

**The Parochial Church Council  
of  
St Thomas' and St Mary Magdalene's Churches  
Stockton Heath**



**Annual and Financial Reports  
for the Year Ending  
31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

### Introduction

This information is published as part of the requirements of the Church of England Regulations and Requirements of the Charities Commissioners.

The Parish of St. Thomas, Stockton Heath is in the Deanery of Great Budworth and is a part of the Diocese of Chester. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is a registered Charity (Charity No.1131459)

St Thomas' PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Michael Ridley, in promoting the mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St. Thomas' Church, London Rd., Stockton Heath, St. Thomas Church Hall, Ellesmere Rd. Stockton Heath, St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dingleway/Bridge Lane Appleton and 8 St. Monica's Close Appleton.

Correspondence should be addressed to:

The Vicar,

St. Thomas' Vicarage, 12 Melton Avenue,  
Walton, Warrington, WA4 6PQ.

Tel:01925 261396

### Parochial Church Council 2021

**Vicar**

**Rev. Michael Ridley**

#### Ex Officio Members

Lay Reader (Licenced Oct 2022) Lee Marsh

Pastoral Workers (Resigned) Olu Olojugba  
Claire Hutt  
Julie Brown

Deanery Synod Dorothy Carter  
Susan Burke  
Jenny Corroboy

Church Wardens Sheila Barton  
Melanie Wilson

#### Elected Members

Peter Speed	Peter Banyard
Kirsty Gill	Lynda Heesom
David Whalley	Dorika Roxby
Stuart Marley	James Thornton
Jacqueline Shaw	Sarah Downes
Elaine Smith	
(Resigned)	Sarah Gibbons
(Resigned)	Joanne Benson

#### Officers

Secretary	Dorothy Carter
Treasurer	Sue Burke
Safeguarding	Dorothy Carter

Lay Readers	Christine Chapman
	Joanna Woodward
Licenced October 2022	Lee Marsh

In 2022 the Parochial Church Council met in January, March, April, June, September and November with Standing Committee meetings generally two weeks beforehand. Face to face meetings had resumed, following the easing of Covid restrictions, although the PCC did proceed with caution in all areas.

Standing Committees are made up of the Vicar (who also Chairs the PCC), The Church Wardens, The Secretary and the Treasurer and these willing people prepare for the PCC meeting, and make emergency decisions, which are ratified by the PCC at the next PCC Meeting.

PCC members are also Charity Trustees and are recruited from and voted for by members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll. PCC members are elected for three-year terms after which they must stand down, but can stand for re-election.

The PCC adheres to its aims and principles concerning outreach and mission, whilst managing the finances and the running of and safety of both Churches.

Action groups hold their own meetings but refer to the PCC for approval of their spending and actions.

Issues addressed include worship, mission, safeguarding, ecumenical matters, social activities and all the possible ways of enhancing outreach and mission.

The PCC works extremely hard on the many aspects of running a successful Church and thanks go to all who attend regularly with a cheerful willingness and enthusiasm.

New faces and talents are always welcome and anyone who feels that they can contribute should speak to the Secretary or a Church Warden.

***Dorothy Carter/PCC Secretary***

## Great Budworth Deanery Synod

The aims of the Deanery Synod are:

- To consider matters concerning the Church of England.
- To bring together the views of the parishes of the Deanery,
- To act as the channel of communication between the parishes of the Deanery and the Diocesan Synod.
- To effect decisions made by the Diocesan Synod.
- To raise matters with the Diocesan Synod.
- To elect representatives to the diocesan and General Synods.

St. Thomas' And St. Mary's representatives for 2022 were Dorothy Carter, Jenny Corroboy and Susan Burke. Deanery Synod representatives attend meetings on behalf of the Parish and report back to the PCC. The Parish is also represented by Pastoral Workers Olu Olojugba, Claire Hutt and Julie Brown.

Because of the numbers on our electoral roll, we are eligible to elect four members for the Deanery Synod. It is a three-year election process and there is a place for one more representative. If anyone would like to learn more about this role, please talk to a Church Warden or one of the representatives.

***Dorothy Carter***

***Deanery Synod Representative***

## Risk report

The major risks to which the PCC are exposed are reviewed regularly and systems and procedures are in place to ensure that those are in place.

Major risks identified are:

- Adverse publicity
- Demographic change
- Dependency on income
- Disaster issues
- Fund raising
- Governance
- Security
- Volunteering
- Vulnerable people
- Pandemic

Risk assessments are stored at a central point and can be viewed on request.

## Electoral Roll

The electoral roll closed on April 19<sup>th</sup> to allow time for revision for revision and a new version will be instated. The electoral roll will be opened on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and the final number of applicants will be announced at the AGM on that day.

Congregation members are encouraged to have their names added to give them voting rights at general meetings.

Should anyone wish to be entered on the electoral roll application forms are available at the Church Office, or ask one of the Church Wardens.

***Simon Hutt.***

***Electoral Roll Officer***

## A Message to All Our Volunteers

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who volunteers and does such amazing things to make our Church such a wonderful place. Thanks to all who have so eagerly returned after the pandemic and thanks to all the new ones who have done so much to help.

Some volunteers underwent safeguarding training and DBS checks to comply with The Diocesan Policies and we thank you for the extra effort.

Thanks go to all who work so hard to make our Church the warm, welcoming and safe haven that it is.

## Reserve Policy

It is the aim of the PCC to seek to hold £18,000 in unrestricted reserves to enable cover for three months' running costs in the event of a major problem, and/or to provide additional support for some unforeseen repairs. Having considered the out-goings the PCC deems this to be a reasonable amount to hold in reserve to maintain an adequate cash flow. This policy will be reviewed in twelve months' time by the PCC, who will consider the viability of this amount.

## **A Word from Your Vicar**

Dear Friends

The last year has seen an incredible change in the world: slowly we limped out of the Covid years with all the ongoing consequences - war erupted in Europe in Ukraine, our long-serving Queen died, we had three Prime Ministers, everything went up in price, especially food and fuel and strikes broke out everywhere.

The Church of England had a pretty turbulent time as well: Covid affected so many congregations, numbers fell and so did income.

Living in Love and Faith discussions were a blessing to some and a curse to others, causing division and resentment.

Historic safeguarding issues continued to cause sadness and hurt to survivors and reputational damage to our Church as a whole.

Many Churches found fuel bills beyond their reach.

So how have we at St. Mary's and St. Thomas weathered all of the above? Without sounding complacent I believe that with God's help we have done well. We have maintained ministry in all forms, our ministry and outreach programmes have continued and, in some cases increased. Our finances, through your generosity, are in a good state, so much so that we can afford to have a new Curate and match fund the grants for car park project at St. Mary's, as well as fund ministry and maintenance and continue our policy of giving away 10% to charities at home and abroad.

It would be very easy to sit on our hands and do nothing new, but the nature of our mission is "to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation". Our Vision Day and subsequent meetings have highlighted issues which need to be addressed.

### **Worship.**

- more lay people involvement and leadership with the development of variety in worship for all ages.
- an emphasis on music and making services more worshipful and accessible to all, re-introducing prayer and ministry in and after services.

### **Young People.**

- development of children's ministry.
- growing Sunday School, Praise and Play, and Story Church.
- re-introducing Sunday School to St. Mary's. soon.
- concentrate on Youth Ministry after Junior Church.
- post Confirmation courses.

### **Succession Management**

- emphasis needs to be given to key roles being filled in the future and how new people can be trained.
- lay people need to be encouraged to go forward for training at the diocese to be Readers, Pastoral Workers and Youth Workers.
- people should not be expected to hold roles for ever, sometimes carrying a "gatekeeper attitude" which sometimes stops growth.
- a thorough review of roles and responsibilities needs to be undertaken.

### **Ministry and Social**

- the need for all activities in our Church life to be seen as mission opportunities - from Grace being said at Fun Lunches to Harvest Suppers, with a message of helping the hungry.
- art exhibitions with a well-presented book stall with evangelistic pamphlets.
- everything we do should draw people to the life of God's Love.

So much more to be done in the next year – let us pray for growth, deeper commitment and a willingness to change so Jesus will be known in this generation.

**Yours as always**

**Michael**

## Financial Review of the Year 2022

2022 saw the eventual lifting of all Covid 19 restrictions as the Government announced it's 'Living with Covid Plan'. Our churches continued to be careful particularly relating to events, regular services, and the giving and receiving of Holy Communion, being sensitive to those within our church family who remained anxious about the risk of Covid. There was however a gradual confidence and 'opening up' with increased attendance at services, fundraising events taking place, study groups, and hall hire in both halls returning strongly with what felt like 'parties galore'! Following my submission of the Culture Recovery Fund Grant Final Evaluation report in January 2022 we received £1,960 the final instalment of the grant. As I said in my 2021 Financial Review this grant had been instrumental in ensuring that we ended the year in a much stronger financial position ready for 2022 and I was able to report that all our recovery indicators had been met.

Geoff Bruce BSc. FCA has continued as our Independent Examiner for a third year in 2022 again providing this service free of charge and we remain most grateful to Geoff for his time, guidance, and expertise. Over the last two years with the PCC, I have developed a set of Standing Financial Instructions which are reviewed annually by the PCC in conjunction with the Charity Commission Internal Financial Controls Self-Assessment Checklist which I undertake annually. I also participated in an online Treasurer training course organised by Chester Diocese. The Parish Accounts have been produced on a Receipts and Payments basis on the Finance Coordinator computerised system that we use to keep our accounts and are in the same format as 2021 but this year we have an additional column for 'designated' funds for total transparency. You will note from the Balance Sheet section of the accounts the separate 'funds' we manage within the accounts. There is one unrestricted General Fund used for any ordinary church expense. There are now three designated funds where the funds are set aside for a particular purpose: Visranthi Trust, a charity in India which supports victims of domestic abuse to which a group of regular donors contribute; Mission Project

fund established to direct donations towards projects like the Christmas and Easter bags for vulnerable families and the holiday fun lunches; St Mary Magdalene Car Park fund established in 2022, through which I will manage the donations, grants and costs of the renewal of St Mary Magdalene's Car Park. There are five active restricted funds, donations into these funds must be used for the sole purpose of that fund. This year with PCC approval we have incorporated the Bell Ringers' monies into the Parish bank and computerised accounts and the £1,963 reflects new money transferred in when they closed their own bank account. The Grants Fund holds money given annually by the War Graves Commission for us to use to maintain the graves of the fallen in the churchyard. The Parish Charities fund is used for our annual charitable outward giving, St Mary Magdalene Flower Fund and Parish Family Fund are self-explanatory.

Our total receipts for 2022 were £200,926 an increase of £11,761 compared to 2021, much of this reflects the increased activity and relaxation of Covid restrictions and the £1,963 new money transferred in from the Bellringers account. In particular Planned Giving and Plate Collections increased (£6,318 and £4,951 respectively) with a consequent increase in Gift Aid Tax Recovery. Fund raising has increased by £5,152, we held more fundraising events in 2022 and for the first time since pre-pandemic times held a joint Christmas Fair with our faith School. Hall hire has increased in both venues but noticeably at St Mary Magdalene, £5,043 –due to a proactive Hall Booking Secretary. St Thomas has increased to a lesser extent £2,005 but was already booked at near maximum capacity with less opportunity for increase. Thanks are due to Julie Bennion and Peter Speed for their hard work and commitment.

Donations are reduced by £4,154 but one off random donations are variable year on year. Grants income is markedly reduced because the majority of the Culture Recovery Fund Grant (£17,640) was paid in 2021 with only the final instalment of £1,960 being received in 2022. So far £72,000 of grants have been secured thanks to the efforts of Julie Bennion towards St Mary Magdalene's car park renewal and are starting to trickle in as

reflected in the £3,000 of designated grants income.

Total expenditure for the year is £159,068 an increase of £3,997 on 2021. Whilst some of this reflects our increased opening times and increased use of our buildings, the main increase is in Diocesan Parish Share which has increased by £15,316 in recognition of Michael no longer being Priest in Charge at St James' and the 20% reduction in Parish Share that attracted. Without this Parish Share increase our overall expenses would have decreased which considering the cost of living and energy crisis is very encouraging and reflects the good stewardship within the Parish. In November 2022 I received an e mail from the Diocese of Chester Finance Department thanking us for our *'continued commitment to the Diocese this year'* and requesting that *'you take a moment at your next PCC meeting to share my thanks with your committee as a whole and thank them for their continued efforts to maintain their Parish Share payments. Parish Share payments while challenging are what enables the Diocese to keep parish ministry functioning and growing in parishes.'* It seems that some Parishes are finding regular payments of the Parish Share a challenge.

Despite increased opening Church running costs have reduced by £4,291. We have been fortunate to be on fixed energy contracts for all our gas contracts throughout 2022. St Thomas Church and Church Hall electricity is reviewed and increased annually under the Parish Buying Scheme and St Mary Magdalene embarked on a new Electricity contract in late 2021 hence we have a full year of that price increase. St Thomas Church Hall is on a fixed contract until 2025 but the gas contracts for both churches expire in 2023 and it is anticipated that costs will quadruple from the current prices we are accustomed to. During 2022 your PCC agreed to two 'midterm' replacement gas contracts which fixed the price at 2022 levels with the option to renegotiate if energy prices fall. This gives us a degree of budgetary certainty and the reassurance that if global prices fall, we can renegotiate.

St Thomas' Church hall running costs have increased by £4,557, this again reflects increased opening in 2022 with cleaning and cleaning materials increasing from £3,144 in

2021 to £4,694 in 2022, electricity from £459 to £1,354, gas from £2,310 to £2,841 and gardening costs from £420 to £1,020. Insurance, water, and other costs have increased by approximately 10%.

Most of the other expenditure is comparable: the situations where maintenance costs are higher one year compared to the next are usually because we have had a boiler repair, or for example we had a major organ repair in 2021 not repeated in 2022. In 2021 we also had the 5-yearly statutory electrical checks on St Thomas' Church and Church Hall, and St Mary's house hence the Church Hall and St Mary's house expenses particularly are reduced in 2022. The restricted 'major works' expense of £5,262 includes the £5,000 we are required to pay as third-party funding for the £50,000 Valencia Grant secured for St Mary Magdalene's car park renewal.

Youth, Family, and children's work expense from the restricted Parish Family Fund have reduced notably by £4,599 as we no longer have an employed Youth Worker. The Parish Family Fund has consequently increased from £3545 in 2021 accounts to £6452 with fourteen people giving regularly to this fund totalling £224 per month. The Parish Vision Day highlighted this area of our church life as requiring considerable input, prayer and work and it is hoped that the newly formed Youth Action Group will address and invigorate this area of mission in our church reassured that there are funds to support it.

Our Mission Project work continued through 2022 with strengthening relationships with local schools to provide 140 Easter bags, 150 Christmas bags of food, and 8 free fun lunches in school holidays providing 150 hot meals, Christian themed activities including videos, stories, crafts, and games. We also provided 50 Christmas Cheer bags for distribution to older vulnerable or isolated people within our congregation and community. We received £803 in donations from our congregations towards the cost of this work and the PCC allocated £500 from Outward Giving, with members of the parish Fund Raising Social and Mission team willingly providing all the food, crafts and help for the fun lunches and who also undertake most of the Christmas and Easter bag packing.

In line with our 'Outward Giving' Parish Policy to give away 10% of our disposable income we allocated £10,151 based on our disposable income 2021, distributed between Overseas Mission, Home Mission, and Secular charities. Donations were as follows: £2000 to the Church Missionary Society, £2000 to USPG, £500 to Visranthi Trust, £500 to St David's Nigeria, £500 to Christchurch Latchford, £500 to Ascension Trust for Street Pastors, £400 to the Prison Fellowship, £50 to National Churches Trust, £800 to Broomfield's Youth Project, £500 to St Joseph's Family Centre, £500 to St Rocco's and £500 to St Thomas' School towards distinctiveness, £800 to Warrington Youth for Christ, £500 to the church Mission project and £50 to support the Creamfields tent. Listed in the Memorandum Analysis - Charity Agency Summary are all the other collections or donations received and paid out to charities throughout 2022 totalling £4,063 paid out including £938 to the Disaster Emergency Fund to support the situation in Ukraine.

I am pleased and thankful to be able to serve God and the Parish as your Treasurer and fortunate to be supported by an ever willing and dedicated team. In September 2022 Nat West Bank closed in the village and we now bank the weekly receipts via the Post Office, this produced challenges which all members of the team helped to address. My thanks to those who count the money on a Sunday morning – Joanne Ridley, Peter Speed, Jackie Cole and Reg Pritchard; Simon Hutt who takes it to the Post Office; Carol Bridger who provides admin support and banking back up; Joanne Ridley our Gift Aid Secretary; all who operate the card reader at Baptisms and promote online giving and my particular thanks to Linda Latham who is our Bookkeeper maintaining our computerised financial records.

Overall, we have a £41,857 surplus for 2022 which leaves the Parish in a healthy financial position from which to face the current cost of living issues, which I do not think have significantly impacted us so far, and the forthcoming energy contract renewal with increased costs. 2023 will be an exciting year for our Parish and this financial position gives us confidence to go forward in faith. St Mary Magdalene's Car park renewal has been

approved by the PCC with an allocation of £35,000 from General Fund to supplement the grant and fundraising monies already secured and will take place in the summer 2023. In June we will welcome our new Curate, Ruth who will live in St Mary's house. Whilst there will be financial implications – loss of house rental income for example, this is a wonderful opportunity for new ministry, challenge, and growth and we are fortunate to be chosen to receive a Curate in Training. Thank you to everyone who contributes financially and 'in kind' to the work of our churches, it is God's grace and faithfulness with your faith, dedication and love which underpins the whole life of the church in Stockton Heath and Appleton of which financial commitment is a significant part.

**Sue Burke**  
**Parish Treasurer**

### **Fund Raising, Social and Mission Project Group Report 2022.**

Our team grew in numbers over 2022 and it is a joy to work together. We are always ready to welcome new people and much of what we do is fun and enjoyable if hard work. I am so grateful to the entire team for their commitment, generosity, and support. With the relaxing of all Covid 19 restrictions we embarked on a full plan of activities during 2022. We supported Julie Bennion's Car Treasure Hunt in February and hosted a well-attended Pancake Party in March. Also in March, the team put on tea, coffee and cake as our congregations met to watch the joyful occasion of Michael marrying Gregory and Abi streamed from Bath. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend was marked by a 'Best of British' concert with Golborne Brass and a Civic Service followed by lunch in the hall. Stockton Heath Festival weekend saw us on the Festival field for two days with our 'pick a prize raffle' raising £575 for church funds and £439 for the Ukraine appeal and hosting a 'Music for Summer's evening concert' with 'Melody Makers' and young people from 'Sixpence' performing. Refreshments for Walking Day and an Afternoon Tea with Prosecco and Tower Tours by members of the Bellringers occupied us in July. In September a Tabletop and Car Boot Sale was held at St Mary Magdalene's to raise funds for the car park



and a Macmillan Coffee morning raising £459 for this amazing charity, followed by a traditional Harvest Supper with hot pot and apple crumble at St Thomas' Church Hall in October. Finally, we were able to work with St Thomas' School, our faith school, on a joint Christmas Fair in November which was very successful raising £3,765 which was shared equally with school. Our year ended with a wonderful Christmas Concert with Golborne Brass getting everyone in the mood for Christmas. Total fund-raising profit after expenses for 2022 was £4,443.

Our Mission Project work is a really important part of our role, and we are fortunate to have developed good links with local schools who support this vital work. We packed and distributed 210 Easter bags each containing an Easter egg, fruit, craft activity and card and 150 Christmas bags of food containing 3 meals per day for 2 days for a family of 4 with additional fresh fruit, farm potatoes, carrots and parsnips, and a Christmas treat. This is a huge operation, and our thanks go to Morrison's supermarket who provided free carrier bags, gave us a 10% discount on our Christmas food purchases and the wonderful team of volunteers who helped shop, pack, and deliver. Working with the Pastoral Care Team we also produced 50 Christmas Cheer bags for them to distribute to older, isolated, or vulnerable members of our community. These activities of course are not possible without the generosity both financial and in donations of food and gifts of our congregations across both churches, thank you all so much!

We also hosted free fun lunches weekly in the school holidays providing an estimated 150 hot meals for children and families with Christian themed activities including videos, stories, crafts, and games – all provided by members of the FRASM team. These have become really popular, and the charity 'Transforming Lives Together' are holding an event in October 2023 to celebrate a decade of their operations and have asked me to facilitate a 'Filling the Gap' theme-based discussion table to share our experience and learning from the fun lunches and other mission project activities. I hope to take other members of our team along for support and to extend our own learning.

Two new 'mission' activities commenced in 2022. With friends from 'Stitch and Chat' - Sarah Downes, Lynda Heesom, Joanne Ridley, and Sarah Walton producing beautiful, embroidered 'Noah hoops' personalised with their name and a Christian message as a keepsake gift for all babies baptised in our churches. These have been so appreciated by our Baptism families, we hope they will display them on their bedroom wall as a reminder of their Baptism. We have also set up the 'Church Kindness Group'. Receiving names of people who are having memorable birthdays, new babies, or going through tough times with illness, hospital stays, operations, or bereavement our happy band of bakers have taken cakes, meals, or if more appropriate flowers and plants with a card extending the love and prayers from both our congregations showing that their church family are supporting and praying for them. We were delighted to make a total of 35 deliveries during 2022.

We have a full programme of activities planned for 2023 and I hope we can rely on your support to make 2023 as successful.

***Sue Burke***

***Parish Treasurer***



## **Church Wardens' Report**

### **St Thomas and St Mary Magdalene**

Dear Friends

After two years of 'getting by' through the weirdness and scariness of covid regulations, 2022 has felt like a year where we have started to really think about what we are here to do, although we know that covid or flu viruses can easily change our plans at short notice. We have had to really think about our stewardship of our resources, financial and otherwise, as we have faced the consequences of the war in Ukraine, questioning our response as a church to the humanitarian calamity as well as the consequential spiralling cost of living and its impact upon those struggling in our own community. Thinking about our stewardship has been the backdrop to many of our plans and decisions this year as we have had to think about the changes we need to make to play our role in God's plan for an inclusive, sustainable and growing future.

The year started with some challenging explorations about the Christian perspective on identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. Our two churches joined with members from the parishes of St. John's Walton, Latchford St. James and Christ Church to follow the Living in Love and Faith course. Each of the five sessions of the course explored one key topic, with an opening reflection, followed by teaching, time for discussion and Bible study. It was a great opportunity to meet with other church members and discuss topics which many of us might shy away from. Attendees were invited to respond to a national consultation and a report was published by the church of England later in the year.

In March Vicar Michael took a weekend off! Fair enough it was the wedding of his son Gregory to Abi and many watched the happy event live streamed from Bath. While in May we witnessed an even rarer event: Michael took a week off to holiday in Derbyshire. We hope that he continues to take time off for himself and Joanne. This concern for our vicar's well-being has also jump-started the revival of our Word services once a month in both churches, by starting to develop our role as lay people in leading services. We are really excited about how this is developing and we are grateful to Michael

for the support he has offered to enable us to hear from other members of our church community. We are delighted that so many people have volunteered to try this out and want to re-assure you that it's not too late to get involved – either in leading at the front or by volunteering to do 'the talkie bit' (or sermon if you like) in either church (or both). And, as part of strengthening the ministry team, we were pleased to officially welcome Lee as another of our licensed readers. Despite some teething troubles with the tech at St Mary Magdalene's, we now have a team of folks in both churches who are able to share our services with those who are unable to attend by streaming the service on YouTube. We are incredibly grateful to those who have volunteered, as we know it makes a difference to many who cannot get there in person to feel they are included in what we do on a Sunday. Once again, this is not a closed shop so if you fancy giving it a try, learning a new skill or helping us with your existing skills please speak to Mel or Sheila. At Easter Katie Bridger stepped back from her role as a faithful cleaner and 'welcomer' at St Thomas's on Thursday mornings. We also said goodbye to the last of the banks in the village causing yet another change in the modus operandi of the church treasurer and her team. We know as Wardens that this role is absolutely critical to the work we do ensuring we are good stewards of the donations we are entrusted with to enable us to do the things we are called to do. In terms of sustainability and being good stewards of our planet, last spring the Vicar encouraged us to grow sunflowers from seeds and these were staked out last summer creating an army of yellow around St Thomas'. The 'green eco team' have continued to tend the garden beds, while the bell ringers' vegetable plot produced a glut of beans, tomatoes, peas, and herbs. The wooden plant shelves were a welcome new addition to the plot. In September planning to achieve the Silver Eco award involved working with several churches. We joined a joint open meeting with partner Eco churches to share money saving energy tips. A church member who works for United Utilities shared ideas about

how we can save water and a couple who both work in sustaining energy, highlighted how we can make little changes to save energy when using our electronic devices. The Eco team has continued to work with the local community group, WASH – Wild About Stockton Heath; having obtained a grant from Warrington Borough Council we have purchased and planted flowering fruit trees which will hopefully blossom on the churchyard border with Ellesmere Road. Our parish joined the country in celebrating the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in early June: We planted a tree and there was a rousing medley of voices singing to Abba's best hits with the Golborne brass band on the Saturday evening. Bishop Willie led our Jubilee service the following day, crowning our rose queen and afterwards we all ate together in the bring and share lunch in the church hall.

After a three-year gap, Stockton Heath Festival 'happened' this July and a noble team were up at the crack of dawn battling with erecting gazebos at our 'pick a prize' stall. Our churches led the village Walking Day procession helped by the choir from St Thomas school. It was good to welcome back the annual witness to our community in the sunshine, indeed during the summer heat wave St Thomas church was a sanctuary from the blistering temperatures.

So that was a review of 2022; what of the future? In October all were invited to contribute to our Vision planning morning at St Mary Magdalene's. We were encouraged to be brave and think outside the box. We know that if we focus on worshipping the Lord, the rest will follow. We drew up plans to refresh our music and renew emphasis on youth work and mission in the community, building on the Mission projects you'll read about in the FRAS report. Alongside that, we will also continue to think about how we use our physical resources to serve our communities, hopefully moving forward with the St Mary Magdalene's car park project. These plans are ongoing so please continue to pray for them and for the new people we will welcome into our midst as a result in the coming year.

As always, the year ended with Christmas and Bishop Mark led our well attended community Carol service. We held Christingle

and other Christmas services that had attendances approaching 2019 levels. It was great to be back.

We can't end our report without saying thank you to all those who help with keeping our churches clean, the servers, sidespeople, welcomers, power-pointers, sacristans, intercessors, pray-ers, supporters, musicians, hymn choosers, minute takers, children's groups leaders, the endless tea and coffee providers and the techie team. What a team – we are so grateful to be a part of this fabulous community.

***With thanks***

***Melanie and Sheila***  
***Church Wardens***

## **Action Groups**

Action groups hold their own meetings but refer back to the PCC for approval of their spending and actions. Issues addressed include worship, mission, safeguarding, ecumenical matters, social activities and all the possible ways of enhancing outreach and mission.

The groups who meet regularly are:

- ST Thomas Action Group (STAG)
- St Mary's Action Group (SMAG)
- Church Hall Action Group (CHAG)
- Fundraising And Social and Mission Group (FRASM)
- Tech Team
- Pastoral Group
- Deanery
- Synod
- Bridgewater Churches Together

## **Outreach**

A word of thanks go to all to who work so hard to organise or help with the groups that our Church community provides.

It was stated a while ago in Parliament that "Without volunteers this country would grind to a halt" and our wonderful group of volunteers certainly lays testimony to that statement.

A heartfelt thanks goes to all.  
Apart from the support listed in other parts of the report, volunteers are responsible for the success of the following really well loved and important parts of our Churches:

Sunday School	The Choir	Bellringing
Open Church	Eco Church	Cleaning
Church Duties	Office work	Home Visits
Praise and Play		

## **Annual Report of the Safeguarding Officer 2022**

The PCC of St Thomas and St Mary Magdalene adheres to the Church of England principles and has adopted their Policy – “Promoting a Safer Church”, which promotes safety for children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults. Advice leaflets are available for all volunteers and where appropriate volunteers received basic awareness training.

The Diocese has reviewed its guidelines on Disclosure and Barring Service checks and the PCC will endeavour to comply with these. DBS clearance is required every three years and not the five years as was the case previously.

In line with the more stringent policy adopted, it is now mandatory that all PCC members have the appropriate Church of England DBS clearance, regardless of any other checks they may have undertaken. Sunday School Teachers and Group Leaders, who work regularly on a one-to-one basis with children, young people and vulnerable people must also have this DBS clearance.

The said DBS clearance has now been processed for all to whom it applies, within our Churches and all new PCC members or volunteers who must have clearance will be expected to apply on joining.

The Diocese has ruled that safeguarding training should also be undertaken by PCC Members, Sunday School Teachers and Group Leaders. All to whom this currently applies have undergone The Church Of England approved Foundation or Leadership training as appropriate. This will also apply to anyone taking on one of these roles in the future

The Safeguarding Officer/Lead Recruiter (Dorothy Carter) also underwent the three-day Lead Recruiter Training with the Diocese and also achieved certificates for on-line training in awareness of, domestic Abuse, Human Trafficking and Slave Trading.

The Safeguarding Officers are:  
**St Thomas -Dorothy Carter**  
**St Mary's - Julie Bennion**

Anyone having any concerns about people of any age within our Churches should contact their Safety Officer. There are posters in both Churches with the contact information displayed.

Safeguarding is a regular item on all PCC agendas.

Church employees who work regularly with children or vulnerable adults currently have valid and satisfactory DBS disclosures This also applies to Lay Readers and Pastoral workers.

The aims of these measures are:

- To ensure a safe environment for all who attend our Churches to worship, work, volunteer or visit.
- to promote safe practice by raising awareness of safeguarding issues by offering training to church volunteers.
- to ensure all church activities and church groups have a recent risk assessments which are reviewed annually and risk assessments for all church trips and events are completed.

**There were no issues or causes for concern reported in 2022.**

**Dorothy Carter**  
**Safeguarding Office/Lead Recruiter**

**St Thomas' Church Stockton Heath**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**For the period from 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022**

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
<i>Income and endowments from:</i>						
Donations and legacies						
Planned Giving	76,698	420	2,654	0	79,772	73,454
Plate Collections	17,432	0	0	0	17,432	12,481
Recovered tax	22,921	982	724	0	24,629	23,383
Legacies	2,000	0	0	0	2,000	1,354
Donations	11,818	6,268	588	0	18,675	22,829
Income from charitable activities						
Fund Raising	9,762	1,003	0	0	10,766	5,614
Investments	704	0	2	0	707	18
Other income	357	0	1,963	0	2,321	1,031
St Mary's House Rent	7,680	0	0	0	7,680	8,330
St Thomas' Church Hall Hire	12,480	0	0	0	12,480	10,115
St Mary's Hall Hire	11,079	0	0	0	11,079	6,395
PCC Fees	6,480	0	0	0	6,480	6,301
Grants	3,445	3,000	457	0	6,902	17,857
Diocesan fees	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total income</b>	<b>182,860</b>	<b>11,674</b>	<b>6,390</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>200,926</b>	<b>189,165</b>
<i>Expenditure on:</i>						
Raising funds	4,634	0	254	0	4,889	1,479
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Diocesan Parish Contribution and Deanery	69,746	0	0	0	69,746	54,545
Clergy Costs	2,681	0	0	0	2,681	3,733
Youth Worker Costs	0	0	533	0	533	5,132
Church Running costs	21,111	0	0	0	21,111	25,402
Church Maintenance / Repairs	5,087	0	0	0	5,087	4,348
Church equipment purchase	2,920	0	0	0	2,920	3,921
Church Hall Running Costs	13,839	0	0	0	13,839	9,282
Church Hall Maintenance / repairs	730	0	0	0	730	9,391
Mission Giving and donations	0	0	10,100	0	10,100	10,145
Worship Costs	5,888	0	364	0	6,252	4,364
Churchyard costs	239	0	0	0	239	1,357
Support Costs	4,218	2,301	0	0	6,520	4,891
Vicarage costs	4,552	0	0	0	4,552	4,826
Other expenditure	583	3,244	1	0	3,828	5,085
St Mary's House	772	0	0	0	772	1,495
Major works	0	5,262	0	0	5,262	5,670
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>137,007</b>	<b>10,808</b>	<b>11,252</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>159,068</b>	<b>155,071</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer</b>	<b>45,853</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>(4,862)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41,857</b>	<b>34,094</b>
<i>Transfers</i>						
Gross transfers between funds - in	81	500	10,100	0	10,681	10,906
Gross transfers between funds - out	(10,100)	0	(581)	0	(10,681)	(10,906)
<i>Other recognised gains / losses</i>						
Gains / losses on investment assets	0	0	0	0	0	(123)
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>35,834</b>	<b>1,366</b>	<b>4,656</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41,857</b>	<b>33,970</b>
<i>Reconciliation of funds</i>						
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<b>107,103</b>	<b>1,089</b>	<b>5,137</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>113,330</b>	<b>79,359</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>142,937</b>	<b>2,455</b>	<b>9,793</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>155,187</b>	<b>113,330</b>

*There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown*

St Thomas' Church Stockton Heath

Balance sheet (Summary)

As at: 31 December 2022

	As at 31/12/2022	As at 31/12/2021
	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	1,575	1,475
Cash at bank and in hand	162,758	115,235
	<u>164,333</u>	<u>116,710</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year	9,145	3,380
<b>Net current assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>155,187</u>	<u>113,330</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>155,187</u>	<u>113,330</u>
<b>Total net assets less liabilities</b>	<u>155,187</u>	<u>113,330</u>
<b>Represented by</b>		
<b>Unrestricted</b>		
Unrestricted - General fund	142,937	107,103
<b>Designated</b>		
Designated - ST MM Car Park	2,193	0
Designated - Mission Projects	262	1,089
Designated - Visranthi Trust	0	0
<b>Restricted</b>		
Restricted - Bells fund	1,963	0
Restricted - Grants Fund	1,095	825
Restricted - St Mary's Flower Fund	276	260
Restricted - Parish Charities fund	5	506
Restricted - Parish Family Fund	6,452	3,545
Restricted - Praise Praise	0	0
Restricted - Agency collection	0	0
<b>Funds of the church</b>	<u>155,187</u>	<u>113,330</u>

*There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown*

Notes to Accompany the Accounts 2022

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Regulations 2006 and Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 using the receipts and payments basis, except for the following:  
any invoice raised and not settled before 31/12 is included as a debtor  
any cheque issued but not cashed or services received but not paid for before 31/12 are included as creditors if they materially affect the accounts  
Agency monies held are also shown as a creditor. These are detailed below for information.

2. The PCC holds 199.49 CBF accumulation shares whose market value was £10582.55 at 31st December 2021 (£11650.52 for 2021)

3. At a PCC meeting in November 2022 it was decided to manage the funds of the Bell ringers within the PCC accounts as a restricted fund with the introduction of £1963.58

4. In addition the PCC own the following non sacred buildings: St Mary's house Insurance valuation 2023, £247,754 & St Thomas Church Hall Insurance valuation 2023, £1,125,247

5. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Bal b/fwd	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Bal C/fwd
Designated fund (unrestricted)	£	£	£	£	£
Visranthi Trust	0.00	3,235.00	3,235.00		0.00
Mission Project fund	1,089.37	974.63	2,301.55	500.00	262.45
St Mary Magdalene Car Park fund		7,465.22	5,271.75		2,193.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,089.37</b>	<b>11,674.85</b>	<b>10,808.30</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>2,455.92</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Charities	506.00	0.00	10,101.00	9,600.00	5.00
War graves	825.02	457.00	186.25	0.00	1,095.77
Flowers	260.94	380.00	364.13	0.00	276.81
Parish Family fund	3,545.36	3,589.99	601.59	-81.00	6,452.76
Gain on investment asset					
Bells Fund	0.00	1,963.58	0.00	0.00	1,963.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,137.32</b>	<b>6,390.57</b>	<b>11,252.97</b>	<b>9,519.00</b>	<b>9,793.92</b>
<b>Memorandum analysis</b>					
<b>Church acting as an agent</b>		<b>Bal b/fwd</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Bal C/ fwd</b>
Diocesan fees for weddings and funerals		362.00	6,903.20	6,009.52	1,255.68
Other fees- verger/ organist/choir		155.00	3,175.00	2,790.00	540.00
Retired/visiting clergy fee		0.00	140.80	140.80	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>517.00</b>	<b>10,219.00</b>	<b>8,940.32</b>	<b>1,795.68</b>
<b>Charity Agency Summary</b>					
BCT		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Children's society		528.08	1,140.27	842.59	825.76
foodbank		0.00	941.46	268.14	673.32
Present Aid		416.00	435.30	430.00	421.30
Christian Aid		0.00	320.00	320.00	0.00
Home Start		-0.79	0.79	0.00	0.00
Parish Family Fund		120.91	0.00	120.91	0.00
Macmillan Cancer Support		5.00	459.64	464.64	0.00
USPG		0.00	679.81	678.76	1.05
DEC Ukraine		0.00	938.00	938.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,069.20</b>	<b>4,915.27</b>	<b>4,063.04</b>	<b>1,921.43</b>
<b>Total Agency fund</b>					<b>3,717.11</b>



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

The Parochial Church Council of St Thomas and St Mary Magdalene  
Stockton Heath

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>st</sup> December 2022

Charity no  
(if any)

1131459

Set out on pages

1 - 5

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above  
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

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

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

### Independent examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130  
of the Charities 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 accounts set out in the Charities  
(Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement  
that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter  
considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:

Date: 18 March 2023

Name:

Geoff Bruce

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

FCA

Address:

31 Bristow Close, Warrington, WA5 8EU



