

The Parish of Kemsing and Woodlands



Annual Report & Financial Statements 2023

Registered Charity 1131431

Incumbent

The Venerable Mike Lodge

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Parish Office

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Independent Examiner

Richard Goss

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation Bank Ltd.
25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4TA

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group PLC, Beaufort House,
Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1JZ

Quinquennial Inspector of Fabric

John Bailey, Thomas Ford & Partners 177 Kirkdale, Sydenham,
London SE26 4QH

Solicitor

Patti Russell, Diocesan Registrar
Arbor, 255 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 9AX

From the Vicar

'Building up the body of Christ'

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. ²⁸And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.



(1 Corinthians 12:27-31)

The apostle Paul makes an important point in his letter that just as a human body has many parts, each with different functions, so the church has many members, each with their different roles to play; and they are all necessary for the good of the church. It is for this reason that I want to begin by thanking everyone for your contributions over the past year; for what you have been able to do within the Body of Christ, for gifts used, time given and money pledged towards completing the tasks set before us. This is an appropriate opportunity for all of us to take a few moments in prayer to acknowledge the contributions of those around us, to thank God for them and take time to thank them in person...

'the most excellent way'

And *the most excellent way* the apostle Paul is referring to in his letter is described in the next chapter (1 Corinthians 13), described as a 'hymn of love', drawing our attention to one aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit which he sees as being of vital importance to the life of the church – love. Love is a significant ingredient in the life of the church and in all relationships. As love forms the very basis of our faith, God's unconditional love for us shown through the giving of His Son, Jesus Christ, so we are to respond by demonstrating our love for one another in the way that we speak to and treat each other, for there is no place for any substitute to this...

'Growing as the Body of Christ'

Growing is a natural part of life, both physical and spiritual, and growth applies to us as individuals as well as corporately as God's Church. As individuals we are able to contribute to the life and work of the Parish in order to see God's church develop and grow.

I want to briefly reflect on our Shared Vision for the Parish of Kemsing and Woodlands, established during 2023, to be...

Rooted in Jesus, Nurturing his Love, Growing his Church,

in the context its three main aims of:

- ***Our relationship with God***
- ***Our relationship with each other***
- ***Our relationship with the community***

Our relationship with God

One of our aims is to build up our faith through a commitment to Biblical teaching. Our growth in faith and commitment will be dependent on our commitment to learn more about Jesus and follow in His Way. We can do this through Bible Study, Home Groups, Sermons and listening to one another, as well as taking other opportunities as they arise.

Our worship is at the heart of what we do as we meet together regularly in God's name. It's as we gather together that we are able to offer praise to God for the richness of his love for us, that we can grow in our understanding of His purpose through the teaching of the Bible and as we listen to Him and one another in prayer.

Our relationship with each other

No matter how insignificant we think we are, the Bible clearly teaches us that each of us is important within the Church Family. In God's sight every one of us has been uniquely made and has a purpose in the world and the life of the church. It is vital that we encourage one another to use the gifts that God has given us and this will help to build up the life of the parish in a creative and wholesome way. We honour God by acknowledging and using the talents He has given us and it should be our ongoing desire to see His work flourish.

Our relationship with the community

The church buildings are already used for the benefit of the community and I believe that the completion of the New Church Hall in Kemsing will enable them all to be used with a more flexible approach. Ideally, all of our church buildings should accommodate the needs of the worshipping congregations and to provide facilities to enable them to be used for Christian and appropriate secular activities.

'Growing to maturity'

If our purpose, as we state in our Vision Statement, is to be, ***'Rooted in Jesus, Nurturing his Love, Growing his Church'***, then this is what we must try to be and accomplish as we grow towards God, one another and the community we serve. The process of growing, especially if we use our own bodies and lives as an example, is not an easy one, mainly because it implies a continuous process of evolving and change, with all the associated 'growing pains' that go with this!

If we are to continue to grow in faith and in numbers, then we cannot expect an easy ride. In fact, Jesus never promised that life as a 'Christian' would be that simple, but to expect opposition and challenges along the way. By growing together as Members of God's family in Kemsing and Woodlands we can be assured that we will be strengthened and equipped for the challenges that we face, working together as any successful team does - knowing what we have to achieve, equipped to do the job and helping and supporting each other.



The Venerable Mike Lodge
Priest in Charge

Churchwardens' Report

The year has seen a steady growth in our congregation numbers at the main Sunday morning services, the number of young people attending being a particularly encouraging feature. To a degree this has been counterbalanced by a reduction in the number of regular Evensong services. However, overall, on a population percentage basis, church attendance in our parish is running about double that for the Church of England across the country. A large part of this growth can be attributed to our Priest in Charge, Mike Lodge, in engaging with the wider village community as well as strengthening relationships with the village school children.

Against this positive position we have to accept that operating expenses particularly energy and insurance costs have seen the Church struggle to maintain / develop a healthy financial position, in spite of the considerable efforts of our Fundraising Team. However, we can take pride in the fact that we have been able to increase our "Parish Offer" contribution to the Rochester Diocese which goes towards the cost of our own ministry in addition to the administrative costs and outreach of the Diocese itself.

An additional drain of our financial resources is the continued delay in completing the construction of the new church hall, which when established will be a valuable source of revenue for the parish. At the time of writing this report we are prayerfully waiting for a positive outcome to the appeal against Sevenoaks Council's decision not to allow planning permission for a new vicarage to be constructed on the "church field", which could have a significant impact on our finances and ability to complete the construction of the hall.

A further issue of concern is the continued viability of Woodlands Church, where a small number of "festival" services were held during the year. Although these in themselves were quite well attended, collection donations do not meet the church's running costs. The lack of a natural critical mass of population on which to build a regular congregation as well as the inherent parking difficulties for visitors makes the continued viability of the church a challenging situation.

Woodlands Church was also subject to a Quinquennial inspection, legally required by the Diocese, in October. As with a similar inspection of Kemsing during the previous year, both churches were found to remain in a fundamentally sound condition, although a number of areas of deterioration were identified for attention within the next 2-4 years. Again, the financial situation within the parish has precluded an early start to undertaking the required repairs specified in these reports.

On a more positive note, our year ended with a bigger and more inclusive Christmas Service at the Well where we celebrated the birth of Christ. The event which included both the traditional carols and scripture readings attracted several hundred, bringing together families from both the church and village communities in celebration of God's wonderful gift.

In closing the Churchwardens would like to thank the PCC and members of the wider Church community for all their help, support and sound advice during the year.

Trevor Mallinson

Peter Chadwick

Church Attendance and Statistics 2023

Electoral Roll

At 31st Dec 2023, 126 parishioners were registered on the Electoral Roll, of whom 7 were not resident in the parish.

Services	Kemsing	Woodlands
Ave. Sunday Attendance (Adults)	75	31 (4 Festival Services)
Ave. Sunday Attendance (Children)	12	3 (4 Festival Services)
Easter Attendance	149	N/A
Christmas Attendance	675	41
Baptisms	18	2
Thanksgiving for Gift of Child	1	0
Weddings	2	1
Funerals (Church)	8	0
Funerals (Crematorium)	4	0
Interment of Ashes	13	1

Membership of the PCC 2022/23

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the church representation rules, or co-opted.

The PCC has complied with the duty under 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).

As charity trustees, the members of the PCC had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Ex-Officio Members

Incumbent	Venerable Mike Lodge
Churchwardens	Peter Chadwick, Trevor Mallinson
Diocesan Synod Reps	John Quenby, Jill Berry
Deanery Synod Reps	Jill Berry, Mary Quenby, John Quenby

Elected Members

Until APCM 2024	Ruth Mason, Nina Holley, Jean Walker
Until APCM 2025	Chris Freeman, Tamara Maretlane, David Round
Until APCM 2026	Rosemary Banister, Paul Mayo, Philip Walker

Other Appointments

Director of Music	Gillian Oldridge
PCC Treasurer	Philip Walker
PCC Secretary	Rosemary Banister
Gift Aid Officer	Peter Chadwick
Electoral Roll Officer	Nina Holley
Lead Recruiter	Anita Connelly
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Tamara Maretlane
Children and Families Worker	Vacant
Children & Youth Co-ordinator	Ruth Mason
Ruth Mason	Licensed Lay Minister with PTO
Mary Quenby	Reader with PTO
Philip Walker	Reader with PTO

Welcome Team (Sidesmen)

The following were appointed during 2023

Rosemary Banister	Alan Brightman	Martin Brightman
Peter Chadwick	Michael Cursons (Lead)	Gitta Edenborough
Chris Freeman	Ros McLarney	Robert Pierson
David Round	Mary Round	Ranusha de Silva
Ann Taunton	Geoffrey Taunton	Jean Walker
Bridget Wolfe		

Review of the Year

Activities of the PCC and Church Family

Church Hall, Kemsing

Following completion in September 2021 of most of the external work, and internally to 'First Fix' stage, at a total cost of just over £500,000, no further building work has been carried out, apart from some minor 'snagging' remedial work, carried out by the builder in accordance with the agreed contract.

The Hall building work has been held back pending the outcome of the planning appeal for the building of a new Vicarage, submitted by the Diocese of Rochester in August 2022, the delay due to a shortage of relevantly qualified Inspectors.

In relation to discussions with the Diocesan Property Director and Diocesan Finance Director, a grant was approved by the Diocesan Finance Committee in 2022 to assist with the cost of the Insurance. Following two claims in 2023 a total of £15,000 has been received.

Discussions have continued with Diocesan Officers and Diocesan Finance Committee regarding the Parish Church Hall business plan, drawn up in September 2022, in readiness to move to Phase 2 of the project and to complete the Hall.

Mike Lodge

Safeguarding

Within St. Mary's Kemsing and Woodlands, the safety and wellbeing of all people, especially children and vulnerable adults is taken seriously. Over the past year, we have continued to focus on ensuring that safeguarding is central in what we do.

My focus has been to ensure that PCC members, and those working with children and vulnerable adults have completed the necessary training as required by the diocese. I have run two face to face safeguarding training sessions, as well as offering support to those who preferred to complete the training online. 18 members of the church have now completed the basic safeguarding awareness training - from the PCC, Sunday Special Leaders and Open Door leaders, and 17 have completed the foundations course. Our current focus is to ensure that all PCC members have completed training on Domestic Abuse and plan to offer a face to face session for this in the upcoming months. Four people have completed the safeguarding leadership training.

Anita Connelly continues to take responsibility for DBS checks for all church members who need them, as per safer recruitment procedures.

We have started to use the diocesan safeguarding dashboard to monitor and check our progress and that we have implemented actions to ensure safeguarding is prioritised. Our safeguarding policy is accessible from the front page of the church website, alongside a hard copy also available, applicable to all activities the church carries out.

I have been grateful for the support offered to all parishes from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team where I have had queries, they have responded quickly and helpfully. We have not had any formal safeguarding incidents in the past year. My contact details are available in the church porch for anyone with concerns to contact me.

I am grateful for the support from Mike with regards to carrying out my responsibilities as Parish Safeguarding Officer and to everyone who has been willing to take time to complete trainings. Safeguarding is everyone's business and thank you to everyone who keeps an eye out and raises concerns when they have them to keep all those who have contact with the church safe.

Tamara Maretlane

The Friends of St Mary's, Kemsing

Our AGM was held as usual on the first Saturday in February and after a short business meeting we examined the files cataloguing the Church Artefacts compiled by NADFAS. Barbara Ropek said a few words about the work involved.

A Committee meeting was held in April to discuss future projects, membership, fundraising and the AGM.

Membership has dropped to around 30, nevertheless we raised £2,098. This figure is made up of members' subscriptions, gift aid and the £578 from the lunch in June hosted by Jean and Philip Walker.

We were asked to contribute to the cost of new bell ropes and pulleys by the bell ringers which was readily agreed by the Committee.

£5,889 was carried forward from 2022, so the Friends had £7,456 to spend. Around £1,000 will help pay for bell ropes and pulleys. We hope to contribute to the upgrade of the sound system or the lighting as the PCC see fit.

Debby Pierson, Secretary

Pastoral Team

Mary Quenby leads the team. The team includes seven Church members who are all Enhanced CRB checked and who all support the aims and objectives of the team and also support each other working well together. The team works closely with the Priest in Charge who attends the regular meetings.

We are pleased to welcome Pamela Burrige and Ruth Allen to the team which includes Brenda Buttifant, David Debenham, Ray Parton, Nina Holly, and Jenny Williamson.

We visit newcomers, the sick and housebound, and the bereaved, and also visit those in residential care. We are revising the role of Road stewards to keep in touch with all who are in need including revision of the Welcome leaflet

"Open Door" continues to provide companionship and interest for the elderly and housebound, to meet together in The St Edith Hall on Monday mornings. We are pleased to welcome Ruth Allen who now leads this.

The Luncheon Club meets every Wednesday and provides a home cooked lunch and fellowship for people living alone to meet together, also in The St Edith Hall. This is a combined village service with AGE CONCERN and a large group of supporters who continue to produce delicious welcome lunches each week

The Craft Group meets on Thursday afternoon in the library and gives opportunity for sharing craft and fellowship, led by Jane Webb.

The Pastoral Team is not solely responsible for these activities but contributes in many ways. It demonstrates the caring pastoral concerns of the body of Christ in Kemsing. It shows good works emanating from our faith and following in the Our Lords command to love God and love our neighbours as ourselves

There is liaison with Open Door, Helping Hand, Mothers and others, Luncheon Club, and with the community at Woodlands when we share facilities and note where needs arise. Whilst we do not have a church hall available we are grateful for the hospitality so generously offered to us. Grateful thanks for the blessings we all receive.

Mary Quenby

Baby and Toddler Group

The Baby and Toddler Group continues to fulfil its aim to provide a warm and welcoming space. The children enjoy the craft as well as toys and biscuits. The adults who bring children are very grateful for the time, space, and friendship. The adults vary from great-granny to the very young mum with new-born baby. The greatest number of adults are from the grandparents. Childminding is demonstrating the need for parents to work. At the end of each term the families receive an appropriate Bible based story book.

Ruth Mason

Youth and Family

Over the past year, Sunday Special has had anywhere between 9 and 22 children attending on a Sunday morning. Over the year we've looked at the life of King Saul and the importance for us of remaining obedient to God, the mission of the church to tell people the good news of Jesus, and have just completed looking at the Sermon on the Mount and what Jesus teaches us about how to live in a way which glorifies Him. As a lively group, we have been focusing on Looking, Listening and Loving - demonstrating practically to each other in Sunday Special respect and love for each other and the children love seeing who has demonstrated these three qualities most each week! It's been wonderful to see the children and young people be involved in other areas of the life of the church, singing in the music group and choir, helping at the food festival and participating in the Christmas Tree competition.

We have a small group of young people who are now at Secondary School, and it is wonderful to see how they continue to grow in their understanding of the Bible and faith in Jesus, and pray they continue to grow in faith despite the challenges of being a young person today. One real joy to see is how well they lead the action song at the 11am service each week - taking on the responsibility with confidence and leading us in worship.

Tamara Maretlane

Choir and Music

The 9.30 Choir has seen a decline in numbers and had it not been for a few exceptionally loyal members, would have been disbanded. We also sadly lost Douglas Bennett, a very able tenor.

The 11.00 Singing Group has grown and is attracting more members.

The extra services have been well attended and supported by other musical members of the congregation, although there is always room for more singers who want to have a go. I try to choose music which is accessible to all abilities and yet meaningful for the event.

We had a lovely Carol service and a memorable Good Friday service.

Whatever the numbers, those who sing with us do it with commitment, conviction and heart, and a desire to communicate the Gospel message through the medium of music.

Sincere thanks are due to all who contribute their musical talent and all who support.

Gillian Oldridge, Director of Music

Church Flower Group

This year the Church Flower Group has welcomed a new member – Diane Campos who has joined us with enthusiasm and with fresh ideas.

We were delighted when we came first in the Church category of the Christmas Tree Festival and our arrangements in Church for Christmas took on a slightly different format which was much admired.

During the year we have decorated our beautiful church for two weddings and for the coronation of King Charles III when we had a red, white and blue theme which was also much admired.

If there are any younger members of the congregation who would like to join us please get in touch with me – you would be most welcome.

Since January we have begun planning for our Flower Festival in June with a biblical theme. We hope this will be a great success.

Ann Taunton

Joint Churchyard Maintenance Committee

The removal of the Irish Yew which was too close to the Church Porch opened up a view from the west lychgate to the Church, and has made the path easier to navigate. Other pruning was carried out on some of the Yews, with the result that the grass is easier to mow, and headstones have been revealed.

The curved seat dedicated to Phil Burrows which had fallen into disrepair was beautifully restored by Richard Dalton, and will be much appreciated by visitors to the Churchyard in future.

Relocation of the 'spoil/compost heap' is still a work in progress. A request by Sue Stoyell for bird boxes to be put up on some of the trees was agreed, and it is hoped that the birds will use them. A wildflower area has been set aside by the car park wall. It is still intended to plant a tree in memory of our late Queen Elizabeth II.

The Parochial Church Council and Kemsing Parish Council agreed to renew their joint agreement to fund maintenance to the Churchyard for another 15 years from January 2023.

Rosemary Banister, PCC Secretary

'The Well'

We were able to publish and distribute all four quarterly editions in 2023, with our regular advertisers mostly carrying on, with one or two new ones. Our grateful thanks to them, and to Kemsing Parish Council which agreed to help with the printing costs.

The highlight of the year was the King and Queen's Coronation on 6th May which the Summer edition showed on its cover, with photographs of some of the village street parties. The cover of the Autumn edition was a drawing of St Edith by Vic Bowden, our Kemsing Historian who wrote *The Story of Kemsing in Kent*. Vic refused to describe himself as an historian, but he certainly fulfilled that role wonderfully. Copies of his book are still available in the Kemsing Heritage Centre.

Our thanks to our regular contributors Sue Stoyell and Caroline Copleston who keep us informed about the natural world about us, and to the village groups and societies who send in details of their past and future activities. We hope that future generations will be able to read past copies of 'The Well' and capture what Kemsing was like in the years gone by.

Last but not least, our thanks to Julian at Highland Printers who has been such a great help getting copies printed on time, and to our volunteers who give up their time to distribute them to each household in the parish.

The Well Editors

Open Door

November 2022 – October 2023

Open Door continued to meet on Monday mornings apart from Bank Holidays, Mondays at Christmas, Easter, and the whole of August – 40 weeks in total. There are currently 33 on the register. We began the year with 32, 5 sadly died and 2 moved on to a care home, but 4 new people joined us over the months. These figures do not include Sheila and Hugh Kindred who were with us on and off from April to July, neither does it include our wonderful helpers in the kitchen, waitresses and table setter-uppers.

In November 2022 we filled 10 shoeboxes which went to Moldova, we decorated a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival, and played carols on the hand bells at the Christmas Fayre. In December we enjoyed a lovely Christmas meal at Wrotham, and finished the year with mince pies while celebrating Dorothy Lane's 90th birthday.

We began 2023 by introducing a 'Thought for the Week' at the end of each session. In February our 'bell' disappeared and has not been seen since. Also in February we had a short service in church to remember Phyllis Bishop, Dot Kent, and Tony Stanton, as we had been unable to attend funerals for them.

In May we had a half day outing to Hall Place, a lovely day and a delicious tea. Most months we have held a raffle run by Rita and Daphne (then Rosemary), the profits from which have paid for the cream teas on our outings. In June another 90th birthday was celebrated for Dennis Searle. In July we had a visit from the Year 6 children at the village school. They played table games with us and sang songs from their show.

In August we went to Hastings for the day. It was rather damp and windy. However, it enabled us to enjoy the chance to visit various cafes for coffee, lunch, or afternoon tea before the coach journey home.

In September, it was agreed that David and Ruth Allen should join the Committee with a view to taking over the responsibility for Open Door from the November AGM. Also in September we held a very successful Macmillan Coffee Morning, when we raised £300. In October we enjoyed a delicious soup and dessert lunch to celebrate Open Door's 33rd birthday. We ended the year with a half-day Autumn Ride and cream tea at Merriments Garden Centre.

Some people who have been brought by transport have put money into a box, and when the amount reaches £50 we have given it to the Church Treasurer for the new Church Hall.

I would like to close this report by saying a huge 'thank you' to the Committee and all the helpers and drivers, for all they do each week to make Open Door the success it has been. Thank you, as I now hand over the reins to David and Ruth. God Bless everyone who comes so eagerly each week.

Jenny Williamson

November – December 2023

In November, Open Door filled 7 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, and decorated a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival. In December we again went to the Holiday Inn at Wrotham for our Christmas meal, and ran a stall at the Christmas Fayre, selling superfluous books and jigsaws from our Open Door bookstall. The children from Years 5 and 6 at Kemsing School came to sing Christmas songs for us and were a delight as they mingled among us chatting about Christmas.

Ruth and David Allen

Traidcraft

In my report last year I reported that the name of Traidcraft Exchange had changed to Transform Trade. This year we were sad to hear that Traidcraft PLC had gone into administration. Traidcraft had been trading for 40 years and Kemsing Church had been an outlet for their goods for a good part of that time - started by Hilary Kendall in the time of Richard Bateman. Transform Trade has bought the name 'Traidcraft' so that it cannot be misused.

Year ending 31st December 2023

Payments		Receipts	
Goods	68.47	B/forward	4,739.08
Kenya Trust SKET	250.00	Goods sold	290.00
Transform Trade	1,500.00		
Leprosy Mission	310.61		
Kenya Trust SKET	1,400.00		
Poverty & Hope	1,500.00		
(Rochester DBF)	4,960.61		
	-----		-----
	£5,029.08		£5,029.08
	=====		=====

November 2023 — Account now Closed

Transform Trade carries on with the work previously done under the name Traidcraft Exchange with its mission to campaign and help traders in developing countries find outlets for their goods and obtain fair payment. Traidcraft was one of the first to promote the Fair Trade movement. Without Traidcraft UK Transform Trade needs to raise funds and find other ethical companies to sell the goods. At Christmas it produced its own Christmas cards and is considering selling some goods directly. Many thanks to Gitta Edenborough for keeping the accounts so efficiently.

Jill Berry

St Mary's Craft Group

The craft group year has been as busy as ever trying to meet the needs of the charity, the Queen Mother's Clothing Guild (QMCG), together with items to be sold at the Church sale in December.

In September we once again packed many bags of charity requirements. Having done this for a number of years now, we have learnt from the charities about their particular needs. These bags were collected and taken to St. James' Palace in London.

We were very fortunate to obtain two tickets for members to go and see the Palace and surroundings and to meet some of the charities and find out their views. You may have read Barbara Bond's account of her visit with Caroline Bevan in September.

Our membership continues to grow slightly and people seem to enjoy their chatty Tuesday afternoons. We always welcome new members and love hearing about the crafts they can do. Teaching goes on as required and is much appreciated. Thank you for the wool that has come in since our last appeal, we are always very grateful. Tea on a Tuesday is between 2.30 and 3pm and we would be very happy to see you.

Jane Webb

Bellringing

The highlight of the year was the ringing to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, when we rang prior to the service on the morning of 6th May. During the year we rang for Sunday Services, at our regular Tuesday evening practices, and on Christmas Day. On Remembrance Sunday the bells were rung half-muffled as usual (the hand-stroke open and the back-stroke quietened with a leather pad on the clapper).

Visitors during the year were the Kent County Association of Change Ringers (KCACR) MINI-ringers (under twelves) on 29th January and 28th October, the Southern District of the Essex Association of Change Ringers on 14th October, and a KCACR Tonbridge District Practice on 4th November. The organiser of the Essex outing, Nigel Taylor, used to work at The Whitechapel Bell Foundry and tuned the Kemsing bells after they were cast in 1991. On Easter Sunday the tower was open for ringers going to the KCACR AGM at Wrotham but, probably because of the awful weather that day, no one came!

A new set of ropes was ordered from Ellis Ropes Ltd. of Loughborough in March, and the ropes were delivered in October. The Friends of St. Mary's kindly met half the cost, with the ringers contributing the other half. Subject to certain conditions, VAT can be reclaimed on all work on bells and bell frames, including the supply of ropes and pulleys. New flax ropes are quite difficult to handle because of their initial springiness, and it was decided to fit them in 2024 so that the various visitors at the end of the year and our own ringers did not have to contend with new ropes over the winter, and our two ringers who look after the bells did not have to spend hours up in the belfry over the cold winter months! When the new ropes are hung we will also be replacing five, of twelve, pulley sheaves in the belfry, which are showing excessive wear.

All in all it has been an enjoyable year, and people seem to appreciate the bells, especially the half-muffled ringing.

Fraser Clift, Tower Captain

Loaves and Fishes

Although a sad reflection of the effect of the continued austerity and inflationary pressures affecting our country, Kemsing's donations to the central Food Bank for the area at St John's Church, Sevenoaks have not faltered in meeting this need. We continue to remain indebted to Ray Parton to allow his home to be an additional "drop off" point for donations which is in addition to the collection box at the back of the church, enabling both the church and village communities to join in this most valuable form of outreach.

Our monthly contributions are always gratefully received by the cheerful and efficient group of volunteers at St John's Church. Donations such as ours and from other churches, schools and businesses in the area enable an initial emergency bag of food to be given to anybody in need without any further referral or introduction required.

On a practical level, in addition to the more critical need for donations of non-perishable food items, other household requirements such as cleaning materials and hygiene products are also welcomed. Thank you again to all who contribute to our Loaves and Fishes project, your continued generosity is much appreciated.

Peter Chadwick and Trevor Mallinson

Helping Hand Driving Scheme

Following our recent appeals we have had a modest increase in driver numbers. So a warm welcome to Howard Pearl and Nigel Cuttill. More drivers are always very welcome too but, meanwhile, many thanks to all the drivers for their willingness to help out.

We've managed 202 drives in 2023—somewhat down on the previous year's 239. In fact, December and January have been remarkably quiet. Maybe it's still a problem getting a medical appointment or maybe there are still Kemsing residents who are not yet fully aware of us. So don't be afraid to contact me

Alastair Boobyer, Home: 01959 522490, Mob: 07400 711985

Fundraising Team

The fundraising team organised events throughout the year for church funds. Including a Food Festival, BBQ, Quiz, Tree Festival and Christmas Fayre, a total of around £4,100 was raised. In addition, through the use of Easyfundraising, over £250 had been raised by the year end. For more information on Easyfundraising please talk to me or Mike Lodge.

David Round

Treasurer's Report

The Church has come through the year having paid its agreed Parish Share and managed £2,000 extra toward the calculated request. We also paid the full requirement from fees received to the Diocese.

The result of not having a church hall still causes a grave strain on the church finances.

St Mary's, Kemsing, has supported Woodlands Church considerably during the year. Although no formal contribution was made towards its running costs, £720.63 was received from Service collections.

The loan for the finishing of the first stage of the Church Hall has been paid off.

My thanks goes out to Michael Martin and Richard Goss for their work in presenting and examining the accounts, and to Peter Chadwick for sterling work in reclaiming significant sums from HMRC in gift aid.

Dr Philip Walker, Honorary Treasurer

Accounting Policies

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions together with FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

Assets

Consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of "charity" by section 10(2) (a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011, such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

The Church Hall is not consecrated property. No depreciation is provided on the Hall as the currently estimated residual value is not less than its carrying value and the remaining useful life currently exceeds 50 years, so that any depreciation charges would be immaterial. If the carrying value of the Hall looks greater than its current value on this basis, an impairment review will be carried out and any resultant loss included in expenditure for the year.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Investments (Income shares held by the Churches Board of Finance) are valued at market value at the year end.

Funds

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

Restricted funds: These are income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and represent donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis. Details of the funds held are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds: are resources received by the PCC, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Designated funds: These are a portion of the unrestricted funds of the PCC that have been set aside for a particular purpose by the PCC.

Incoming resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the income resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Dividends are accounted for when receivable, interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when it is receivable. All income resources are accounted for gross.

Expenditure and Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation and settlement is probable and quantifiable. Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation to the PCC. The Diocesan Indicative Offer (Parish Share) is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Reserve Policy

It is the policy of the PCC that sufficient reserves should be held to pay, for three months, the necessary bills to ensure the church can continue to meet its legal obligations. In principle, this will be to pay:-

The incumbent, the organist, administrator and cleaners, the utility bills and insurance on the churches and hall, the council tax on the vicarage and vicarage services, the vicar's expenses and administration and upkeep of the churchyards.


Due to the pandemic, this criterion was not met at every point in 2023 from unrestricted funds and reserves. The reserve figure for 2024 is set at £20,000.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023

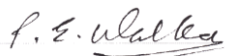
	Note	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSET			
Tangible Fixed Assets	6	613,217	617,998
Investments	7	59,836	54,691
		<u>673,053</u>	<u>672,689</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	8	3,625	3,946
Cash at bank and in hand	9	58,708	83,360
		<u>62,333</u>	<u>87,306</u>
LIABILITIES:			
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>7,333</u>	<u>58,949</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)		<u>55,001</u>	<u>28,357</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		728,054	701,046
Creditors - amounts falling due after one year	11	10,000	10,000
TOTAL NET ASSETS	12	<u>718,054</u>	<u>691,046</u>
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted	12 & 13	17,815	18,964
Designated	12 & 13	20,457	19,244
Restricted	12 & 13	58,619	49,764
Restricted Hall - a non cash fund	12 & 13	567,358	553,467
Endowment	12 & 13	53,805	49,608
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>718,054</u>	<u>691,046</u>

Note: 2022 figures adjusted to incorporate "Open Door" .

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 11 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



 Ven M. Lodge
 Priest in Charge



 P. E. Walker
 Honorary Treasurer

The notes on pages 20 to 23 form part of these accounts.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

		Unres- tricted Funds £	Desig- nated Funds £	Res- tricted Funds £	Endow- ments £	TOTAL FUNDS	
	Note					2023 £	2022 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS							
Voluntary income	2(a)	60,045		-	-	60,045	54,038
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	13,183		26,638	-	39,821	24,492
Activities for generating funds	2(c)	11,565		13,891	-	25,456	26,481
Income from investment	2(d)	844	264	277	1,241	2,626	1,906
TOTAL INCOME		85,637	264	40,806	1,241	127,949	106,916
RESOURCES EXPENDED							
Missionary and charitable giving	3(a)	-		455	-	455	793
Activities directly related to the work of the church	3(b)	77,674		11,980	1,241	90,895	79,842
Fund raising costs	3(c)	65		-	-	65	87
Church management and administration	3(d)	14,672		-	-	14,672	13,555
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		92,410	-	12,435	1,241	106,087	94,276
NET INCOME (EXPENDITURE) BEFORE INVESTMENTS GAINS/(LOSSES)							
		(6,773)	264	28,372	-	21,862	12,640
NET GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENT			949		4,197	5,146	(7,297)
TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	4	5,625	-	(5,625)	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(1,149)	1,213	22,747	4,197	27,008	5,343
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1ST JANUARY 2023		18,964	19,244	603,230	49,608	691,046	685,703
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023		17,815	20,457	625,977	53,805	718,054	691,046

Note: 2022 figures adjusted to incorporate "Open Door" .

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

2 INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unre- stricted Funds £	Design- ated Funds £	Restric- ted Funds £	Endow- ments £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	2022 £
2(a) Voluntary income						
Planned giving:						
Gift aid donations and other planned giving	43,773				43,773	42,042
Income tax recoverable	9,330				9,330	8,879
Collections (open plate) at all services	6,943				6,943	3,117
	<u>60,045</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>60,045</u>	<u>54,038</u>
2(b) Other voluntary income						
Kemsing Old School Trust			1,244		1,244	659
Donations, appeals, etc	6,720		4,919		11,639	9,267
Fund-raising	4,011		8,652		12,663	10,359
Legacies	2,000		-	-	2,000	2,500
Café Trading			-		-	-
Miscellaneous income	452		11,823		12,275	1,707
	<u>13,183</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,638</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,821</u>	<u>24,492</u>
2(c) Activities for generating income						
Magazine 'The Well'	6,600				6,600	3,079
Church Hall donations	-		13,891		13,891	16,268
Fees for weddings and funerals	4,965				4,965	7,134
	<u>11,565</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,891</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,456</u>	<u>26,481</u>
2(d) Income from investments						
Dividends and interest	844	264	277	1,241	2,626	1,906
TOTAL INCOME	<u>85,637</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>40,806</u>	<u>1,241</u>	<u>127,949</u>	<u>106,916</u>

Please note that the full pounds & pence amounts are not shown in these statements but are rounded to the nearest pound and some totals may appear to not exactly add-up for this reason.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unre- stricted Funds £	Restric- ted Funds £	Endow- ments £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	2022 £
3(a) Missionary and charitable giving					
Home missions and other Church Societies	-	455	-	455	793
	-	455	-	455	793
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the church					
Ministry -					
Clergy expenses	575			575	844
Vicarage expenses	3,922			3,922	5,069
Other clergy costs	232			232	243
Diocesan parish share	34,400			34,400	28,276
Junior church	-	1,244		1,244	972
Church running expenses	7,336	4,537		11,873	12,140
Church maintenance	6,793	-		6,793	5,048
Choir and organ	561	-		561	606
Parish magazine	6,760			6,760	5,065
Upkeep of churchyard	2,978	1,466	1,241	5,685	3,550
Church hall running costs	3,107	4,732		7,840	7,521
Salaries and fees for services	11,010	-		11,010	10,508
	77,674	11,980	1,241	90,895	79,842
3(c) Fund-raising costs					
Cost of events and activities	65	-		65	87
Café Trading	-	-		-	-
	65	-	-	65	87
3(d) Church management and administration					
Administration	7,831			7,831	6,715
Depreciation	-			-	-
Salaries	6,842			6,842	6,840
	14,672	-	-	14,672	13,555
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	92,410	12,435	1,241	106,087	94,276

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

4 ANALYSIS OF TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
New Hall Insurance	5,625	(5,625)	0

Premium in 2022 was charged to unrestricted but covered by Diocesan grant in 2023.

5 (a) STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	6,842	6,887

During the year the PCC employed an Administrator.

The position of Youth Worker remained vacant in 2023 but there was an adjustment in 2022 to final payment to outgoing Youth Worker.

In addition, fees for the services of a Director of Music, various visiting organists, visiting clergy and a cleaner were paid for but these persons are not employees of the PCC.

5 (b) PAYMENTS TO PCC MEMBERS

Other than to the Incumbent, no payments or expenses were paid to any PCC member, persons closely connected to them or related parties.

6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	2023 £	2022 £
(a) Buildings		
The construction of the new hall commenced in July 2019 and by end 2021 the roof was on and the building water tight. Phase 1 completed.		
To complete construction to a useable state see note 14.		
Fitting out and internal furniture and equipment will also be required.	613,217	617,998
(b) Office Equipment		
There is no net book value at 31st December 2023.	-	-
Total Tangible Assets	613,217	617,998

7 INVESTMENT ASSETS

The legacies received for the maintenance of certain graves in the Kemsing churchyard have been invested in the Church of England Investment Fund and have been taken into the accounts at market value.

The Woodlands designated "contingency fund" is similarly invested (see note 11).

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value at 1st January	54,691	61,988
Gain / (Loss)	5,145	(7,297)
Market Value at 31 December	59,836	54,691

8 DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Income Tax recoverable	3,324	3,202
Other debtors	301	744
	3,625	3,946

9 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash - Restricted *	1,842	1,081
Bank - Restricted, Designated or Endowment *	52,143	66,434
Bank - Unrestricted	4,723	15,845
Term Deposits *	0	0
	58,708	83,360

* Note: See Note 12 regarding split of Bank balances over various Funds.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

10 LIABILITIES:

	2023 £	2022 £
CREDITORS - AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
New Hall creditors	1,800	48,634
Loan repayments due	-	9,488
Other accruals and deferred income	5,533	827
	<u>7,333</u>	<u>58,949</u>

11 CREDITORS - AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER ONE YEAR

Loan	10,000	10,000
	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>

12 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unres- tricted Funds £	Desig- nated Funds £	Res- tricted Funds £	Res- tricted Hall Fund £	Endow- ments £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets				613,217		613,217	617,998
Investments		11,031			48,805	59,836	54,691
Debtors	3,625					3,625	3,946
Deficit funding *	15,000		19,059	(34,059)			
Cash/Bank	4,723	9,425	39,560		5,000	58,708	83,360
Current creditor	(5,533)			(1,800)		(7,333)	(58,949)
Creditor due after 1 year				(10,000)		(10,000)	(10,000)
Net Assets	<u>17,816</u>	<u>20,456</u>	<u>58,619</u>	<u>567,358</u>	<u>53,805</u>	<u>718,054</u>	<u>691,046</u>

* Deficit Funding - All construction costs for the Hall (Phase1) were finally paid in 2023 but these exceeded funds raised to date. The Restricted Hall Fund has utilised £19,059 from Kemsing Church Development Fund and £15,000 from Unrestricted Funds. These funds will need to be replaced and the position is planned to be rectified as soon as the hall situation is cleared once the outcome of the Planning Appeal in respect of the new vicarage is known.

13 FUND DETAILS

The Restricted Fund is comprised of the following funds -	2023 £	2022 £
· The Frank Johnson Memorial Fund - provides for the education of the junior choir in church music.	150	150
· The Kemsing Church Development Fund - provides for building projects within the church.	27,762	27,762
· The Holiday Club Fund - is for the Children's Summer Holiday Club.	199	199
· The Friends of St Mary's Kemsing - raise funds for specific maintenance and building development within the fabric of the church.	7,456	5,889
· The Kemsing Hall Rebuilding & Equipping Fund - relates to funds raised specifically towards the new hall and is represented by the hall building.	567,358	553,467
· Kemsing - Church yard.	6,250	-
· Kemsing - Open Door.	1,842	1,081
· Woodlands - Church & Hall Maintenance.	14,627	14,350
· Woodlands - Church Repair.	333	333
	<u>625,977</u>	<u>603,230</u>

The Designated Fund is comprised of the following funds -

	2023 £	2022 £
· Woodlands - Church Repair Fund	9,425	9,161
· Woodlands - Contingency Fund	11,031	10,083
	<u>20,457</u>	<u>19,244</u>

The Endowment Fund consists of six small trusts and a deposit (£5,000) established to provide an income for the maintenance of graves in the Kemsing graveyard and provide Chancel income.

14 CONTINGENT LIABILITY

The PCC entered into a contract for Phase 1 of the Hall and that phase was completed in 2021 with final payments in 2023. There is no contract in place to finalise construction. At present we await the outcome of the Planning Appeal and only then can a decision be made on how to proceed and to call for quotations to complete the hall to a useable state.

Independent Examiner's Report To The PCC of The Parish of Kemsing and Woodlands

This report on the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on the preceding pages, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s. 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As the Members of the PCC, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulation and s.145 of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulation.

Basis of this Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under s. 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church Guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect therequirements:
 - (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the Act, and
 - (b) to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met, or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

Signed:



Date:



Richard Goss

21 The Landway, Kemsing, Sevenoaks, TN15 6TG