

# **THE PARISH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**The Churchwardens' Report on the Fabric & Ornaments of the Church  
and the Deanery Synod Report**

**The Minutes of the Annual Church Meetings held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

### **Incumbent:**

The Rev'd Simon Dommett

### **Bank:**

National Westminster Bank  
81 High Street,  
Bedford

### **Independent Examiner:**

Amy Eyles  
44 Wellington Road,  
Raunds

# **THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON**

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2023**

### **Administrative Information**

St. Mary's Church is situated in Church Lane, Goldington, Bedford. It is part of the Diocese of St. Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St. Mary's Parish Office, Church Lane, Goldington, Bedford MK41 0AP.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1131568.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church members are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year the following have served as members of the Council:

### ***Ex-Officio Members***

Vicar:	The Rev'd Simon Dommett
Assistant Curate:	The Rev'd Joss Sanders
Churchwardens:	Colin Last Nesta Gedrych
Licensed Readers:	Michael Furlong Cathy Sanderson Susan Lane
Deanery Synod Representatives:	Susan Lane

### ***Elected Members***

Sarah Collinson (elected in 2021 for three years) (Secretary)  
Chris Hjelt (elected in 2021 for three years)  
D-J Alino-Wilcockson (elected in 2021 for three years)

Debbie Richardson (elected in 2022 for three years) (Minutes Secretary)

Susan Lane (elected in 2022 for three years) (Licensed Reader and Deanery Synod Representative)

Jeff Alino-Abbott (elected in 2022 for three years) (Treasurer)

Alan Bates (elected in 2022 for three years)

Sue Lennon (elected in 2023 for one year) (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

Craig Brandon (elected in 2023 for three years) (resigned)

### **Committees and Working Groups**

The PCC operates through a series of committees in order to carry out its aims and objectives. All these committees have the power to make recommendations but all spiritual, pastoral and financial decisions are made by the full PCC. All committees have agreed Terms of Reference ratified by the PCC in 2019.

#### ***Standing Committee***

The only committee required by law. It has the power to transact business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The committee must comprise the incumbent, each churchwarden and at least two other members of the PCC.

The committee of St Mary's comprises the incumbent, churchwardens, secretary, treasurer and at least one ordinary member. Members of the congregation wishing matters to be raised at the PCC should bring them, in the first instance, to this committee for consideration. In general, it meets two weeks before a full Council meeting to prepare the Agenda for PCC meetings and to consider financial and property reports.

#### ***Finance Committee***

The committee comprises the Vicar, Treasurer, a Churchwarden and the Planned Giving Officer. It supervises budgets and maintains an overview of the parish finances.

#### ***Pastoral Committee***

The committee prepares Services of Thanksgiving for the bereaved and supports the sick and housebound with prayer and anniversary or other greetings cards. It also organises a Christmas tree bauble scheme in aid of St John's hospice, Moggerhanger.

#### ***Property Committee***

The committee is responsible for all aspects of the church fabric and the church hall.

#### ***Publicity Committee***

The committee arranges advertising and publicity using multiple media and tries to ensure that all activities and events at St Mary's are well promoted.

### ***Worship Committee***

All service planning is considered under the aegis of this committee which regularly reviews our worship. The members meet two or three times a year to check that all scheduling is in hand and that services are running smoothly.

The Health & Safety Officer (currently vacant) reports directly to the Standing Committee of the PCC.

The Environmental Officer, North Bedford Churches Together and Deanery Synod representatives report directly to the PCC.

### **Objectives and Achievements**

The PCC co-operates with the Churchwardens in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, co-ordinating and inspiring the congregation in its pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical mission. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of St. Mary's church and church hall in Church Lane, Goldington.

St. Mary's PCC is dedicated to helping all those living in Goldington and beyond to worship at St. Mary's without discrimination, to engage with its activities, to develop their spiritual lives and to become part of the family of God through our Lord's unconditional love. It is constantly reviewing and developing new ways of involving those who have no background of church life.

We aim to do this by providing services and facilities which will support our work of outreach in the community, by maintaining a framework of church services where worship, praise and prayer can be offered, by hosting courses where people may learn about the Christian message and be encouraged to live it and grow spiritually in a Christian environment and by the pastoral care of our parishioners at focal times in their lives.

The PCC under the chairmanship of the Vicar has complied with its duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

The PCC has complied with their 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.)

In April 2023 there were 120 (122) names registered on the Electoral Roll.

Attendance numbers for 2023 have remained steady in comparison to 2022 with particular increases in young families and children due to Diddy Disciples, Messy Church and during services such as Christingle and Nativity. There remains a good core of online worshippers both locally, nationally and internationally.

5 (5) marriages were celebrated during the year and 15 (14) baptisms. There were 10 (11) funerals in church and 14 (12) funerals at Norse Road Chapel.

Safeguarding as ever has been at the forefront of our PCC deliberations with Sue Lennon continuing as our Parish Safeguarding Officer. There have been changes to the Church of England and Diocesan strategies and planning and these have required a lot of work by our PSO. New policies include Safer Use of Images and the introduction of the Safeguarding Hub. All PCC members, church leaders, officers and relevant volunteers will be required to undertake a recruitment process with relevant safeguarding training in order to comply with regulations and to ensure that we are living out our faith in the safest and most caring ways.

## *WORSHIP*

The PCC worked hard on finding ways to worship that would suit the needs of as many as possible including the re-introduction of the Common Cup and decreased social distancing requirements. We continue to purchase the necessary licenses for music and online services. There was good attendance at our Christmas services, in particular our Christingle and Nativity. Most of the congregation has settled into to the pattern of weekly worship but some of the more vulnerable are still understandably wary and continue to worship at home.

Services are still being live-streamed and are available on our YouTube platform. Great strides have been made in what the technology can offer and continues to evolve. The 'tech team' led by our vicar is to be congratulated on their knowledge and dedication in this work.

This year we said good bye to the Rev'd Marcus Ottaviani and his family and pray for God's blessing on their future ministry in Battersea. In the summer we welcomed the Rev'd Joss Sanders as our new part time Assistant Curate and his wife and family to join us at St. Mary's. He has already proved a great source of support to the ministerial team and in particular has enhanced the musical worship in the Family Praise service and the interactive talks at Messy Church which our young members engage in and thoroughly enjoy.

As well as our hard-working Vicar and Curate, the other members of the ministerial team comprising the Rev'd Jennie Cappleman (Associate Priest) our three Licensed Readers Cathy Sanderson, Michael Furlong, and Susan Lane and Sue Lennon (Lay Leader of Worship) have continued to give their invaluable support throughout the year ensuring variety and freshness in our worship.

We celebrated the coronation of HM King Charles III in May by organising events which the local community were warmly invited to and enjoyed. As part of the celebrations, we like the country were encouraged to organise events over the Bank Holiday weekend. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May we hosted a 'Coronation Big Lunch' event in our hall with a 'Right Royal Bring & Share Picnic Lunch'. Soft drinks were provided and we were pleased of the plethora of food attendees brought. On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May we organised a 'Big Help Out' event of a community litter pick which was very well attended by congregation members as well as local community and Goldington Ward Councillors. Most of the litter pickers then joined the Warm Spaces session in the hall for much needed refreshments and fellowship.

The Worship Committee led by Cathy Sanderson constantly reviewed all aspects of our worship during the year.

The Messy Church Team has worked incredibly hard this year holding monthly with average attendances of around forty-five family members. Diddy Disciples is our Sunday group meeting regularly each week and providing teaching and play for the youngest members of the congregation. Since Amanda Ottaviani left us, Diddy Disciples has continued under Heather Dommett's leadership with invaluable support from volunteers and parent helpers. Much continued prayer has been offered for the work of these two Fresh

Expressions of our faith. A small team applied to multiple trusts and organisations for grants towards the 3-years contract of a new Families and Children's Minister. Interviews of two candidates were undertaken in late 2023 with Ceri-Anne Ashby being successful and subsequently appointed. She will assume leadership of Diddy Disciples in January 2024, and plans to implement other ideas to extend our outreach to all local families and children.

The Signing Group has continued to sign at the First Sunday service and meets once per month to practise together. The choir, although much reduced in number, is singing regularly at the 9.30am Sunday service. It also contributed to the Carol Service which is boosted by extra singers from within the congregation and from another church.

The Bell Ringers in the tower regularly ring for main services inviting all to worship and welcoming new families. They have also welcomed members of the community up into the tower and, as part of the summer fete, invited them to try ringing.

#### *PASTORAL CARE*

Susan Lane has continued her leadership of the Pastoral matters. Prayers for the vulnerable and sick have been offered ceaselessly and the bereaved remembered with anniversary cards. Holy Communion is taken to those housebound members who request it and once per month is celebrated at a local care home. The ministry of the team would love to be expanded with more volunteers, could you help? Sadly, the team is very low in numbers and we shall need to look to reducing the pressure on them.

#### *PROPERTY*

Throughout the year the Property Committee has maintained the fabric of the church and hall. After a few years of leadership Chris Hjelt retired and Colin Last has taken over this role in the interim.

The refurbishment of the south porch is still proceeding as well as work on the oak beams. Various leaks and other minor matters have been addressed and any outstanding quinquennial items have now been complete. The church building is due its next quinquennial inspection in 2024. This is a thorough survey of the building for wear and repairs.

Surveys and plans were carried out and plans produced to help us in our aim to become carbon neutral including inviting the congregation to assess their own carbon footprint at home. Some small changes can be effected immediately but other issues such as heating and lighting changes are ongoing. We installed a new boiler in the church hall and we look to renewing our gas and electric contracts on green zero carbon tariffs. Some projects require more thought and could incur considerable expense. This work was carried out with our Environmental Officer, Colin Last, as part of our Eco Church plans. We are working towards our 'Silver' EcoChurch award and with the addition of a pond in the churchyard and regular maintenance of the grounds, this should come to fruition in the near future.

Craig Brandon was appointed as Health & Safety Officer and carried out a much-needed overview of our risk Assessments, Health & Safety protocols and Due Diligence procedures. Unfortunately, he had to relinquish this post for personal reasons at the beginning of 2024 and we are now seeking a new Officer.

Geoff Sowerby has continued to work hard to building our client base in the hall and bookings are now looking healthy again with some spaces still available. Our thanks go to him for all the work he does re the hall's management.

## MISSION, CHARITY AND OUTREACH

Diddy Disciples and a much-expanded Messy Church are going from strength to strength.

The church hall is a focus of much community activity and the various groups and activities which are so much part of the life of St Mary's often attract people from beyond our congregation. Our annual summer fête and autumn fair were held as usual and, largely in part to successful leaflet drops and local community canvassing, were our most lucrative to date.

Other social gatherings i.e. indoor bowls, the walking group, monthly breakfasts have all run regularly and welcome both church members and those from the wider community. Post-service refreshments are available and the catering team provided its usual much appreciated services for the Harvest lunch and at our summer and autumn fairs.

The North Bedford Churches Together group offered a Lent course with multiple venues and start times to suit all. Links to the online material were distributed to the wider congregation with references made in church *via* displays. The annual Remembrance Day Service organised by the group took place on Goldington Green.

All these activities and events have been well advertised by the Publicity Group under Debbie Richardson using online platforms (Facebook and website) and any other available media such as posters, handbills, the large noticeboards and word of mouth. This publicity has been supplemented by the regular circulation of our parish magazine *Parish & People* which continues to be published each month online and in print for those who prefer this format.

The congregation still support the Children's Society with donations *via* house boxes and the Christingle service raise much needed funds and awareness for the charity. Christine Chapman organises the yearly box opening with results that confirmed the generosity of our givers. The parish also supports financially and in kind the Dwell Well Support – Bedford initiative which provides new/like-like every day household goods for those moving from homelessness into new accommodation - a project founded by Marcus and Amanda Ottaviani and now administered by Debbie and Andy Richardson.

Since late 2022, our Monday afternoon Warm Spaces has gone from strength to strength with an average of forty guests per week in 2023. Under the leadership of Heather Dommett and her team of volunteers, members of the public have found friendship and companionship. Sessions are supplemented by official visits by the local Public Health team, Goldington Ward Councillors and local Police Community team. This initiative has proven to be a life-line to many in our community as well as our congregation with new guests still coming. Late 2023 saw Chris Jones and Debbie Richardson interviewed and appointed Deputy Leads which ensures sessions can go ahead as long as one of the three Leads are present.

The PCC continued to review and re-invigorate our Mission Action Plan. This tool allows us to advance our ministry and mission with clear goals in mind. Our mission statement has remained the same but continuing and new goals were prepared and priorities identified. The PCC is constantly engaging the congregation to take ownership of our MAP.

The prayers and practical support of everyone have ensured that St Mary's is even more at the heart of the community and we look forward to growing in faith and love having as our vision the aim *'To grow together as a worshipping church family, to know Jesus better and to find new ways to express our faith within our local community.'*

## **Mission Action Plan 2023-24**

Going Deeper into God + Making New Disciples + Transforming Communities

### **Vision**

*What is the vision for your Church, Parish, Team Ministry or Benefice?*

To grow together as a worshipping church family, to know Jesus better and to find new ways to express our faith within our local community.

### **Values**

*What are the core values for your Church, Parish, Team Ministry or Benefice?*

- Inclusive.
- Place of welcome in the community.
- Accepting of difference.

### **Priorities**

*What is your 1st Priority to make your vision a reality?*

Employ a Family and Children's worker.

*Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does your 1st Priority most focus on?*

Making New Disciples.

*SMART Goal to achieve your 1st Priority*

Planning in Autumn 2023/Employ by Spring 2024.

*SMART Goal 2 to achieve your 1st Priority*

Advertise in Autumn 2023.

*SMART Goal 3 to achieve your 1st Priority*

Interview in late Autumn 2023.

*Smart Goal 4 to achieve your 1<sup>st</sup> priority*

- To confirm pledges and grants by Spring 2024.
- To put plans in place in 2024 for any shortfall for the three-year funding plan.

*What is your 2nd Priority to make your vision a reality?*

To become a carbon neutral church by 2030.

*Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does your 2nd Priority most focus on?*

Transforming Communities.

*SMART Goal to achieve your 2nd Priority*



Have an energy audit in Summer 2023 to get baseline usage.

SMART Goal 2 to achieve your 2nd Priority

Improve insulation and energy usage in hall and church by Autumn 2024.

SMART Goal 3 to achieve your 2nd Priority

To move to carbon neutral or sustainable energy suppliers in 2024.

Smart Goal 4 to achieve your 2nd priority

To put together a planned pathway to being a carbon neutral community by Autumn 2024.

What is your 3rd Priority to make your vision a reality?

To grow the scope and influence of Warm Spaces.

Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does your 3rd Priority most focus on?

Transforming Communities.

SMART Goal to achieve your 3rd Priority

To appoint Deputy Leads by Spring 2024.

SMART Goal 2 to achieve your 3rd Priority

To obtain external funding for the project for 2024 Spring/Summer 2024.

SMART Goal 3 to achieve your 3rd Priority

To train and recruit volunteers to run the event safely and sustainably by Summer 2024.

**Financial Review for the year 2023 (figures are rounded to nearest '000 for ease of understanding)**

During 2023, the PCC has kept financial activity under close review, recognising the potential impacts of rising inflation on both those who provide our income and the church's direct costs. Concerns about a reduction in voluntary giving proved to be unfounded, although income from this source has remained flat. General expenditure has risen, creating a deficit in unrestricted funds for the year. This is despite our costs for gas and electricity remaining constant throughout 2023, due to the fixed rate contracts that were in place during the year.

There has, however, been a significant rise in the level of restricted income, due to the receipt of grants in support of the new Children's and Families Minister, who started her work within the parish early in 2024. The total of grants received for this purpose totalled £20,000 and, together with other restricted receipts of net £2,000, allowed the overall Income and expenditure account for 2023 to show a surplus of £14,000.

This situation is being kept under detailed review by the PCC, especially as 2024 brings increased gas and electricity costs, and activities designed to both increase income and decrease expenditure are being brought forward.

The Parish Giving Scheme continues to be a success and has replaced regular cash giving in most cases, although around 30 members continue to use standing orders and envelopes. The Scheme requires regular donations to be made by direct debit and saves the Stewardship Recorder from having to maintain records to support gift aid tax claims.

The summer and autumn fetes were very successful in 2023, generating record receipts and several other social activities took place. Conversely, there was a reduction in income generated by hall lettings, largely due to the loss of some regular bookings. By the third and fourth quarters there was evidence of a recovery, with new regular lettings and an increase in ad-hoc bookings becoming evident.

The market value of long-term investments increased by £2,500, arising largely from increases in interest rates. As with the losses suffered in 2022, gains of this nature do not give any indication of future performance.

The PCC sets aside 5% of stewardship income, plate collections and gift aid tax recovery for missionary giving. This is shared between support for the work of our CMS mission partner, Heather Johnstone, at the Rehema Project in Tanzania ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) and WaterAid ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ). The resulting donation amounts for CMS and WaterAid were consistent with the previous year. A full list of charitable donations appears in Note 9 to the Financial Statements.

### **Reserves Policy**

The church is partly an historic building and, therefore, expensive to repair as modern materials and methods are usually not permitted. Consequently, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted and relevant restricted funds to mitigate the costs of future major maintenance work that has been identified in the Quinquennial survey. A similar policy is adopted for work required to the church hall, although the hall is not subject to a professional survey. No work of any major significance has been carried out in recent years, but some stonework repairs were undertaken in 2022. The church hall has benefitted from the installation of new heating equipment, which will help to reduce consumption. In recognition of the Church of England's policy to move to a zero-carbon energy position the Property Committee has been looking at various other options of reducing consumption. The amount set aside for both buildings at the end of the year was £72,000. Funds 'set aside' for future expenditure are designated funds and there is no restriction on the money being used for other purposes should this prove necessary.

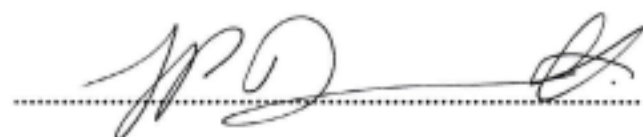
Where no specific purpose for a legacy is expressed, it is PCC policy to consult with the family as appropriate and put the money to a use which reflects the interests of the donor. The PCC has received several such legacies over the years and the amount remaining unspent stands at £85,000. These gifts comprise a significant part of general church funds.

It is also PCC policy to retain sufficient unrestricted reserves to cover any deficit forecast for the following year plus an amount to cover any adverse cash flow situations that may arise from time to time. The amount required by this policy amounts to £17,000 for the year 2023.

At the end of the year the available unrestricted and relevant restricted funds totalled £157,000. Cash represents £88,000 of this amount and is sufficient to meet the regular cash requirements and the repair expenditure likely to be required in the next two years. Cash funds and the PCC's long-term investments, taken together, are sufficient to meet the cost of repairs and the commitment to spend legacies on worthwhile improvement projects. The amount to be held in reserve for repair and cash flow purposes is reviewed on an annual basis.

It is PCC policy to invest a proportion of reserve funds in CBF Church of England Investment Funds for long-term growth and income. The remainder in the form of cash is held by Virgin Money and the CBF Deposit Fund. Interest earned on both deposits is now rising due to the bank rate policy of the Bank of England.

Annual report approved by the PCC on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Rev'd Simon Dommett, Vicar

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SD', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

#### **Independent Examiner's Report to the Members of St. Mary the Virgin, Goldington**

I report on the Accounts of the PCC of St. Mary the Virgin, Goldington for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 12 to 19.

#### **Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Independent Examiner**

The PCC's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts.

The PCC's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to: -

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

#### **Basis of Independent Examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the Accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the Accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full

audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the Accounts present a 'true and fair' view, and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent Examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: -
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare Accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the Accounts to be reached.



**Amy Eyles - CPFA, BA (Hons)**  
**44 Wellington Road, Raunds**  
**7<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	TOTAL FUNDS	
		£	£	£	2023	2022
		£	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>						
Voluntary income	2(a)	64,979	23,613	-	88,592	70,400
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	16,950	-	-	16,950	19,286
Income from investments	2(c)	3,988	-	256	4,244	3,202
Church activities	2(d)	8,495	-	-	8,495	9,436
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		<b>94,412</b>	<b>23,613</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>118,281</b>	<b>102,324</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Church activities	3(a)	93,741	1,659	-	95,400	98,957
Costs of generation of income	3(b)	685	-	-	685	269
Major repairs and depreciation	3(c)	8,009	-	-	8,009	1,389
Support costs	3(d)	2,593	-	-	2,593	1,518
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES USED</b>		<b>105,028</b>	<b>1,659</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>106,687</b>	<b>102,133</b>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		<b>(10,616)</b>	<b>21,954</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>11,595</b>	<b>191</b>
Gain/(Loss) on revaluation of investments	5(b)	2,481	-	-	2,481	(9,245)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>(8,134)</b>	<b>21,954</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>14,076</b>	<b>(9,054)</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>		<b>146,762</b>	<b>13,659</b>	<b>3,817</b>	<b>164,238</b>	<b>173,292</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>138,628</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>178,314</b>	<b>164,238</b>

BALANCE SHEET at 31 December 2023

<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>						
Tangible fixed assets	5(a)	4,084	-	-	4,084	4,223
Investments	5(b)	67,861	-	1,582	69,444	66,962
		<b>71,945</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,582</b>	<b>73,528</b>	<b>71,185</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Stock of goods for sale		-	-	-	-	-
Debtors & prepayments	6	4,315	-	-	4,315	4,777
Short term deposits		78,176	7,000	2,490	87,666	83,422
Bank & cash balances		(11,694)	28,613	-	16,919	13,087
		<b>70,797</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>2,490</b>	<b>108,901</b>	<b>101,286</b>
<b>LIABILITIES: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	7	<b>(4,115)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(4,115)</b>	<b>(8,233)</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>66,682</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>2,490</b>	<b>104,787</b>	<b>93,053</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<b>138,628</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>178,314</b>	<b>164,238</b>
<b>PARISH FUNDS</b>						
Unrestricted	8	138,628	-	-	138,628	146,762
Restricted		-	35,613	-	35,613	13,659
Endowment		-	-	4,073	4,073	3,817
		<b>138,628</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>178,314</b>	<b>164,238</b>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council 9th April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

The Rev'd S P Dommett



S E Collinson



The notes on pages 16 to 19 form part of these Accounts.

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2023

## 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of preparation

The Accounts have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and is in compliance with accounting standard FRS102.

The Accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at a fair value. The Accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

### Funds

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

*Restricted funds* represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. 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 basis.

*Unrestricted funds* are general funds which can be used for ordinary PCC purposes. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC, such as the church repair fund, are also unrestricted.

### Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the income 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.

Gifts in kind for the PCC's own use are included in the SOFA as incoming resources at their fair value when receivable, and expensed as and when consumed in use. Gifts of fixed assets, if material, are included in the balance sheet at their fair value and expensed over the asset's useful economic life.

All incoming resources are accounted for gross. Amounts generated specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. Amounts received for mission in which the PCC acts only as an intermediary are not shown as income of the PCC, except where the PCC is involved in the fund-raising process.

Rental income from the letting of church premises is recognised when the rental is due. Realised gains or losses are recognised when investments are sold. Unrealised gains or losses are accounted for on revaluation of investments at 31st December. The value of any donated services or voluntary help received are not included in the Accounts but are described in the trustees' annual report.

### **Resources expended**

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Any parish share unpaid at 31st December is provided for in these Accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

### **Fixed assets**

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the financial statements in accordance with S.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011. All expenditure on consecrated or benefice buildings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the Accounts in the year in which it is incurred.

Land and buildings held for the functional use of the PCC are valued at original cost, less provision for depreciation. Buildings are depreciated over a period of 50 years; pre-fabricated buildings are assumed to have a useful life of 25 years. Additions to existing buildings, which do not substantially extend the life of the asset, are written off over the remaining life of the original building. Land is not depreciated.

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. They are listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to the year 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the Accounts. Subsequent to this date no individual item has cost more than £1,000, so all such expenditure has been written off when incurred.

Fixtures & fittings and equipment used within the church premises, including moveable church furnishings, are depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years. Individual items with a purchase price of less than £1,000 are written off when the asset is acquired. Investments are valued at a fair value, which is deemed to be the market value at 31st December.

**Current assets**

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31st December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectable.

Short-term deposits comprise cash held on deposit with Virgin Money plc and the CBF Church of England Funds.



PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2023

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS	
				2023 £	2022 £
<b>2(a) Voluntary income</b>					
Planned giving:					
Gift Aid donations	36,399	-	-	36,399	34,909
Tax recoverable on gift aid donations	6,308	-	-	6,308	8,174
Other planned giving	10,068	-	-	10,068	14,555
Collections at all services	1,826	139	-	1,965	3,031
Donations and appeals	1,927	3,524	-	5,451	2,932
Tax recoverable on other gift aid donations	-	-	-	-	84
Tax recovered on small donations (GASDS)	-	-	-	-	555
Donations for missions and charities	1,520	-	-	1,520	1,160
Legacies	1,000	-	-	1,000	5,000
Grants received	5,931	19,950	-	25,881	-
Government grants received	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>64,979</b>	<b>23,613</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>88,592</b>	<b>70,400</b>
<b>2(b) Activities for generating funds</b>					
Fetes, bazaars, and other fund raising events	5,059	-	-	5,059	2,803
Church hall lettings	11,990	-	-	11,990	16,082
Rental income, 1 Atholl Walk	-	-	-	-	346
Sales of purchased and donated goods	(99)	-	-	99	54
	<b>16,950</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,950</b>	<b>19,286</b>
<b>2(c) Income from investments</b>					
Dividends and interest	3,988	-	256	4,244	3,202
<b>2(d) Income from Church activities</b>					
Magazine	10	-	-	10	55
Donations for use of church hall	-	-	-	-	-
Social events	456	-	-	456	1,719
Church fees	8,029	-	-	8,029	7,662
	<b>8,495</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,495</b>	<b>9,436</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>94,412</b>	<b>23,613</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>118,281</b>	<b>102,324</b>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2023

**3 EXPENDITURE**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	2022 £
<b>3(a) Church activities</b>					
Missionary & charitable giving:					
Church overseas:					
- missionary societies	2,048			2,048	2,285
- relief and development agencies		1,520		1,520	969
Home missions and other Church societies					
Secular charities	682	139		821	1,884
	<u>2,730</u>	<u>1,659</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,389</u>	<u>5,138</u>
Ministry:					
Diocesan parish share	65,635	-	-	65,635	60,536
Other ministry costs & housing	1,798	-	-	1,798	7,391
Parish training and mission	988	-	-	988	396
Church running & maintenance expenses	8,930	-	-	8,930	10,298
Upkeep of services	989	-	-	989	1,082
Upkeep of churchyard and grounds		-	-		170
Church hall running costs	12,671	-	-	12,671	13,946
	<u>91,011</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,011</u>	<u>93,819</u>
	<u>93,741</u>	<u>1,659</u>		<u>95,400</u>	<u>98,957</u>
<b>3(b) Costs of fund raising activities</b>					
Cost of fetes, fairs and social activities	685	-	-	685	215
Cost of purchased items for sale	-	-	-	-	54
Costs of Christian Stewardship	-	-	-	-	
	<u>685</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>685</u>	<u>269</u>
<b>3 (c) Major repairs and depreciation</b>					
Church repairs & furnishings		-	-		1,250
Church hall equipment & furnishings	7,870	-	-	7,870	
Depreciation of buildings	139	-	-	139	139
Depreciation of church hall fixtures & fittings	-	-	-	-	
	<u>8,009</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,009</u>	<u>1,389</u>
<b>3(d) Support costs</b>					
Printing and stationery	294	-	-	294	677
Office equipment & computer software	1,054	-	-	1,054	87
Parish office telephone		-	-		316
Other costs	1,245	-	-	1,245	438
	<u>2,593</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,593</u>	<u>1,518</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>105,028</u>	<u>1,659</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>106,687</u>	<u>102,133</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2023

<b>4 (a) STAFF COSTS</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
Wages and salaries	5,421	6,172

During the year the PCC employed a verger, hall caretaker and a hall manager.  
All positions are part-time.

**(b) PAYMENTS TO PCC MEMBERS & RELATED PARTIES**

No transactions have taken place with related parties.

No trustee has received payment for services provided or expenses incurred as a trustee.

Verger's fees of £378 were paid to PCC members and persons closely connected with them, who acted as vergers at weddings and funerals

Apart from the above, no other payments were made to any PCC member, persons closely connected to them or related parties except for the reimbursement of purchases made on behalf of the PCC.

**5 FIXED ASSETS FOR USE BY THE PCC**

		Freehold Land & Buildings £	Hall Fittings £	Hall Equipment £	Total £
<b>(a) Tangible fixed assets (all unrestricted)</b>					
ACTUAL/DEEMED COST	at 1 January 2023	108,414	39,453	3,910	151,777
	additions	-	-	-	-
	disposals	-	-	-	-
	at 31 December 2023	<u>108,414</u>	<u>39,453</u>	<u>3,910</u>	<u>151,777</u>
DEPRECIATION	at 1 January 2023	104,191	39,453	3,910	147,554
	charge for the year	139	-	-	139
	withdrawn on disposals	-	-	-	-
	at 31 December 2023	<u>104,330</u>	<u>39,453</u>	<u>3,910</u>	<u>147,693</u>
WRITTEN-DOWN VALUE	at 31 December 2023	4,084	-	-	4,084
	at 31 December 2022	4,223	-	-	4,223

The freehold land and buildings comprise the church hall and Dilworth Room and are shown at their original cost, less provision for buildings amortisation. Land is not amortised. The hall and contents are valued for insurance purposes at £2,900,000 and this is considered to be a fair estimate of the current value in use of the property.

<b>(b) Investments</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
Fair value at 1 January	66,962	76,207
Revaluation gain/(loss)	2,482	(9,245)
Fair value at 31 December	<u>69,444</u>	<u>66,962</u>

The following investments are held and are shown at fair value as at 31 December :

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
10,872 units CBF Fixed Interest Securities Fund - historical cost £18,650	15,738	14,852
18,408 units CBF Property Fund- historical cost £25,000	22,551	23,654
1,378 units CBF Investment Fund - historical cost £15,072	31,155	28,456
	<u>69,444</u>	<u>66,962</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2023

<b>6 DEBTORS</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	
			£	£	
Income tax recoverable			1,631	2,357	
Prepayments for goods and services and accrued interest			1,103	370	
Other debtors			1,581	2,050	
			<u>4,315</u>	<u>4,777</u>	
<b>7 LIABILITIES</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	
			£	£	
Amounts falling due in one year:					
Creditors for goods and services			43	850	
Missionary giving			3,776	4,510	
Accrued expenses and deferred income			296	2,873	
			<u>4,115</u>	<u>8,233</u>	
<b>8 FUND DETAILS</b>					
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£	£	Total	Total
The PCC funds comprise the following:				£	£
General	64,036	-	-	64,036	73,213
Church repairs	48,902	-	-	48,902	48,333
Chancel repairs	-	-	4,073	4,073	3,817
Church hall repairs	25,690	-	-	25,690	25,216
Others	-	35,613	-	35,613	13,659
	<u>138,628</u>	<u>35,613</u>	<u>4,073</u>	<u>178,314</u>	<u>164,238</u>

The Chancel Repair Fund is a permanent endowment which permits only the income to be spent.  
Designated funds are unrestricted and may be used for other purposes.

Summary of Fund Movements	Unrestricted	Designated Funds		Restricted Funds	Endowment Fund	2023
	general fund	church repairs	church hall repairs	others	chancel repairs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2023	73,213	48,333	25,216	13,659	3,817	164,238
Incoming resources	93,369	569	474	23,613	256	118,281
Resources expended/Amortisation	(105,028)	-	-	(1,659)	-	(106,687)
Investment gains/(losses)	2,481	-	-	-	-	2,481
Balance at 31 December 2023	<u>64,036</u>	<u>48,902</u>	<u>25,690</u>	<u>35,613</u>	<u>4,073</u>	<u>178,314</u>

**9 CHARITABLE GIVING FOR THE YEAR**

From PCC resources:	£	From other donations & events:	£
CMS (for our Mission Partner)	2,048	Bishop's harvest appeal	473
WaterAid	683	Christian Aid	1,047
	<u>2,730</u>		
From Christmas donations:			<u>1,520</u>
SMART Prebend Day Centre	69		
Families First Bedfordshire	70		
	<u>139</u>	Total Charitable Giving	<u>4,388</u>

## **CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS**

It has been a quiet year with no major expenses regarding the church building. We have kept on top of the routine maintenance jobs. There is still some outstanding work to do in the South Porch. Thanks are due to the Property Committee for all the work they do in keeping the church in a good condition.

There is concern about damp getting into the church in one or two places. This summer the Quinquennial Survey is due, 5-yearly inspection of the building by our architect. He will no doubt flag up what works we need to undertake to deal with the damp problem and also other works that are needed to keep the building in a fit state.

The churchyard continues to be looked after regularly. We required a Faculty, permission from the Diocese, when we decided to dig a large hole in the churchyard for our pond.

The Log Book and Terrier (inventory of all church possessions) has been kept up to date. There have been no major additions, and we haven't lost anything either.

The annual Archdeacon's Visitation went well with favourable comments about how things are going at St Mary's. We churchwardens got the praise, but thanks to everyone who has helped us both in the past year. It's a team effort.

Colin Last and Nesta Gedrych  
Church Wardens

## **BEDFORD DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

Bedford Deanery Synod met three times in 2023 in various churches around the deanery. We have had some interesting talks this year alongside the more formal business part of the meetings.

In March, we had a talk by a representative of the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust. We heard a brief history of the Trust and how it makes grants. We discovered that churches don't have to be historic to benefit from grants from the Trust. The bulk of the Trust's income arises from the annual bike ride, which raises around £100,000 each year. Half the sponsorship money goes to the churches. St. Mary's has benefitted from the Trust in this way over the years through the dedicated folk who cycle or walk to as many local churches as they can on one day in September.

In June, we had a very interesting talk on how churches can communicate well. We were encouraged to consider what our church offers, what message we are giving out, what draws people into our church, and lots of other ideas to get our creative juices flowing. At that meeting, we also heard from Revd David Thomas from Christchurch, Bedford, about his first year of incumbency.

In October, Sheila Bissell gave a report on General Synod and Cathy Sanderson gave a report on Diocesan Synod. We also had a presentation by two young people from Transfiguration Church in Kempston, highlighting the views of young people in caring for God's creation and what their church is doing to fulfil the fifth Mark of Mission.

Previously, there have been two St. Mary's representatives at Deanery Synod. If you would like to join me in representing St. Mary's in our local Deanery, please do speak to me to find out more.

Susan Lane  
St Mary's, Deanery Synod Rep.

## SAFEGUARDING REPORT

As the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for St. Mary's, I can confirm that the PCC has complied with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidelines. In order to comply, safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every PCC meeting. Here, feedback is given on the elements of safeguarding that require annual review by the PCC, and on any other safeguarding matters that need the PCC's attention. The elements needing annual review are those that apply to St. Mary's involvement with activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults. As such, policies on safeguarding, and the recruitment and safeguarding training of people who lead and volunteer to help with Messy Church, Diddy Disciples and Warm Spaces must be reviewed, as well as necessary DBS checks; and certain safeguarding procedures used in those activities. The PCC also has to annually review the organisations that use the church hall that are for children, young people or vulnerable adults; and ensure that safeguarding guidelines and the Church of England Policy Statement are displayed in the church hall (for hirers to see) and in church.

The PCC subscribes to an electronic service provided by the Church of England, called The Dashboard, which reminds us of when the annual reviews are due. It's very useful, and the reminders have helped us to be – at the time of writing – 99% up-to-date with every requirement. This year, the PCC has given approval for us to subscribe to a second Church of England electronic service called The Hub, which will retain people's DBS and safeguarding training records, and send out reminders electronically when updates are required.

Across the past year, some concerns have been brought to the PSO regarding people who might be at risk. Usually, these have resolved themselves, with just a watchful eye being kept to monitor situations. Occasionally, they've been referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, who then gives guidance on further action. This can result in a concern being passed to a professional body. We sometimes hear that some church members have felt that safeguarding is only about children. It truly isn't. In the past three years, all but one concern has been about adults. Whether we come into contact with children or not in the church environment, safeguarding is relevant to us all. Even the strongest of us can, through circumstance, go through a time of being vulnerable. We may find ourselves in need of, or being able to offer, caring concern. The Introduction to the Church of England's Policy Statement for Children, Young People and Adults: Promoting a Safer Church states, "The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all."

Sue Lennon  
Parish Safeguarding Officer

# **ANNUAL MEETING OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON**

**Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PARISHIONERS – 11.00 am in church**

The Meeting of Parishioners was attended by 42 people.

1. The Rev'd Simon Dommett opened the meeting with an introductory welcome and prayer.

2. **Apologies for absence**

Sue Barker, Jean Bloom, The Rev'd Jennie Cappleman, Vi Tulloch, Michael Barker, Alan Bates, Russell Bloom, Craig Brandon, Daniel Everitt, Geoff Sowerby

3. **Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners – Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

The Minutes were distributed prior to the meeting. It was agreed that they be adopted.

There being no amendments, the Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

4. **Election of Churchwardens for 2023/2024**

There were two nominations for the two posts

Colin Last	Proposer:	Richard Kirby
	Seconder:	Susan Lane

Nesta Gedrych	Proposer:	Mary Everitt
	Seconder:	Michael Barker

There being no other nominations, these two were appointed to serve as Churchwardens for the 2023/2024 and the meeting showed its appreciation. The two wardens were welcomed to the new term of office and thanked for their contribution during the previous year.

There being no other business, the Meeting was closed at 11.05 am.

S.E.C. 17.04.23

# **ANNUAL MEETING OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON**

**Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING – 11.10 am in church**

### **1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting – Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

The Minutes were distributed prior to the meeting. It was agreed that they be adopted.

There being no amendments, the Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

### **2. Presentation of the Electoral Roll**

John Sheffield, the Electoral Roll Officer, announced that the revised roll has 120 names with 5 deletions and 3 additions. He was thanked for his work on this.

### **3. Presentation of the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC**

The Report was circulated and available to parishioners before the meeting. After noting that this was his first year in office, the treasurer, Jeff Alino-Abbott highlighted various points.

- The PCC almost broke even during the year with a nominal surplus of £191.
- There was a significant reduction in investment value of *ca* £9,000 caused by market fluctuations.
- In general income has recovered post Covid.
- The roll-out of the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) has been very successful with only a few people still paying by Standing Order.
- Overall costs have been consistent largely due to the PCC having fixed contracts for utilities which still have a while to run. Hall costs will be reviewed in the light of increased utility prices once the contract have expired.
- Social activities - fêtes and fairs etc. - have continued to bring in good sums.
- Hall lettings are almost back to pre-Covid levels bringing in *ca* £16,000. The Hall Manager was thanked for all his efforts in ensuring this level of letting.
- Running costs have increased mainly as a result of church repairs and increased cleaning expenses in the hall.

The treasurer concluded by thanking Richard Kirby for guiding him through his first year in office.

*The Rev'd David Gregg* asked whether any thought had been given to installing solar panels. The vicar replied that it was the PCC's aim to be carbon-neutral by 2030 and various options were being considered.

*Andrew Dennison*, the Independent Examiner, brought the meeting's attention to an error in the page numbering of the report noting that the following references within the financial statements are incorrect and should be amended as follows:

Page 7: The first paragraph of the independent examiner's report should refer to pages 8 to 14 instead of 10 to 15.

Page 8: The last line should read 'The notes on pages 9 to 14 form part of these Accounts. The final version for submission to the diocese and Charity Commission has been amended accordingly.



It was proposed that the Financial Statements, as approved by the PCC, be adopted.

Proposer: Antony Collinson  
Seconder: Debbie Richardson

Accepted *Nem Con*

4. **Churchwardens' Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church**

Colin Last explained the requirement for the Report and noted that the continued diligence of the Property Committee in always ensuring that work on the church building is carried out makes the wardens' role much easier. He announced that the content of the Inventory and Terrier was now all recorded digitally. This includes itemisation of all the church property - plate, furniture etc - and photographs of all the objects. All the items for attention outlined in the last quinquennial inspection have now been completed. Both he and Nesta Gedrych were thanked and applauded for their hard work as wardens.

5. **Group Reports 2022**

The reports were circulated before the meeting. The vicar thanked everyone for their time and contributions to the many church groups. He noted the sad loss of our Fairtrade stall resulting from the cessation in trading of Traidcraft but urged people to continue using fair trade products and accessing the Fairtrade shop at St Andrews church.

6. **Deanery Synod Report**

The report was circulated before the meeting and taken as read. Sue Lennon was thanked for her four years as a Deanery Synod representative.

7. **Safeguarding Report showing PCC Compliance with the House of Bishops' Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

Sue Lennon, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), confirmed that the PCC is compliant with the House of Bishops' Guidance. She said that the diocese encourages all members of the congregation, regardless of whether they hold specific roles, to take the basic online safeguarding course and let her know if they intend to so that she can guide them through the process. Renewal of training is always ongoing and eleven more people refreshed their training as required during the year.

8. a. **Election of Deanery Synod Representatives**

There was 1 nomination for the three-year vacancies

Susan Lane                      Proposer: Sue Lennon  
Seconder: Debbie Richardson

There being no other nominations, Susan Lane was declared appointed.

**Election of Parochial Church Councillors**

There was 1 nomination for the three-year vacancies

Craig Brandon                      Proposer: Heather Dommett  
Seconder: Wendy Watmough

There was 1 nomination for the one-year vacancy

Sue Lennon	Proposer:	Antony Collinson
	Seconded:	Sarah Collinson

There were no nominations for the two-year vacancy

There being no other nominations, the above were declared appointed. Craig Brandon has also agreed to act as Health and Safety Officer.

**c. Appointment of Readers to the PCC**

It was proposed that Michael Furlong, as a Licensed Reader, be appointed to the Parochial Church Council.

Proposer: Janet Fowlds	Seconded: Tim Hern
------------------------	--------------------

*Accepted unanimously*

**9. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Amy Eyles has agreed to stand as Independent Examiner for next year and on the recommendation of the PCC her appointment was proposed. Andrew Dennison was thanked for his tireless work in the role for so many years.

Proposer: Jeff Alino-Wilcockson	Seconded: Antony Collinson
---------------------------------	----------------------------

*Accepted unanimously*

**10. Priest's Comments**

The vicar opened his remarks with a brief history of St Mary's church noting that in five years' time we shall celebrate our 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary - taken from the installation of the first vicar.

The parish is home to 18,000 souls with over 25 languages being found in local schools. It also has some of the highest levels of deprivation. We are a centre-of-the road Anglican church with worship ranging from Prayer Book services through Common Worship Eucharists to *Praise is Rising* and Taizé style offerings.

Average attendances on Sundays are *ca* 70 and 15 during the week.

We have long been a training parish and despite having an aging congregation are delighted to have the uniformed youth organisations meeting in the church hall. Our families and children's outreach has expanded and with the help of a diocesan grant Messy Church has grown into a monthly stand-alone congregation of more than 60 members. This growth has been largely due to the work of Cathy Sanderson and her team of helpers. Our Sunday School, Diddy Disciples, has also grown and become an integral part of our Sunday worship under the aegis of Amanda Ottaviani.

We are now trying to appoint a children and families' worker for three years and have already obtained pledges of £10.000 support from the congregation. £15.000 is earmarked from PCC reserves and there are several ongoing grant applications.

Warm Spaces on Monday afternoons is much appreciated and, working with our local councillors and other organisations, is branching out to incorporate activities with initiatives such as Golden Gardens and include some skills workshops.

Dwell Well, set up by Marcus Ottaviani, continues to fill a big need and over 100 tenancy packs have been prepared. Again, we work with other organisations to optimise our help and these include St Paul's church and Bridging the Gap.

Environmental issues are also at the heart of our parish life and Colin Last, the environmental Officer has initiated several projects including tree planting and the installation of swift bird boxes.

Praying and sharing are essential to our church life and four of the Lent House Groups have decided to continue their companionship. The meeting noted how much the prayer ministry had helped and supported them during the year.

Sadly, we shall say farewell to Marcus and his family this summer but shall welcome Joss Sanders as our new curate in training. The congregation was thanked for supporting him during his training.

We give thanks for God's work with our children and families and pray for this vision to continue.

Finally, the vicar thanked the hard-working Ministry Team and all those who work behind the scenes to make St Mary's what it is.

*David Gregg* in turn thanked Simon and Heather Dommett for their oversight and care.

## **11. Any Other Business**

*Susan Lane* thanked the Ministry team for its support during her training and said how honoured she was to have been admitted as a Reader. She asked for everyone's continued prayer.

*Frances Tyler* asked whether the ongoing work at Bury Court flats had caused any undue problems for the church and Simon Dommett replied that he was in constant touch with the site team and was monitoring any parking issues.

*Susan Lane* reported on the renovation of the church library which has seen several books given to theological colleges and charity outlets. The book trolley will now be in the hall weekly after services. Any number of books may be borrowed for an unlimited time. Work is still continuing on classification of the remaining holdings.

*Colin Last* reiterated the meetings thanks to Andrew Dennison the retiring Independent Examiner and gave him a card.

12. **Closing Prayer**

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 11.53 with the grace.

S.E.C. 17.04.23