,762.38 for equipment, training and advertising material for a new service, BubbleChurch, which commenced on Sunday 17/03/24

3i) Repairs & Maintenance					
Car park resurfacing and marking	£13,073.64	£3,295.00		£16,368.64	
Roof repairs and fees	£1,408.20			£1,408.20	
Electrical repairs	£391.20			£391.20	
	£14,873.04	£3,295.00	-	£18,168.04	-

4

Interest and dividends from the Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds, have built up in the current account and have been included in the Lloyds deposit account part of which has been allocated to restricted funds.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2023, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

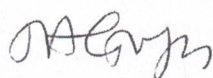
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

1 May 2024

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2022

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) supports our interim Priest in Charge the Revd. Chris Lavender in promoting the pastoral, evangelistic and social mission of the church in the parish. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable ordinary people to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

Like every church, we are all too aware that we are not all that we could be. That is why our vision is about *"Becoming Christian Community..."* We are a work in progress, seeking always to better reflect the life of Jesus Christ in our life together, and no truly Christian community exists for its own sake. We are not a private club; of course we do our best to look after our own, but it goes much further than that. Hence *"serving the wider community."*

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve.

The PCC has complied with Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults).

Achievements and Performance

Reviewing our Church Life, Worship and Prayer and Ministry

The last year has seen the church gradually come to terms with maintaining a breadth of worship post-pandemic, and providing an environment that enables others to assist and explore ministry to one degree or another.

This has been made more possible following on from the ordination to the priesthood of our Assistant Curate, Revd. Anthea Mitchell, in July 2022. Her development has seen her become proactive in the planning and implementation of worship, as well as her ministry in secular employment. It is fair to say that Anthea has found her role within the life of the church to be very rewarding and significant in shaping her own sense of calling.

Within the mix of worship others continue to play a significant part in the provision of a monthly Café Church service that is run by a team with the Worship Leader ALM, Gwyn McPherson.

The pastoral and prayer side of church life is ably maintained by the Pastoral ALM, Jenny Clifton, who produces a weekly prayer diary, keeps people connected and visits Maidstone Care Home on a regular basis.

A monthly toddler group was started in summer 2022 which has seen varying degrees of success. The numbers attending have fluctuated but those that come appreciate the informality and the hospitality. The intention is to continue with this on a monthly basis with Margaret Hawkes, Anne Gillespie and Wendy Reeves as the facilitators.

Our re-connection with the local schools has not really taken place as had been hoped, other than the very occasional assembly.

This last year has been about consolidating the church's position post-Covid and seeking to provide a foundation from which the challenges of the future can be tackled. In September our incumbent Revd. Chris Lavender announced his intention to take early retirement in February 2023. This brought forward by six months the need for the parish to put into motion the process of seeking a new incumbent through the development of a Parish Profile. The PCC will choose a suitable group for this purpose and will be in regular contact with the Archdeacon, the Venerable Andrew Sewell.

As St Paul's enters an interregnum the main question in terms of a new priest will be about how that fits into the bigger deanery picture. So the church needs to investigate, with the Archdeacon, what possibilities are most suitable in terms of continuing to share a priest with another parish or not. In the meantime, those who have continued to maintain the life of the church, and will do so during the interregnum, are to be commended for their faithful commitment.

Pastoral Care

St Paul's has always believed that care for others must play an important role in the way we live, and that we should reach out not only to our families, friends and church family, but also to the wider community. We have a dedicated pastoral team, led by Jenny Clifton, our ALM Pastoral Assistant, which keeps in touch with those who live on their own or who are unwell or struggling

and we offer home communion to members of the congregation who are no longer able to get to church.

We have one Care Home in our Parish and Jenny takes a regular short service there, making sure that the special times of the Church year are covered. Residents are also offered communion and personal visits.

Our prayer life continues to thrive and during the year Jenny has worked with others to develop after service prayer for the ongoing life of St Paul's and the local community. She produces a prayer diary each week which gives the congregation and those who access our website a focus for their daily prayer. These prayers can also be included in our Sunday intercessions. We continue to encourage small church groups to pray for current issues and for anyone known to them who is in need of God's love and care.

Deanery Synod

Four members of the PCC have sat on Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

When Synod met earlier in the year (a meeting attended by Bishop Rose), the focus was on regrouping after the pandemic. Each church in the deanery was asked to give a two minute presentation on how they had coped during the Covid crisis and what they had learnt.

When Synod met again at the end of the year, much work had been done behind the scenes and Chapter was able to introduce the 'Maidstone Mission Mosaic' - an initiative with the express purpose of bringing the good news of the gospel to the people of Maidstone via a series of different but complimentary projects. Steve Coneys, Diocesan Mission and Growth Advisor, has been facilitating Chapter meetings since the summer and has been instrumental in helping to formulate these plans. Synod voted to pursue this agenda going forward, and documents have been submitted to the diocese to form part of a larger bid to secure a portion of the next round of Strategic Development funding released by the Church Commissioners.

In August 2021, Maidstone Deanery Environment Group started the process of producing a short video on Climate Change recording the responses of some of the young people in our local Churches, and Rowan, from St Paul's, agreed to be involved. This video was forwarded to all local churches and the wider church organisations. In January 2022 St Paul's held a service on climate change, which included screening the video, and Rowan was presented with a certificate for taking part. The Environment Group organised a tree to be planted in each young person's name and Rowan also received a National Trust Planting Certificate with background details of the Trust's Tree Planting Scheme.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

The newly formed social committee has been active in providing a programme of social events which have been well supported and provided much needed funds for the church. Other church groups have returned to meeting regularly providing full and varied programmes. Groups include St Paul's Fellowship and Mothers Union.

Once a month the craft group meet to chat whilst knitting, sewing, card making and other diverse craft activities.

Use of the Halls

Post Pandemic we are pleased to see that the church complex is in use every day of the week, in a variety of ways which we believe contribute to the social well-being of our community.

We see the hospitality that we offer to all who cross our threshold as central to our mission and are always looking for ways to make them feel more welcome. Leaving the doors to the worship space permanently unlocked allows parents to take advantage of the seating area at the back of church whilst the children play in the children's area. It also means that everyone can have access to the worship space.

St Faith's Church, Maidstone is without a building whilst their new Church complex is being built. They have had to find alternative arrangements for Sunday worship and we have been pleased to make our church and halls available to them once a month.

Care of our building

The quinquennial inspection took place this year and a number of maintenance items were highlighted including resurfacing the car park. This will form the basis of grant applications in the coming year because of the high costs involved. Chlorination of the water tanks in the building was undertaken, together with replacement of a heated water cylinder damaged during the process.

The boiler continues to be capricious but following a small adjustment now seems to perform more reliably.

The building remains a significant drain on our resources.

Communication

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. A weekly update is available by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access) and on the church website. The website is a vital means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news and is expertly managed by our Parish administrator. Importantly there is a designated email link to our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Church members also support each other using a church WhatsApp™ group and house group meetings.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in different ways, by standing orders, bank transfers, envelopes, and cheques. There are few envelope givers remaining. We are very grateful for all methods of supporting the church financially.

In 2022 the total for planned giving was £27,724 of which £2,173 was in envelopes. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum. Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using a standing order or envelopes.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving reduced from £29,891 to £27,724 a reduction of 7.3% (2021 10.7%). Collections at services increased from £568 to £1,652 albeit this amount is less than 50% of that received in 2019 pre the Covid 19 pandemic.

The total for giving was £29,376 (2021 £30,459, 2020 £35,128 and 2019 £38,786), a decline of 3.6% in the year.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £6,132 (2021 £6,634). £1,723 (2021 £1,311) was outstanding on donations received in the year.

Hall Income returned to the pre pandemic level at £31,579 compared with £18,093 in 2021. However in 2021 we were fortunate to be awarded two discretionary grants by Maidstone Borough Council totalling £12,002 towards loss of hall fees suffered due to Covid restrictions.

The most significant item of expenditure, the Parish Share, which was paid in full, at £35,485 (2021 £36,601, 2020 £46,315). The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese. The amount reduced in 2021 compared with 2020 due to the reduced allocation from 50% to 40% for our incumbent and the removal of a paid Area Dean post in Maidstone Deanery for which we along with other churches paid a proportion of the cost. The diocese budgeted reduced central costs which accounts for the reduced amount in 2022.

In December we received a grant of £2,450 from Canterbury towards increased costs of energy during winter 2022/23. The increased cost will be more significant in 2023.

The notes on page 3 show details of collections for charities, interest and dividends, being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds.

We were fortunate that other payments were either as expected or reduced. However we always have to be alive to the fact that our 1970's building requires repairs and maintenance and when this is needed the costs can be substantial. Also, we do not have sufficient unrestricted funds to enable improvements to be made.

Excess receipts were £8,802 (2021 £6,459).

The second page of the accounts identifies the movement of funds. At 31 December 2022 there was £42,407 (2021 £33,605) in current and deposit accounts and cash.

Unfortunately the value of our investments fell back to the 31 December 2020 level, 2022 £71,908 (2021 £81,503), a reduction in the year of 11.8%.

Adding gift aid recoverable and a small liability, our total assets at 31 December 2022 amounted to £116,018 (2021 £116,403) of which £70,309 (2021 £79,537) was in restricted funds.

Volunteers

Many of our members take an active role as volunteers in many aspects of church and local community life.

St Paul's members have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that Allert and Rosemary have arranged for their house to be used as a collection point and deliver the food on agreed dates.

This year The Penenden Heath Uniform bank, organised and run by John Viner, has begun operating from the church hall. The bank is open each month and is appreciated by its customers.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. At present there are 67 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll of which 46 are non-resident in the parish.

St Paul's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the interim priest in charge, the Revd Chris Lavender, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church Centre complex of St Paul's.

The full PCC met five times during the year with an average level of attendance of 75%. Committees met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric, outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN. Registered charity number 1131270.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2022 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Incumbent Interim Priest in Charge Rev Chris Lavender (Retired 19th February 2023)

Assistant Curate Rev Anthea Mitchell

Warden Mr B Beswick
Mr M Turner Vice-Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs J Clifton ALM Pastoral Assistant
Mrs R Riepma

Elected members:

Mrs J Hudson	Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson	until 8 th May 2022
Mrs G McPherson	ALM Worship Leader
Mrs A Lewis	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mr A Riepma	
Mrs M Thomas	Reader Emeritus
Mrs J Turner	Secretary
Mrs C Wylie	until 8 th May 2022

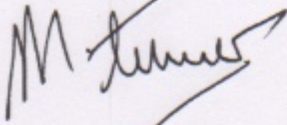
Co-opted Member:

Mrs S Willmott	Treasurer
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Non PCC member

Mrs C Kirrage	Parish Disclosure Officer
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Approved by the PCC on 25th April 2023 and signed on their behalf by



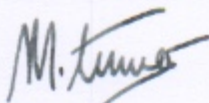
PCC Vice Chair

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE (Charity Registration No. 1131270)
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS (1)
For the year ended 31 December 2022

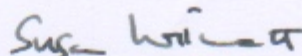
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2022	2021
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts regular giving						
Planned giving		£27,724.00			£27,724.00	£29,891.50
Collections at services		£1,652.05			£1,652.05	£567.30
Gift Aid recovered		£5,816.76			£5,816.76	£6,502.00
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme		£315.68			£315.68	£131.91
		£35,508.49	-	-	£35,508.49	£37,092.71
Other voluntary receipts						
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a)	£563.00			£563.00	£536.00
Donations for flowers		£195.00			£195.00	£50.50
		£758.00	-	-	£758.00	£586.50
Receipts from activities for generating funds						
Fund raising		£961.00			£961.00	
Hall Income		£31,579.40			£31,579.40	£18,093.25
		£32,540.40	-	-	£32,540.40	£18,093.25
Receipts from church activities						
Fees & Charges		£400.00			£400.00	£309.00
Collection(s) for charity	3b)		£529.20		£529.20	£65.10
		£400.00	£529.20	-	£929.20	£374.10
Income from investments						
Interest	3c)	£146.37	£19.27	£5.29	£170.93	£3.06
Dividends	3d)	£67.80	£2,070.88		£2,138.68	£2,068.37
		£214.17	£2,090.15	£5.29	£2,309.61	£2,071.43
Other						
Miscellaneous	3e)	£2,480.00			£2,480.00	£12,004.40
Total receipts		£71,901.06	£2,619.35	£5.29	£74,525.70	£70,222.39
PAYMENTS						
Parish Share		£35,485.00			£35,485.00	£36,601.00
Clergy expenses					-	-
Mission giving and donations	3f)	£2,510.50	£509.20		£3,019.70	£3,175.00
Administration and cleaning staff		£10,539.50			£10,539.50	£10,866.00
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.		£702.00			£702.00	£354.00
To Maidstone Deanery					-	-
Upkeep of Services		£800.54			£800.54	£1,137.95
Children's work	3g)	£53.44			£53.44	(£351.90)
Flowers		£51.96			£51.96	-
Gifts/subsidies		£98.90			£98.90	£318.85
Fund raising expenses		£112.26			£112.26	-
Heating, Lighting, etc		£6,573.45			£6,573.45	£3,140.74
Insurance		£2,759.74			£2,759.74	£2,628.32
Repairs & Maintenance	3f)				-	£3,233.64
Hall Expenses etc		£2,944.50			£2,944.50	£1,444.20
Fees for contactless giving		£4.55			£4.55	£3.40
Administration & sundries		£1,171.95			£1,171.95	£844.27
Parish website		£68.33			£68.33	£115.79
Signs		£1,074.00			£1,074.00	-
Independent Examiner fee		£264.00			£264.00	£252.00
Total payments		£65,214.62	£509.20	-	£65,723.82	£63,763.26
Excess of Receipts over Payments		£6,686.44	£2,110.15	£5.29	£8,801.88	£6,459.13

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2022	2021
Opening balances		£28,611.87	£4,197.72	£795.06	£33,604.65	£27,145.52
Movement above		£6,686.44	£2,110.15	£5.29	£8,801.88	£6,459.13
Interest Balson Endowment Fund		£5.29		(£5.29)	-	
Closing Balances		£35,303.60	£6,307.87	£795.06	£42,406.53	£33,604.65
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
Cash Funds						
Current Account		£ 28,818.91			£28,818.91	£20,357.21
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£131.42)
Cash in Hand		£146.25			£146.25	£24.75
Fabric Fund			£679.05		£679.05	£617.44
Contingency Reserve Fund		£11,274.33			£11,274.33	£11,127.96
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£824.35			£824.35	£813.65
		£40,932.42	£679.05	£795.06	£42,406.53	£33,604.65
Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable		£1,723.19			£1,723.19	£1,310.58
Amount owed to USPG 2022 (The Children's Society 2021)			(£20.00)		(£20.00)	(£15.10)
Investment Assets at market value						
Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£67,846.05		£67,846.05	£76,898.25
Fabric Fund			£1,783.49		£1,783.49	£2,021.45
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,279.16			£2,279.16	£2,583.25
	1	£2,279.16	£69,629.54	-	£71,908.70	£81,502.95
Net Assets		£44,934.77	£70,288.59	£795.06	£116,018.42	£116,403.08

Approved by the PCC on 25 April 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Mark Turner
PCC Vice Chairman



Susan Willmott
Treasurer

Notes

1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.

3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

3a) There were no legacies received in 2022 (2021 Nil).

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2022	2021
3b) Collections for charities					
USPG (Ukraine Appeal)		£529.20		£529.20	
Advent for Justice Appeal					£50.00
The Children's Society Christingle					£15.10
	-	£529.20	-	£529.20	£65.10
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2022	2021
3c) Interest					
Fabric Fund		£8.57		£8.57	£0.31
Contingency Reserve Fund	£146.37			£146.37	£1.54
Balston Endowment Fund			£5.29	£5.29	£0.79
Vicar and Church Warden's Account	£10.70			£10.70	£0.42
	£157.07	£8.57	£5.29	£170.93	£3.06
3d) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£2,017.84		£2,017.84	£1,951.50
Fabric Fund		£53.04		£53.04	£51.31
Contingency Reserve Fund	£67.80			£67.80	£65.56
	£67.80	£2,070.88	-	£2,138.68	£2,068.37

Payments

3e) Miscellaneous income includes £2,450 grant from the Diocese of Canterbury towards heating costs over the winter (2021 £12,002 Discretionary Grants from Maidstone Borough Council towards the loss of Hall Income suffered as a result of the loss of use of the building due to Government restrictions to limit the spread of the Coronavirus.)

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2022	2021
3f) Mission giving and donations					
The Childrens Society	£235.50			£235.50	
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Homeless Care	£1,000.00			£1,000.00	£800.00
Kent Workplace Mission				-	£100.00
Maidstone Street Pastors	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
Church Army	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
Princess Project	£250.00			£250.00	£350.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter	£250.00			£250.00	£250.00
CAST	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
CDBF Advent Justice Appeal				-	£150.00
The United Society (USPG)		£509.20		£509.20	
	£2,510.50	£509.20	-	£3,019.70	£3,175.00

Note Additional £20 paid to USPG in 2023

3g) Children's work
2021 includes a refund of £492.50 paid in 2019 for a place on course in Godly Play in 2020 which was cancelled due to Covid-19.

	2022	2021
3f) Repairs & Maintenance		
Boller		£2,370.00
Lighting		£863.64
	-	£3,233.64

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2022, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report


My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

3 May 2023

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2021

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) supports our interim Priest in Charge the Rev. Chris Lavender in promoting the pastoral, evangelistic and social mission of the church in the parish. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable ordinary people to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

Like every church, we are all too aware that we are not all that we could be. That is why our vision is about *"Becoming Christian Community..."* We are a work in progress, seeking always to better reflect the life of Jesus Christ in our life together, and no truly Christian community exists for its own sake. We are not a private club; of course we do our best to look after our own, but it goes much further than that. Hence *"serving the wider community."*

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve.

The PCC has complied with Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults).

Achievements and Performance

Reviewing our Church Life, Worship and Prayer and Ministry

The last couple of years has been challenging for the church in general. St Paul's has been further challenged by an interregnum as the Priest-in-charge, Andrew Sewell, moved on to become the Archdeacon of Maidstone.

This took place during the course of the Covid pandemic; however the parish ably worked its way through such difficulties by providing online worship using Zoom, and then physical worship, utilizing visiting priests when restrictions allowed.

In August 2021 the Revd Chris Lavender (Priest-in-charge of St Nicholas, Allington) was licensed to the parish as Interim Priest-in-Charge for a period of two years to accompany the parish during a period of potential change in Maidstone Deanery, and as training incumbent to Revd Anthea Mitchell. Chris would like to thank everyone for the welcome, and guidance, he has received, particularly from churchwardens Brian and Mark.

Anthea was ordained deacon in July 2021 and licensed as Assistant Curate to the parish and as a Minister in Secular Employment. Anthea had contributed to the parish by way of lay ministry and has now taken up the role of an ordained minister – she will be priested in July 2022.

Since her ordination and the licensing of Revd Chris, we have been attempting to review the life of St Paul's Church with a return to regular physical worship and in the light of the outworkings of the pandemic on those able and willing to attend, whilst also seeking to reach out to the community.

Thought has had to go into the Worship side of church life, and we are still discerning the best way forward and how things might evolve. For the present we have settled on a 10am mid-morning Sunday service that is different each week. The first Sunday is Café style, second Sunday is All Age Communion, third Sunday is Morning Worship, and fourth Sunday is Holy Communion. For now, this provides a variety of worship to meet the needs of a wide spectrum of worshipping styles that also gives flexibility and space for creativity and the development of others in leading and assisting. All are welcome to attend our regular services. The average Sunday Attendance for the year numbered 29 adults and 3 children.

In terms of pastoral care and the prayer life of the church our Pastoral ALM, Jenny Clifton, has provided a report below that shows how she is working to re-establish that side of church life, including work with the local care home and home communions. Others have also worked with Jenny to develop after service prayer as a time to pray about the ongoing life of St Paul's.

Gwyn McPherson, our Worship Leader ALM continues to work within the deanery as the project manager for Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter and as volunteer at Maidstone Homeless Care food bank. Gwyn is also a Maidstone Street Pastor so when the Saturday night patrols resumed on 4th July was with others providing emotional, spiritual and practical support to all those who are part of the town's night time economy.

We have also been keen to re-establish links with the local Primary Schools. Revd Anthea took a Harvest Assembly in Sandling Primary in 2021. Revd Chris has visited all of the local schools, Sandling, St Paul's & Northborough and we wait to see how such connections go forward.

We are also hoping to start a toddler group at St Paul's in May of 2022. This will be on one Friday each month and will be led by Sarah Lavender and assisted by others from the parish.

It cannot be denied that there is much uncertainty about the future as we learn what it is to be a post-Covid church. Resources, both physical and financial, have been impacted. In addition, the world is now being significantly challenged by the increasing cost of living and the outworking of conflict in Ukraine. However, St Paul's has a good heart, a sound spiritual base and willing people. This will be significantly enhanced through the presence of Revd Anthea as she gains experience and comes to be priested, an event that we all look forward to with great joy.

We have continued to build stronger and deeper relationships and to make St Paul's a welcoming place. But, as people inevitably move on there are signs of numerical decline over the last twelve months.

We must not forget the other ways in which members of St Paul's seek to make a difference in the world through their own ministry at work, at home, as volunteers and in the wider community, in all sorts of ways too many to name.

Pastoral care

St Paul's has always believed that care for others must play an important role in the way we live, and that we should reach out not only to our families, friends and church family, but also to the wider community. We have a dedicated pastoral team, led by Jenny Clifton, our ALM Pastoral Assistant, which keeps in touch with those who live on their own or who are unwell or struggling and we are, once again, offering home communion to members of the congregation who are no longer able to get to church. We have one Care Home in our Parish which, before Covid, was regularly visited, with residents being offered communion and services at special times of the Church year.

Our prayer life continues to thrive and recently Jenny has worked with others to develop after service prayer as a time to pray about the ongoing life of St Paul's and the local community. She produced a prayer diary each week which gives the congregation and those who access our website a focus for their daily prayer. These prayers can also be included in our Sunday intercessions. We continue to encourage small church groups to pray for current issues and for anyone known to them who is in need of God's love and care.

Deanery Synod

Four members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod.

Revd Chris stood down from his role as Area Dean when licensed to St Paul's in August 2021. The Lay Chair to the deanery had already finished her time in the post in April 2021. As a result, the deanery has not had a leadership structure, or met as Deanery Synod, for a significant period. However, Revd Phil Goodey, from Boughton Monchelsea, was recently appointed to be Area Dean, in an oversight capacity – he is also Area Dean of North Downs Deanery. A new Lay Chair has also recently been appointed and a Deanery Synod arranged for 7th April 2022.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

As the covid restrictions gradually lifted the church community were able to celebrate important events in the life of the church, Revd Anthea's Ordination Licensing and later in the year the Revd Chris' Licensing to the Parish as Interim Priest-in-Charge. We look forward to being able plan further events and be a welcoming community.

Use of the Halls

The premises are in use every day of the week, in a variety of ways which we believe contribute to the social well-being of our community.

We see the hospitality that we offer to all who cross our threshold as central to our mission and are always looking for ways to make them feel more welcome. Leaving the doors to the worship space permanently unlocked allows parents to take advantage of the low seating area at the back of church whilst the children play in the children's area. It also means that everyone can have access to the worship space.

The pandemic and its restrictions continued into 2021. Many of our hall users even if permitted, have taken a cautious approach to resuming their group activities. It is pleasing to note that by the end of 2021 nearly all of our regular users and some new ones are once again enjoying their leisure activities. All hall users have liaised with our Parish Administrator so that everyone still follows the COVID safe protocols as recommended by the Church of England.

Care of our building

High winds and general unpredictability still means the boiler does not always fire up reliably. This year however the boiler broke down completely and was out of action for several months whilst the engineers identified the problem and located the replacement part. The lighting controls in the church were also repaired and replaced where necessary. A small number of volunteers have helped keep the place in order, but we need to recruit more workers as numbers have dropped.

Maintenance of the building continues to be a significant drain on our resources.

Communication

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. The Parish magazine was produced at Easter and at the end of July and was available by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access), and on the church website. The website has been a crucial means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news and it has been expertly managed by our Parish administrator. Church members also support each other using a church WhatsApp™ group and house groups (both virtual and in person when permitted). Members also support those without IT access by telephone or visits in person where these are within regulations. A weekly update was introduced at the beginning of November which includes a message from Revd Chris, service information and notices about upcoming Events.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in two different ways, by standing orders and by envelope. By 2021 most planned givers had changed from giving by envelopes to giving by standing order as Church access was restricted. During periods of Church closure, most envelope givers were kind enough to give directly by cheque or by bank transfer and we are very grateful to them for helping our cash flow. By the end of 2021 only six envelope givers remained.

In 2021 the total for planned giving was £29,891 of which £2,405 was in envelopes with the remainder by standing order, bank transfer or cheque. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum.

Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using a standing order or envelopes.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving reduced by 10.7% (2020 3.6%) and due to the continued inability to hold services during part of the year, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, collections at services reduced by a further 65% (2020 nearly 60%). The total for giving was £30,459 (2020 £35,128 and 2019 £38,786), a decline of 13.3% in the year.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £6,634 (2020 £9,485). £1,311 (2020 £1,280) was outstanding on donations received in the year.

Hall Income was £18,093 compared with £12,359 in 2020 and £31,477 in 2019 and it remained sad to have the halls, normally so well used by the community for such a great range of activities, closed or with limited usage this year during lockdowns and when only limited social contact was allowed. However we were fortunate to be awarded two discretionary grants by Maidstone Borough Council totalling £12,002 towards loss of hall fees suffered due to Covid restrictions.

The most significant item of expenditure, the Parish Share, was paid in full. The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese. The amount reduced in 2021 compared with 2020 due to the reduced allocation from 50% to 40% for our incumbent and the removal of a paid Area Dean post in Maidstone Deanery for which we along with other churches paid a proportion of the cost.

The notes on page 3 of the accounts show details of collections for charities, interest and dividends, the latter two items being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds.

We were fortunate that other payments were either as expected or reduced due to the limited usage in 2020 and 2021 with reductions for electricity and telephone. Fortunately, following exceptionally high expenditure in 2020, building maintenance and repair costs were modest.

Excess receipts were £6,459 (2020 excess payments £45,754).

The second page of the accounts identifies the movement of funds. As at 31 December 2021 there was £33,605 (2020 £27,146) in current and deposit accounts.

Our investments performed well, the value of our shares increased from £71,303 to £81,503, an increase of 14.3%.

Adding gift aid recoverable and a small liability, our total assets at 31 December amounted to £116,403 (2020 £99,728) of which £79,537 (2020 £69,609) was in restricted funds.

However, we still urgently need to replace the funds used for the cost of replacing the small hall ceiling and loss of income due to Covid 19 and otherwise and then build reserves so that we can continue to maintain our building for worship, mission and community use.

Finally, we must thank Jan for continuing to look after planned giving and tax recovery, Margaret who counts and banks the cash and Tracey, our administrator, who looks after the hall users.

Volunteers

Most of our members take an active role as volunteers in many aspects of church life. In particular we would like to mention our churchwardens who have continued to undertake extra responsibilities during the interregnum until Revd Chris' appointment in August.

St Paul's members have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that Allert and Rosemary have arranged for their house to be used as a collection point and deliver the food on agreed dates.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. There are 68 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll of which 47 are non-resident within the parish.

St Paul's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the interim priest in charge, the Revd Chris Lavender, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church Centre complex of St Paul's.

The full PCC met ten times during the year with an average level of attendance of 86%. Committees met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric, outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN. Registered charity number 1131270.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2021 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Incumbent Interim Priest-in-Charge Revd Chris Lavender from 24th August 2021

Deacon Revd Anthea Mitchell from 3rd July 2021

Warden Mr B Beswick
Mr M Turner Vice Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs J Clifton Pastoral Assistant
Mrs A Mitchell 3rd year Ordinand until 2nd July 2021
Mrs R Riepma from 27th July 2021

Elected members:

Mrs J Hudson Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson
Mrs C Kirrage Parish Disclosure Officer, Parish Safeguarding Officer
until July 2021
Mrs A Lewis Parish Safeguarding Officer

Mr A Riepma
Mrs M Thomas
Mrs J Turner
Ms S Vale
Mrs C Wylie

Reader Emeritus
Secretary, Electoral Roll Officer
until June 13th 2021

Co-opted Member:

Mrs S Willmott Treasurer

Approved by the PCC on 20th April 2022 and signed on their behalf by



PCC Chairman

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE (Charity Registration No. 1131270)

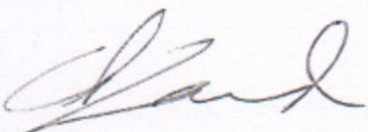
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2021	2020
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts regular giving						
Planned giving		£29,891.50			£29,891.50	£33,482.60
Collections at services		£567.30			£567.30	£1,645.90
Gift Aid recovered		£6,502.00			£6,502.00	£8,612.69
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme		£131.91			£131.91	£872.81
		<u>£37,092.71</u>	-	-	<u>£37,092.71</u>	<u>£44,614.00</u>
Other voluntary receipts						
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a)	£536.00			£536.00	£2,920.00
Dontions for flowers		£50.50			£50.50	£158.50
		<u>£586.50</u>	-	-	<u>£586.50</u>	<u>£3,078.50</u>
Receipts from activities for generating funds						
Fund raising					-	£784.80
Hall Income		£18,093.25			£18,093.25	£12,358.75
Miscellaneous						
		<u>£18,093.25</u>	-	-	<u>£18,093.25</u>	<u>£13,143.55</u>
Receipts from church activities						
Fees & Charges		£309.00			£309.00	-
Collection(s) for charity	3b)	£65.10			£65.10	-
		<u>£374.10</u>	£0.00	£0.00	<u>£374.10</u>	£0.00
Income from Investments						
Interest	3c)	£1.54	£0.73	£0.79	£3.06	£48.55
Dividends	3d)	£65.56	£2,002.81		£2,068.37	£2,434.54
		<u>£67.10</u>	<u>£2,003.54</u>	<u>£0.79</u>	<u>£2,071.43</u>	<u>£2,483.09</u>
Other						
Miscellaneous	3e)	£12,004.40			£12,004.40	£58.00
Total receipts		<u>£68,218.06</u>	<u>£2,003.54</u>	<u>£0.79</u>	<u>£70,222.39</u>	<u>£63,377.14</u>
PAYMENTS						
Parish Share		£36,601.00			£36,601.00	£45,592.63
Clergy expenses					-	£462.52
Mission giving and donations	3f)	£3,175.00			£3,175.00	£1,588.25
Administration and cleaning staff		£10,866.00			£10,866.00	£10,746.50
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.		£354.00			£354.00	£601.80
To Maidstone Deanery					-	-
Upkeep of Services		£1,137.95			£1,137.95	£833.52
Children's work	3g)	(£351.90)			(£351.90)	£492.50
Flowers					-	-
Gifts/subsidies		£318.85			£318.85	£107.64
Fund raising expenses					-	-
Heating, Lighting, etc		£3,140.74			£3,140.74	£6,649.97
Insurance		£2,628.32			£2,628.32	£2,841.45
Repairs & Maintenance	3f)	£3,233.64			£3,233.64	£33,547.64
Hall Expenses etc		£1,444.20			£1,444.20	£2,937.20
Fees for contactless giving		£3.40			£3.40	£8.11
Administration & sundries		£844.27			£844.27	£1,897.71
Parish website		£115.79			£115.79	£486.13
Fees to the Diocese					-	£86.00
Independent Examiner fee		£252.00			£252.00	£252.00
Total payments		<u>£63,763.26</u>	<u>£0.00</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£63,763.26</u>	<u>£109,131.57</u>
Excess of Receipts over Payments		<u>£4,454.80</u>	<u>£2,003.54</u>	<u>£0.79</u>	<u>£6,459.13</u>	<u>(£45,754.43)</u>

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2020
Opening balances		£24,156.28	£2,194.18	£795.06	£27,145.52	£52,899.95
Movement above		£4,454.80	£2,003.54	£0.79	£6,459.13	(£45,754.43)
Contingency fund - Sale of shares						£20,000.00
Interest Balson Endowment Fund		£0.79		(£0.79)	-	-
Closing Balances		£28,611.87	£4,197.72	£795.06	£33,604.65	£27,145.52
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
Cash Funds						
Current Account		£ 20,357.21			£20,357.21	£23,681.66
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£131.42)
Cash in Hand		£24.75			£24.75	£294.75
Fabric Fund			£617.44		£617.44	£565.82
Contingency Reserve Fund		£11,127.96			£11,127.96	£1,126.42
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£813.65			£813.65	£813.23
		£32,192.15	617.44	£795.06	£33,604.65	£27,145.52
Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable		£1,310.58			£1,310.58	£1,279.75
Amount owed to The Children's Society		(£15.10)			(£15.10)	
Investment Assets at market value						
Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£76,898.25		£76,898.25	£67,274.35
Fabric Fund			£2,021.45		£2,021.45	£1,768.46
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,583.25			£2,583.25	£2,259.95
	1	£2,583.25	£78,919.70	-	£81,502.95	£71,302.76
Net Assets		£36,070.88	£79,537.14	£795.06	£116,403.08	£99,728.03

Approved by the PCC on 20 April 2022 and signed on their behalf by



Rev. C Lavender
PCC Chairman



Mrs Susan Willmott
PCC Treasurer

Notes

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.
- 2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.
- 3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

- a) There were no legacies received in 2021 (2020 £200).

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2021	2020
b) Collections for charities					
Advent for Justice Appeal		£50.00		£50.00	
The Children's Society Christingle		£15.10		£15.10	
	-	£65.10	-	£65.10	-
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2021	2020
c) Interest					
Fabric Fund		£0.31		£0.31	£2.80
Contingency Reserve Fund	£1.54			£1.54	£37.89
Balston Endowment Fund			£0.79	£0.79	£4.42
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£0.42		£0.42	£3.44
	£1.54	£0.73	£0.79	£3.06	£48.55
d) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£1,951.50		£1,951.50	£1,884.53
Fabric Fund		£51.31		£51.31	£48.99
Contingency Reserve Fund	£65.56			£65.56	£501.02
	£65.56	£2,002.81	-	£2,068.37	£2,434.54
e) Miscellaneous income includes £12,002 Discretionary Grants from Maidstone Borough Council towards the loss of Hall Income suffered as a result of the loss of use of the building due to Government restrictions to limit the spread of the Coronavirus.					

Payments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2021	2020
f) Mission giving and donations					
Maidstone Deanery - Waypoint					
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Homeless Care	£800.00			£800.00	£500.00
Kent Workplace Mission	£100.00			£100.00	
Maidstone Street Pastors	£500.00			£500.00	£250.00
Church Army	£500.00			£500.00	£500.00
Princess Project	£350.00			£350.00	
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter	£250.00			£250.00	
CAST	£500.00			£500.00	£250.00
CDBF Advent Justice Appeal	£150.00			£150.00	
Other				-	£63.24
	£3,175.00	-	-	£3,175.00	£1,588.24
g) Children's work					
This includes a refund of £492.50 paid in 2019 for a place on course in Godly Play in 2020 which was cancelled due to Covid-19.					
f) Repairs & Maintenance				2021	2020
Boiler	£2,370.00			£2,370.00	
Lighting	£863.64			£863.64	
Small hall ceiling collapse -Asbestos removal and replacement					£25,056.21
Repairs and Clearing to Roofs & Rainwater Goods					£2,946.66
Repairs to Prayer room following water Ingress					£5,407.89
Sundry					£136.88
	£3,233.64	-	-	£3,233.64	£33,547.64

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2021, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

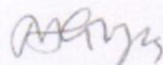
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX



J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

26 April 2022

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

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J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

26 April 2022

APCM 8 May 2022 Treasurer's Report

You have already been provided the accounts and the narrative in the Annual Report and unless there are any questions, I will do no more than to say 2021 was an easier year than 2020 as income exceeded expenditure by £6,459 (2020 expenditure exceeded income by £45,754).

Thankfully those who would normally bring their offering to church forwarded cheques or gave online during another year of disruption due Covid-19 restrictions. We are extremely grateful to all who give regularly and generously.

2022 will be a difficult year, we have seen a number of our congregation move away during the last two years and unless we grow our congregation and encourage giving generally, we face another year of potential decline. Whilst our Parish Share has reduced marginally for 2022, the cost of energy has been hit substantially by the world-wide increases as a result of the timing of the end of our previous contracts. Furthermore, we have to be mindful that our building is aging and the need for potentially substantial maintenance and repair costs is ever present.

We do however ask you to review your giving regularly.

I must thank Jan for looking after planned giving and gift aid recovery, Margaret for banking and assisting Tracey with hall users and Tracey for the work that she continues assisting Mark and Jenny keeping us and hall users Covid 19 secure as Government and Church of England Guidelines have changed and keeping us so well informed for services and the like I commend you to visit the website frequently. If you haven't done so recently you will be surprised by the wealth of information and its ease of use.

Susan Willmott

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts 2020

Aim and Purposes

St Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) co-operates with our Priest in Charge (the Rev. Canon Andrew Sewell until September) in promoting the pastoral, evangelistic and social mission of the church in the parish. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church and halls, which are all part of the same building at St Paul's Boxley Road, Maidstone.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC seeks to serve our parish and the wider community in Maidstone and beyond in various ways. Our Vision Statement reflects this: *"Becoming Christian Community – serving the wider community."*

Through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, activity and silence, our worship is at the heart of who we are. We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at St Paul's and to become part of our church community. To this end, the PCC maintains an overview of our worship, and regularly discusses our pattern of services.

In line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and the particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, we try to enable ordinary people to grow in faith and live it out as part of our church community. As well as providing opportunities for worship, we do our best to help people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and their relationships with God and others.

We offer pastoral care for those living in the parish and for others who are part of our church community. We seek to reach out in various ways, and to contribute to the needs of the wider world.

Like every church, we are all too aware that we are not all that we could be. That is why our vision is about *"Becoming Christian Community..."* We are a work in progress, seeking always to better reflect the life of Jesus Christ in our life together, and no truly Christian community exists for its own sake. We are not a private club; of course we do our best to look after our own, but it goes much further than that. Hence *"serving the wider community."*

One of the primary ways in which we serve the community is to make our premises available not just for worship, but for a range of activities which contribute positively to people's quality of life. With two halls and a kitchen as well as the worship space itself, we have flexible facilities which we are continually seeking to improve.

Achievements and Performance

Reviewing our Church Life

We have continued to build stronger and deeper relationships and to make St Paul's a welcoming place. But, as people inevitably move on there are signs of numerical decline over the last twelve months.

Of course, it's not just about numbers. The atmosphere during worship and afterwards, with coffee and excellent cake served in church after the main 10:30 service, is positively buzzing. Many people stay for up to an hour after services, building the sense of Christian community and mutual support, which is at the heart of our vision statement. As time goes on, the conversations are touching on deeper subjects, and there are healthy signs that people are genuinely looking out for one another.

Sadly the COVID 19 restrictions which came into force in March saw the closure of places of worship and because of the infection levels in the Maidstone area, St Paul's has been closed for public worship for much of the year. When services have resumed we have all had to adjust to the impact the pandemic has had on the way we can worship in church.

Worship and Prayer

We seek to offer a range of worship to suit people of different backgrounds, ages and temperaments. On normal Sunday mornings we hold a traditional Communion Service, followed by more family-friendly All Age Worship, which has Holy Communion twice a month and Café Church once a month. Since its re-introduction to the life of St Paul's in 2011, Café Church is now firmly established.

On Sunday evenings through the month we have a variety of quieter, more contemplative services, from Prayer Book Evensong to worship drawing on Taize liturgy. All are welcome to attend our regular services. The average Sunday Attendance numbered 37 adults and 4 children.

Following the announcement on the 23rd March that places of worship had to close, St Paul's like many churches, had to embrace on line services. To that end, we began to share our services using Zoom™ with links shared to those people whose GDPR registrations were up to date. As regulations changed through the year, we sometimes live streamed services from inside church using Zoom™ so that those who were uncomfortable attending church using our COVID-safe protocol could still participate with services. All these services whether in church or from home were recorded and later published using YouTube™ with the links on the church website.

Ministry

Andrew Sewell's role as Acting Archdeacon of Maidstone was extended a further six months from April. This has continued to increase the pressure on others, especially the Churchwardens and those who share in leading worship. Sadly for us, we had to say goodbye to Andrew at the end of September when his appointment as Archdeacon of Maidstone was made substantive. We have been very fortunate to have Anthea Mitchell and Captain Graham Nunn plus a willing team of retired clergy to lead our services during the interregnum.

Maureen Thomas is Reader Emeritus, and although now retired still likes to keep in touch with the elderly. Gwyn McPherson's Authorised Lay Ministry has continued to develop along with her role as a Street Pastor in the town, and she has been employed by Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter for a third winter (2020/21). Jenny Clifton's ministry as Pastoral Assistant has become more and more vital to an aging congregation, and she continues as a Chaplain to Fremlin Walk shopping centre.

Anthea Mitchell, who joined our congregation some ten years ago, is now into her third year of training to become a Minister in Secular Employment. Her work in the hairdressing salon which she owns will be the main focus of her ministry, but she has been offered and has accepted the role of part-time non-stipendiary, Assistant Curate at St. Paul's to be supervised by Rev Chris Lavender who is Priest-in-Charge at St. Nicholas, Allington and St. Andrew's Barming (and the new Area Dean). Along with this and her studies, she has managed to contribute to life at St Paul's, both on Zoom and in person (when we were meeting physically). She looks forward to her ordination in the summer 2021 but has already taken several funerals and is planning a baptism with a local family. She is currently serving on the Mission and Ministry Committee and on Deanery Synod as well as the PCC.

We must not forget the other ways in which members of St Paul's seek to make a difference in the world through their own ministry at work, at home, as volunteers and in the wider community, in all sorts of ways too many to name.

Pastoral care

St Paul's believes that care for others must always play an important role in the way we live, and that we should reach out not only to our families, friends and church family, but also to the wider community. We have a dedicated pastoral team, led by our ALM Pastoral Assistant, which keeps in touch with those who live on their own or who are unwell or struggling.

We have one Care Home in our Parish which is visited when permitted, with residents being offered communion and services at special times. Likewise when permitted, home communion is also offered to our local housebound members.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod.

This year has seen churches working together in various ways across the town although activity has been heavily curtailed due to the COVID situation. Gwyn has been even more involved in the Winter Shelter and the Food Bank. The Deanery Environment Group, who work constantly to look at practical ways in which we can care for creation in our parishes, have the full support of St. Paul's, and this work is driven by Jenny Clifton assisted by others. Our preaching and prayers this year have also reflected our interest in these matters and our willingness to do better in this regard.

The impact of losing Andrew Sewell to his temporary (and ultimately permanent) Archdeacon role this year has been felt by all the parishes in the deanery but by St. Paul's in particular. The role will now revert to a standard Area Dean remit rather than a half-time paid post. This comes at a time when further cooperation across deaneries is very much on the agenda due to the financial challenges in the diocese made worse by the pandemic. St. Paul's hopes that we can fully participate and partner with our fellow churches in the deanery as we journey together for a brighter, more missional and more sustainable future.

Social, Fundraising and Outreach Events

The highlight of the year was a successful Variety Show held at the end of January. This was a joint collaboration between St Paul's Church and a number of our hall users. The proceeds of the event were shared evenly between St Paul's and the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter.

Use of the Halls

Normally three thousand people cross St Paul's threshold each month. The premises are in use every day of the week, in a variety of ways which we believe contribute to the social well-being of our community.

We see the hospitality that we offer to all who cross our threshold as central to our mission and are always looking for ways to make them feel more welcome. Leaving the doors to the worship space permanently unlocked allows parents to take advantage of the low seating area at the back of church whilst the children play in the children's area. It also means that everyone can have access to the worship space.

During the pandemic many of our hall users even if permitted, have been unable to resume their group activities for a variety of reasons. Those that have returned have liaised with our Parish Administrator so that everyone follows the COVID safe protocols.

Care of our building

The repair to the ceiling in the small hall was completed early in the year but the poor weather over the Christmas period in 2019 resulted in a further ceiling collapse in the prayer

room on Christmas Eve. This was repaired and the leaking roof which led to the problem was also repaired. Mark Turner repainted the room and the flooring was replaced.

Much to our relief, the boiler has functioned reasonably well during the year, though high winds and general temperamental tendencies still mean it does not always fire up reliably. A small number of volunteers have helped keep the place in order, but we need to recruit more workers as numbers have dropped.

The building continues to be a significant drain on our resources as when the first lockdown was lifted we were still unable to return to church because two colonies of bees had taken up residence in the cavity wall high above the nave. Arranging their humane removal and re-homing was both costly and time consuming, and rendered the building unusable for the summer months.

Communication

We endeavour to keep in touch with our worshipping community, hall users and the wider community by a variety of means. This has been especially important during the pandemic. We publish a Parish magazine but again the schedule has been affected by COVID restrictions. The magazine is available by e-mail, as hard copy (in church and taken to those without electronic access), and on the church website. The website has been a vital means of keeping everyone up to date and of passing on notices and news and is expertly managed by our Parish administrator. Church members also support each other using a church WhatsApp™ group and house groups (both virtual and in person when permitted). Members also support those without IT access by telephone or visits in person where these are within regulations.

Planned Giving

Planned giving occurs in two different ways, by standing orders and by envelope. In 2020 several planned givers changed from giving by envelopes to giving by standing order as Church access was restricted and eventually stopped. Most envelope givers were kind enough to forward cheques to the treasurer or give by bank transfer and we are very grateful to them for helping our cash flow.

In 2020 the sum given by standing orders was £23,516 and giving via envelopes and cheques was £9,967, a total of £33,483. We have been able to claim gift aid on nearly all this sum.

Using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme, we were also able to claim on anything in the open collection, which is an individual gift of £30 or less. This is a very good scheme, but we encourage regular givers who are taxpayers to give using envelopes or a standing order.

We are very grateful to all who give.

Financial Review

Planned giving reduced by 3.6% and due to the inability to hold services in church during much of the year due to the COVID 19 pandemic, collections at services reduced by nearly 60%. The total for giving was £35,128 compared with £38,786 in 2019, an overall decline of 9.4%.

Gift aid and gift aid on small donations receipts banked were £9,485 compared with £9,483 in 2019. £1,280 (2019 £2,475) was outstanding on donations received in the year being the claims for November and December.

We were blessed with a legacy of £200 and also donations of £1,600 towards replacing the ceiling in the small hall, £240 towards the cost of removing two swarms of bees that settled in the cavity wall, £400 from St Paul's Fellowship and the remaining donations of £480 were primarily from members of the congregation, aware of our need.

Hall Income was £12,359 compared with £31,477 in 2019 and it was sad to have the halls, normally so well used by the community for such a great range of activities, closed or with limited usage for much of the year during lockdowns and restricted when only limited social contact was allowed.

The most significant item of expenditure, the Parish Share, was paid in full. The cost is for ministry and central costs within Canterbury Diocese.

The notes on page 3 show details of fundraising, interest and dividends, the latter two items being split between unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds. We were thankful that a very successful Variety Show was held in January 2020.

We started the year aware that repairs and maintenance expenditure would be high as we were committed to the substantial costs for the removal of and then replacement of the small hall ceiling which failed in 2019. In addition, we unfortunately suffered damage by water ingress into the prayer room and work was required to maintain the roof. An analysis of this item is shown on page 3. Also, included within hall upkeep is the cost of £1,260 for the removal of the two swarms of bees.

After several years where income and expenditure have been broadly in balance, unfortunately due to the high repair and maintenance costs and the unexpected loss of hall income, payments exceeded receipts by £45,754 (2019 Excess receipts £11,556).

The second page of the accounts identifies the movement of funds. At 31 December there was £27,146 (2019 £52,900) in current and deposit accounts.

In order to maintain cash reserves 1025.80 shares held in the contingency fund were sold, the proceeds being £20,000, a price of £19.497 per share. The mid-market value of the remaining shares on 31 December 2020 was £19.061 per share some 11.9% above the value on 31 December 2019. The value of the remaining shares held at 31 December 2020 was £71,303.

Adding gift aid recoverable, our total assets at 31 December amounted to £99,728 (2019 £141,516) of which £69,609 (2019 £65,114) was in restricted funds. We urgently need to replace the funds used in replacing the small hall ceiling and loss of income and then build reserves so that we can continue to maintain our building for worship, mission and community use.

Finally, we must thank Jan for continuing to look after planned giving and tax recovery, Also, Margaret who counts and banks the cash and along with Tracey, our administrator, looks after the hall users.

Volunteers

Most of our members normally take an active role as volunteers in many aspects of church life. The impact of the pandemic has meant the focus this year has been mainly pastoral. In particular we would like to mention our churchwardens who have worked so hard to keep the church safe and now have extra responsibilities as we are in an interregnum.

St Paul's members have continued to support Maidstone Homeless Care through prayer and donations of food and money. We are grateful that Allert and Rosemary have arranged for their house to be used as a collection point and deliver the food on agreed dates.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a body corporate established by the Church of England. (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered with the Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. At present there are 68 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll of which 47 are non-resident within the parish.

St Paul's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Rev. Canon Andrew Sewell to 27th September, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church Centre complex of St Paul's.

The full PCC met six times during the year with an average level of attendance of 76%. Committees met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary with particular emphasis on worship, finance, fabric, outreach and mission.

Administrative information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Boxley Road, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Paul's Church, Boxley Road, Maidstone, ME14 2AN. Registered charity number 1131270.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2020 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio Members:

Incumbent Reverend Canon Andrew Sewell until 27th September 2020

Warden Mr B Beswick
Mr M Turner Vice Chair

Deanery Synod Mrs G McPherson Worship Leader until 11th October 2020
Mrs J Clifton Pastoral Assistant from 18th November 2020
Mrs A Mitchell 3rd year Ordinand from 11th October 2020

Elected members:

Mrs J Hudson Gift Aid Secretary
Mr P Hudson
Mrs C Kirrage Parish Safeguarding Officer, Parish Disclosure Officer
Mrs A Lewis Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mr A Riepma
Mrs M Thomas Reader Emeritus
Mrs J Turner Secretary
Ms S Vale from 11th October 2020

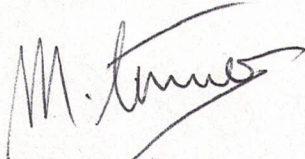
Mrs C Wylie

Co-opted Member:

Mrs S Willmott

Treasurer

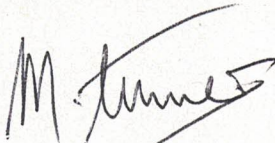
Approved by the PCC on 12th April 2021 and signed on their behalf by



PCC Vice Chairman

Financial Review

Approved by the PCC on 12th April 2021 and signed on their behalf by



PCC Vice Chairman



PCC Treasurer

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PAUL, MAIDSTONE (Charity Registration No. 1131270)

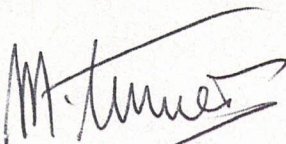
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2019
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary receipts regular giving						
Planned giving		£33,482.60			£33,482.60	£34,741.40
Collections at services		£1,645.90			£1,645.90	£4,045.03
Gift Aid recovered		£8,612.69			£8,612.69	£8,449.07
Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme		£872.81			£872.81	£1,034.38
		£44,614.00	-	-	£44,614.00	£48,269.88
Other voluntary receipts						
Sundry donations and Legacies	3a)	£2,920.00			£2,920.00	£10,867.20
Donations for flowers		£158.50			£158.50	£284.90
		£3,078.50	-	-	£3,078.50	£11,152.10
Receipts from activities for generating funds						
Fund raising	3b)	£784.80			£784.80	£846.63
Hall Income		£12,358.75			£12,358.75	£31,476.75
Miscellaneous						£168.57
		£13,143.55	-	-	£13,143.55	£32,491.95
Receipts from church activities						
Fees & Charges					-	£735.00
Collection(s) for charity	3c)				-	£821.90
		-	-	-	-	£1,556.90
Income from investments						
Interest	3d)	£37.89	£6.24	£4.42	£48.55	£102.51
Dividends	3e)	£501.02	£1,933.52		£2,434.54	£2,510.83
		£538.91	£1,939.76	£4.42	£2,483.09	£2,613.34
Other						
Miscellaneous		£58.00			£58.00	
Collection for leaving gifts	3f)					-
Total receipts		£61,432.96	£1,939.76	£4.42	£63,377.14	£96,084.17
PAYMENTS						
Parish Share		£45,592.63			£45,592.63	£46,315.00
Clergy expenses			£462.52		£462.52	£1,636.83
Mission giving and donations	3g)	£1,588.25			£1,588.25	£4,699.37
Administration and cleaning staff		£10,746.50			£10,746.50	£9,712.92
Organist, Choir, Organ etc.		£601.80			£601.80	£1,711.60
Maidstone Deanery					£0.00	£110.00
Upkeep of Services		£833.52			£833.52	£656.04
Children's work		£492.50			£492.50	£196.20
Flowers					£0.00	£67.79
Gifts/subsidies		£107.64			£107.64	£286.00
Fund raising expenses					£0.00	£265.08
Heating, Lighting, etc		£6,649.97			£6,649.97	£9,434.65
Insurance		£2,841.45			£2,841.45	£2,786.98
Repairs & Maintenance	3h)	£33,547.64			£33,547.64	£2,928.41
Hall Expenses etc		£2,937.20			£2,937.20	£740.26
Fees for contactless giving		£8.11			£8.11	£1.61
Administration & sundries		£1,897.71			£1,897.71	£2,621.96
Parish website		£486.13			£486.13	£117.00
Fees to the Diocese		£86.00			£86.00	
Independent Examiner fee		£252.00			£252.00	£240.00
Total payments		£108,669.05	£462.52	-	£109,131.57	£84,527.70
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(£47,236.09)	£1,477.24	£4.42	(£45,754.43)	£11,556.47

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2019
Opening balances		£51,387.95	£716.94	£795.06	£52,899.95	£41,343.48
Movement above		(£47,236.09)	£1,477.24	£4.42	(£45,754.43)	£11,556.47
Contingency fund - Sale of shares		£20,000.00			£20,000.00	
Interest Balson Endowment Fund		£4.42		(£4.42)	£0.00	£0.00
Closing Balances		£24,156.28	£2,194.18	£795.06	£27,145.52	£52,899.95
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
Cash Funds						
Current Account		£ 23,681.66			£23,681.66	£30,049.21
Less funds held on behalf of Fellowship		(£131.42)			(£131.42)	(£381.42)
Cash in Hand		£294.75			£294.75	£24.75
Fabric Fund			£565.82		£565.82	£514.03
Contingency Reserve Fund		£1,126.42			£1,126.42	£21,088.53
Balston Endowment Fund	2			£795.06	£795.06	£795.06
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£813.23			£813.23	£809.79
		£25,784.64	565.82	£795.06	£27,145.52	£52,899.95
Gift Aid and GASDS recoverable		£1,279.75			£1,279.75	£2,474.60
Fees payable to Canterbury Diocesan Board of Finance						(£237.00)
Investment Assets at market value						
Assistant Clergy and Randall Mercer Funds			£67,274.35		£67,274.35	£62,945.76
Fabric Fund			£1,768.46		£1,768.46	£1,654.68
Contingency Reserve Fund		£2,259.95			£2,259.95	£21,778.21
	1	£2,259.95	£69,042.81	-	£71,302.76	£86,378.65
Net Assets		£29,324.34	£69,608.63	£795.06	£99,728.03	£141,516.20

Approved by the PCC on 12 April 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Mark Turner
PCC Vice Chairman

Notes

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.
- 2 The Endowment fund has to be retained as a capital fund, but the income is for ordinary church purposes and is paid to the current account.
- 3 Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments

Receipts

- a) Sundry donations and legacies includes one legacy of £200 (2019 £10,000).

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2019
b) Fund raising					
Variety Show	£784.80			£784.80	
Pub Night					£316.63
Barn Dance					£530.00
	<u>£784.80</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£784.80</u>	<u>£846.63</u>
c) Collections for charities					
Ride and Stride					£340.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter					£367.40
The Children's Society Christingle					£114.50
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£821.90</u>
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2019
d) Interest					
Fabric Fund		£2.80		£2.80	£3.64
Contingency Reserve Fund	£37.89			£37.89	£87.01
Balston Endowment Fund			£4.42	£4.42	£5.81
Vicar and Church Warden's Account		£3.44		£3.44	£6.05
	<u>£37.89</u>	<u>£6.24</u>	<u>£4.42</u>	<u>£48.55</u>	<u>£102.51</u>
e) Dividends					
Assistant Clergy Fund & Randall Mercer		£1,884.53		£1,884.53	£1,829.70
Fabric Fund		£48.99		£48.99	£48.09
Contingency Reserve Fund	£501.02			£501.02	£633.04
	<u>£501.02</u>	<u>£1,933.52</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£2,434.54</u>	<u>£2,510.83</u>
3f) The 2019 accounts included money collected from the congregation for gifts which were given, together with PCC funds to two leavers. The accounts have been restated to show solely the PCC contribution.					

Payments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2020	2019
g) Mission giving and donations					
Maidstone Deanery - Waypoint					£500.00
Friends of Canterbury Cathedral	£25.00			£25.00	£25.00
Homeless Care	£500.00			£500.00	£150.00
CPAS ventures					£282.00
Maidstone Street Pastors	£250.00			£250.00	£500.00
Church Army	£500.00			£500.00	£500.00
Friends of Kent Churches					£340.00
Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter					£1,509.25
CAST	£250.00			£250.00	£550.00
Other	£63.24			£63.24	
The Children's Society Christingle*					£143.12
CDBF Advent Justice Appeal					£200.00
	<u>£1,588.24</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£1,588.24</u>	<u>£4,699.37</u>
* Including gift aid and gift aid on small donations £120.47 (2018 £43.60)					
				2020	2019
h) Repairs & Maintenance					
Small hall ceiling collapse -Asbestos removal and replacement	£25,056.21			£25,056.21	£2,797.00
Repairs and Clearing to Roofs & Rainwater Goods	£2,946.66			£2,946.66	
Repairs to Prayer room following water ingress	£5,407.89			£5,407.89	
Sundry	£136.88			£136.88	£131.41
	<u>£33,547.64</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£33,547.64</u>	<u>£2,928.41</u>

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIDSTONE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

I report on the accounts of St. Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2020, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities and related notes set out on pages 1 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of members and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement to show a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



61 London Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8TX

J A GRIGGS FCA
LEVICKS
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

05 May 2021