

Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ending 31 December 2023

Charity number 1131636



Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 December 2023

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Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 December 2023

Parochial Church Council

Vicar: Rev Alison Sowton

Independent Reporting Accountants: David Oakensen,
William Price & Co,
Chartered Accountants,
Suite 9, Westbury Court,
Church Road,
Bristol
BS9 3EF

Bankers: HSBC
62 George White Street
Bristol
BS1 3BA

Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 December 2023

The Parochial Church Council present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' 'true and fair view' provisions, together with FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS 102)).

Charitable Status

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England under the PCC Powers Measure. The PCC was registered as a charity in 2009, with charity number 1131636, having previously been an excepted charity. The PCC members have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Aims and Purposes

The PCC has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also maintains the Tithe Barn in accordance with its aims and objectives, making it available for the purposes of St Mary's and for the use of the inhabitants of all ages with the object of improving the conditions of life for the Inhabitants.

Objectives and Activities

St Mary's Church, Shirehampton, provides Church of England services and religious activities for all ages, including outreach into the community via work with youth and the elderly. We run a youth group, dance classes, a Mothers' Union branch, a Bereavement Journey branch and host a 'Goldies' singing group. In addition we hold various social activities and Pop Up events during the year, all open to the whole community.

As part of the Avonside Mission Area (ASMA), we work alongside the Anglican churches of Avonmouth, Lawrence Weston, Sea Mills and Stoke Bishop to provide additional support and events to the whole community, including a Mental Awareness Group branch.

Structure, governance and management

Members of the PCC are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

During the year, the following served as members:

Vicar:	Rev Alison Sowton	
Wardens:	Anne Ford Richard Powell	
Deanery Synod Representatives:	Shemma Laws Pat Davidson Derek Sowton	Resigned 7 th September 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023
Elected Members:	Tim Forder Philip Fowler Solveig Gibson Colin Godfrey Florence Grimes Doug Jennings Sarah Parry Reid Claire Staynings Tony Symons	Electoral Roll Officer Treasurer (to 7 th June 2023) & Data Protection Officer Appointed 21 st May 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023 Resigned 21 st May 2023 Secretary Appointed 21 st May 2023 Safeguarding Officer (<i>from 1st March 2022</i>) Resigned 21 st May 2023
Treasurer (not in PCC)	Eleanor Beddoes	From 7 th June 2023
Health & Safety Officer (not in PCC)	Sharon Viney	From 29 th November 2023

Standing Committee:

This is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions from the Council.

Financial Review

Income at £152,007 (2022: £128,625) was lower (2022: higher) than expenditure of £152,826 (2022: £121,247) to give net expenditure) of £819 (2022: £7,378 net income). Most income streams increased during the year and we have worked hard to make our church known in the community and welcome all through our doors. We are grateful for all the donations received. We applied for grants from some Charitable Foundations and were pleased to receive £6,000 towards the salary of our Youth Worker. Returns on investments continued to bring in valuable income. Costs increased significantly in the year. Some of this relates to an increase in our charitable giving to Bristol Diocese and our chosen charities for the year, which accounted for a £21,000 increase in giving. Many running costs increased in the year, with suppliers passing on cost of living increases and the greatest impact was found in our utility costs where our various fixed rate contracts expired and we were tied into higher rates. We continually review costs to minimise impacts of price increases where appropriate.

We are grateful to our church family and local community for your continued support.

Giving to missions/charities from general funds totalled £10,000 (2022: £3,300). Consultation with the church family resulted in 3 new charities being supported in the year, 1 local, 1 national and 1 international and it was agreed that the level of giving would increase. The amount paid to the Diocese for parish and ministry costs was £50,000 (2022: £35,575).

Restricted income exceeded restricted expenditure by £46 (2022: £745 income exceeded expenditure and a breakdown can be found in the notes to the accounts).

The gain on revaluation of shares held as endowment funds was £65,723 (2022: £91,750 revaluation loss).

The Charity Commission approved a scheme allowing us to sell shares to the value of £109,000 to partly fund the purchase of the Tithe Barn, on the condition these shares would be purchased back until the full number of shares were reinstated. At 31 December 2023 the total market value of the amount remaining to be paid was £55,391, following repurchase of shares to the value of £10,000 in 2023. The full amount is to be repaid by 2033.

Reserves Policy

The PCC aim to maintain reserves in unrestricted funds at a level that will allow sufficient funds to be available to pay for charitable activities as they arise and also to ensure that support and governance costs can be met as they fall due. The balance held as unrestricted funds at the year-end was £459,879 (2022: £460,145), of which £98,015 (2022: £90,784) are regarded as free reserves after allowing for funds tied up in tangible fixed assets.

Where possible, we maintain reserves to cover, as a minimum, identifiable repair and maintenance costs relating to the fabric and furnishings of St Mary's, three months' parish share payments and 25% of the amounts required from fund raising to cover general expenditure. We have estimated quarterly net expenditure on fabric and furnishings for 2024 at £3,000, parish contributions to the Diocese for three months total £12,180 and £3,000 is required to cover any shortfall in fundraising.

Investments

The Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd, as custodial trustees, hold CBF Ltd shares on our behalf in both the Bernard Salmon and Napier Miles Trusts. In addition, 404 CBF shares are held in respect of the Ecclesiastical and non-Ecclesiastical Charities.

PCC Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The law requires the PCC to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Parish and of its income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless this is inappropriate.

The PCC members are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Parish and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the relevant legislation. They are also responsible for safeguarding assets of the Parish and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Alison Sowton

Approved by the PCC on 16th April 2024

and signed on their behalf by Rev Alison Sowton (Vicar)

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of the Parish of St Mary, Shirehampton, Bristol.

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 6 to 14.

Respective Responsibilities of PCC and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

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

Basis of Independent Examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently 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 matter has come to my attention:

1. Which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a. To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - b. To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.

David Oakensen

David Oakensen FCA
William Price & Co Ltd
Westbury Court, Church Road
Westbury-on-Trym
BS9 3EF

Date: 16th April 2024

Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 December 2023

Statement of Financial Activities

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total 2023 £	2022 £
	Notes					
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies		75,255	12,029	—	87,284	77,201
Income from charitable activities		16,525	—	—	16,525	11,647
Other trading activities		8,980	—	—	8,980	10,031
Investments		21,468	—	—	21,468	20,546
Other income		17,750	—	—	17,750	9,200
Total income	2	139,978	12,029	—	152,007	128,625
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		286	—	—	286	316
Expenditure on charitable activities		133,060	11,983	—	145,043	113,434
Other expenditure		7,497	—	—	7,497	7,497
Total expenditure	3	140,843	11,983	—	152,826	121,247
Net (expenditure) /income before gains and transfer		(865)	46	—	(819)	7,378
Transfers between funds		599	(599)	—	—	—
Gains on investment assets		—	—	65,723	65,723	(91,750)
Net movement in funds		(266)	(553)	65,723	64,904	(84,372)
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		460,145	14,662	682,772	1,157,579	1,241,951
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023	10	459,879	14,109	748,495	1,222,483	1,157,579

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

Notes 1 to 10 form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton
Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 December 2023
Balance sheet

		2023 £	2022 £
	Notes		
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	5	361,864	369,361
Investments	6	763,495	687,772
		1,125,359	1,057,133
Current assets			
Debtors	7	9,378	10,342
Cash at bank and in hand		95,860	96,936
		105,238	107,278
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year	8	(8,114)	(6,832)
Net current assets less current liabilities		97,124	100,446
Total net assets less liabilities		1,222,483	1,157,579
Represented by			
Unrestricted funds	10	459,879	460,145
Restricted funds	10	14,109	14,662
Endowment funds	10	748,495	682,772
Total Funds		1,222,483	1,157,579

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 16th April 2024

Alison Sowton

Rev Alison Sowton
Vicar

Eleanor Beddoes

E Beddoes
Treasurer

Notes 1 to 10 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' 'true and fair view' provisions, together with FRS102 (effective 1 January 2019) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS 102)).

The financial statements use the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these financial statements. The valuation of investment assets are shown at market value.

The financial statements 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.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is sterling and all figures are rounded to the nearest pound.

The PCC considers there are no material uncertainties about their ability to continue as a going concern.

Fund accounting policy

Unrestricted funds are general funds that can be used for PCC ordinary purposes in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for a specific purpose, the use of which is restricted to that area. These funds represent income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest will in future be appointed to individual funds on an average balance basis.

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 on the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Incoming resources

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

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. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Volunteer Help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Annual Report. All help received is greatly appreciated.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated property and moveable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is not included in the accounts in accordance with S.96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected (at a reasonable time). For inalienable property acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts. Items acquired since 1 January 2000 with individual value below £1,000 are written off.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost, less any residual value, over their expected useful life, as follows:

Tithe Barn	2% of construction and refurbishment cost on a straight line basis
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Investments

Investments are valued at market value at 31 December. Investment gains and losses resulting from revaluing investments to market value are reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax as it has no taxable activities. Irrecoverable VAT borne by the charity is included in the cost of the item to which it relates.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisitions or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount at which the charity is expected to benefit in a future period. Provision is made for any amount that may prove uncollectible.

Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

2 Income

Donations and legacies	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Gift aided donations	3,928	—	3,928	3,368
Gift aided donations via envelope	5,601	—	5,601	4,865
Planned giving	35,874	—	35,874	32,505
Collections (open plate) at all services	2,627	—	2,627	3,143
Sundry donations	15,176	5,529	20,705	15,719
Donations – appeals, grants (see below)	—	6,500	6,500	7,494
Tax recoverable on gift aided donations	11,749	—	11,749	9,987
Floodlighting	—	—	—	120
Legacies received	300	—	300	—
Donations and legacies total	75,255	12,029	87,284	77,201
Income from charitable activities				
Fees for weddings and funerals	10,262	—	10,262	7,393
Church lettings - objectives	277	—	277	237
Tithe Barn lettings – objectives	4,004	—	4,004	2,751
Other income	1,982	—	1,982	1,266
Income from charitable activities total	16,525	—	16,525	11,647
Other trading activities				
Fayres and events	3,006	—	3,006	3,828
Tithe Barn lettings – other	5,974	—	5,974	6,203
Other trading activities total	8,980	—	8,980	10,031
Investments				
Interest - dividends	693	—	693	309
Bernard Salmon Trust income	13,258	—	13,258	13,185
Napier Miles Trust income	7,091	—	7,091	7,052
Bank interest	426	—	426	—
Investments total	21,468	—	21,468	20,546
Other income				
Telecommunications agreement	17,750	—	17,750	9,200
Other income total	17,750	—	17,750	9,200
Total income	139,978	12,029	152,007	128,625
Grants received:				
Garfield Weston Foundation	—	—	—	5,000
Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance	—	—	—	2,494
Temple Ecclesiastical	—	5,000	5,000	—
St Thomas Ecclesiastical	—	1,500	1,500	—
Total grant income	—	6,500	6,500	7,494

We are grateful to all grant providers for their support.

3 Expenditure

Raising Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Costs of fayres and events	286	—	286	316
Raising funds total	286	—	286	316
Charitable Activities				
Grants and donations – missions:				
African Pastors Fellowship	—	—	—	500
Compassion	—	—	—	1,200
Corymeela	—	—	—	100
In Hope (Crisis Centres Ministries)	—	—	—	500
Open Doors	—	—	—	500
Mercy Ships	—	—	—	250
Water Aid	—	—	—	250
Youth Programmes	1,084	347	1,431	793
Food and Fellowship	260	—	260	300
Ministry Parish Share	50,000	—	50,000	35,575
St Peter's Hospice	3,333	—	3,333	—
Macmillan Cancer Support	3,334	—	3,334	—
Mary's Meals	3,333	—	3,333	—
Charitable activities subtotal	61,344	347	61,691	39,968
Charitable activities – support costs				
Employment costs	31,846	6,500	38,346	35,401
Telephone and broadband costs	1,656	—	1,656	1,008
Parish training and mission	164	—	164	287
Fees paid for weddings and funerals	56	—	56	125
Additional organist fees	500	—	500	560
Verger fees	2,000	—	2,000	1,505
Church running – insurance	3,596	—	3,596	3,363
Kitchen consumables and equipment	992	—	992	616
Church and office equipment	295	1,874	2,169	684
Organ/piano tuning and maintenance	1,284	—	1,284	2,094
Church maintenance and replacements	2,177	—	2,177	2,836
Cleaning & hygiene	1,598	—	1,598	1,370
Altar requisites	993	768	1,761	661
Upkeep of churchyard	2,108	—	2,108	736
Printing and stationery	3,012	—	3,012	2,354
Sundry expenses	155	—	155	157
Church running – utilities	7,480	2,494	9,974	6,763
Specific expenses	1,556	—	1,556	2,559
Tithe Barn running – rates and utilities	4,802	—	4,802	2,934
Tithe Barn insurance	1,541	—	1,541	1,441
Tithe Barn maintenance	1,751	—	1,751	3,736
Tithe Barn broadband	638	—	638	546
Tithe Barn equipment	124	—	124	240
Governance costs – independent examination	900	—	900	780
Professional and other fees	492	—	492	710
Charitable activities – support costs subtotal	71,716	11,636	83,352	73,466
Charitable costs total	133,060	11,983	145,043	113,434
Other expenditure				
Depreciation	7,497	—	7,497	7,497
Other expenditure total	7,497	—	7,497	7,497
Total expenditure	140,843	11,983	152,826	121,247

4 Staff Costs

	2023 £	2022 £
The aggregate payroll costs of staff were as follows:		
Gross payroll and employer's national insurance contributions	37,509	34,635
Employer's pension contributions	837	766
	38,346	35,401
	2023 Number	2022 Number
Number of part-time staff	4	4

5 Fixed Assets for use by PCC

	Tithe Barn £	2023 £
Cost		
At 1 January and 31 December 2023	515,000	515,000
	515,000	515,000
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2023	145,639	145,639
Charge for the year	7,497	7,497
At 31 December 2023	153,136	153,136
Net Book Value		
At 31 December 2023	361,864	361,864
At 31 December 2022	369,361	369,361

6 Investment Assets – Endowment Funds

	Number of shares	Church £	Shire Charities £	2023 £	2022 £
Bernard Salmon Fund					
At 1 January 2023	21,456	443,335	—	443,335	502,485
Shares purchased in year	488	10,000	—	10,000	—
Net gains/(losses) on revaluation	—	42,741	—	42,741	(59,150)
At 31 December 2023	21,944	496,076	—	496,076	443,335
Napier Miles Trust					
At 1 January 2023	11,475	237,095	—	237,095	268,729
Net gains/(losses) on revaluation	—	22,307	—	22,307	(31,634)
At 31 December 2023	11,475	259,402	—	259,402	237,095
CBF Shares Charity Funds					
At 1 January 2023	404	—	7,342	7,342	8,308
Net gains/(losses) on revaluation	—	—	675	675	(966)
At 31 December 2023	404	—	8,017	8,017	7,342
Summary					
Market value at 1 January 2023		680,430	7,342	687,772	779,522
Shares purchased in year		10,000	—	10,000	—
Net gains/(losses) on revaluation		65,048	675	65,723	(91,750)
Total investment assets at 31 December 2023		755,478	8,017	763,495	687,772

7 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments	7,652	7,358
Other debtors	1,726	2,984
	9,378	10,342

8 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	3,091	2,913
Accruals and deferred income	4,777	3,592
Taxation and social security	100	151
Other creditors	146	176
	8,114	6,832

9 Analysis of Net Assets by Fund

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Endowment £	2023 Total £
Fixed assets for church use	361,864	—	—	361,864
Investment fixed assets	—	—	763,495	763,495
Current assets	91,129	14,109	—	105,238
Current liabilities	(8,114)	—	—	(8,114)
	444,879	14,109	763,495	1,222,483

10 Fund movement by type

	Opening £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	Gains/ (losses) £	Closing £
Endowment Funds	682,772	—	—	—	65,723	748,495
Restricted Funds	14,662	12,029	(11,983)	(599)	—	14,109
Unrestricted Funds	460,145	139,978	(140,843)	599	—	459,879
Grand total	1,157,579	152,007	(152,826)	—	65,723	1,222,483

Analysis of Restricted Funds

	2023 £	2022 £
Audio Visual & Music Equipment Fund	639	3,112
Memorial Garden	1,600	1,600
Security System	2,800	2,800
Flower Fund	360	489
Roof Fund	3,667	3,667
Vestments	180	500
Grant towards energy costs	—	2,494
Fund for new church chairs	4,475	—
Vicar's Discretionary Fund	221	—
Youth Group Fund	167	—
Total Restricted Funds	14,109	14,662



Annual PCC Report January to December 2023

Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Shirehampton Annual Report

Background:

St Mary's PCC has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Membership:

Members of the PCC are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year, the following served as members:

Vicar:	Rev Alison Sowton	
Wardens:	Anne Ford Richard Powell	
Deanery Synod Representatives:	Shemma Laws Pat Davidson Derek Sowton	Resigned 7 th September 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023
Elected Members:	Tim Forder Philip Fowler Solveig Gibson Colin Godfrey Florence Grimes Doug Jennings Sarah Parry Reid Claire Staynings Tony Symons	Electoral Roll Officer Treasurer (to 7 th June 2023) & Data Protection Officer Appointed 21 st May 2023 Appointed 21 st May 2023 Resigned 21 st May 2023 Secretary Appointed 21 st May 2023 Safeguarding Officer (<i>from 1st March 2022</i>) Resigned 21 st May 2023
Treasurer (not in PCC) Health & Safety Officer (not in PCC)	Eleanor Beddoes Sharon Viney	From 7 th June 2023 From 29 th November 2023





Vicar's Report

Church offers a place of sanctuary – a still point in an ever-turning world. We appreciate the solidity of church buildings; their history, which reminds us that people have prayed and worshipped in this place for longer than we have been alive; that there have been many before us who have been baptised, married, and funerals held in this building, and future generations who will do the same. There are many important ways in which St Mary's will be at the heart of our community.

An important question that we must continue to ask ourselves though is "What does it mean to be church?" I'm sure you all know the answer:

It is the people, not the building. That is very true. What makes St Mary's is the rich variety of people who come together week by week to worship together, to share, to learn, to receive and to grow.

Here in Shirehampton there is much to be grateful for. Despite gloomy news items on national decline in church attendance, we hold our own and have even seen signs of growth. I would like to acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to each other – in no particular order:-

to those who enrich our worship – our vergers Jill Eynon for her quiet and efficient care for all our services, those who read, those who lead intercessions, both young and older, our servers and of course Tim Forder for his beautiful music as he leads our lovely choir, bringing another dimension to our worship,

to the assistant vergers, Chris Eynon and Colin Godfrey for their assistance in the smooth running of occasional offices

to the welcome team, for their smiles and warmth, offering that first moment of care to those who join us.

to the cake bakers, the chatterers and carers, the coffee morning crew too large to mention by name...you do an amazing ministry.

to Shelley, our flower arranger and church and Barn cleaner, thanks for keeping us gleaming and fragrant,

to our brass cleaners, sound desk team, to those who sort our books, buy our biscuits and clean our churchyard.

to all who take photos to help share our story.

Thanks to Mary Powell as she gathers us together to bake, serve, create, and inspire our fundraising activities; to our youth events team whose creativity and energy are a blessing and a joy at our pop ups and our fayres.

Thanks too to Sharon Viney who has taken on the task of health and safety officer, an important role to ensure all our care.

to our Parish Church Council who share decision-making on behalf of St Mary's and bring insight and questions, being good critical friends. For Sarah Parry Reid, our P.C.C. secretary, who keeps our records and correspondence beautifully and keeps the vicar in order! Thanks for your skill and grace.

to Eleanor Beddoes, our amazing administrator and treasurer, for all her hard work, care and creativity, always delivered with a smile and a positive outlook.

to Claire Staynings, our safeguarding officer, for her constant vigilance and insight.

to Phil Fowler, our deputy treasurer, for his efficiency, encouragement, wisdom and hard work and with his other hat on, for his care of all the bookings at the Barn and along with Colin Godfrey, and Richard Powell give so much their care and attention to our Tithe Barn and all its hirers, opening closing and dealing with any complications that arise. Thanks too to Tony Symons for helping with the Barn.

The mission of the church is shared with all of you, but our Churchwardens share more than most of the statutory business.

Richard Powell and Anne Ford have given generously of themselves over many years. Often their work is unseen and behind the scenes (do you know who checks the roof or loos?). Usually their work is tedious and unexciting – like wrestling with internet companies, grant applications and booking in professionals to keep all our utilities safe. St Mary's could not exist without the work they do. We are so fortunate that they have served this church for over 7 years, providing continuity and lots of wisdom and love. They have both made my life so much easier, relying on their knowledge and good humour as I settled in. It is hard to find sufficient words to express my gratitude as both Rich and Anne step down. I know they will still be very much at the heart of this church and available to offer support and wisdom to whomever might follow in their footsteps. My love and thanks go with them as they step back from this role

All of these people are disciples giving in love and faith. They deserve our thanks for all they give to the Parish and community. Each one of us, the body of Christ...Church in action.

My work as Vicar and Priest is made all the richer for being part of St Mary's team and ASMA.

My thanks to Amy Boucher for her ministry, friendship, prayer, endless creativity and energy, thanks for all your optimism and faith which keeps me energised! We share a vision of a fully inclusive, intergenerational church. The community pop up events have been a place of serving, sharing and growing relationships, not to mention fun! They are truly precious. Rise and Shine and the All Age services, alongside STOMP, Glow and our Youth at the Barn mean that we have a vibrant youth community here at St Mary's. Amy continues to disciple the young people and their families through her authentic and creative ministry which is a blessing to us all.

To Trevor Hearn and Duncan Jennings, my deep thanks for their continued ministry in our midst. I know that their, prayer, knowledge, support and care are valued by us all.

To all my colleagues across the ASMA area: We continue to witness together, praying and worshipping and supporting each other's communities. The Bereavement Journey course, which helps those experiencing loss, will be offered across ASMA on a rolling basis.

My special thanks to Derek for the endless work of loading and unloading stuff from church to vicarage and beyond, and a million other things. Derek's, patience, humour and constant love is my great blessing.

MOVING FORWARD

Here at St Mary's we continue to live out our call, inviting all to "Come as you are, Be renewed, Go share God's love". Our focus on inclusivity, trusting in God's love to transform us, and the impetus to move out of church and into our community all set us on the path to work together with the Bristol Diocese's strategy "Transforming church. Together." A vision that will see churches resourced, through mentoring and administrative support, to share the love of God through evangelism, discipleship and social action. There is much pain and stress in our world and in our community but together we can make a difference. We are already on the journey and it is my prayer that we might embrace all that God has in store for us.

We know there is much to be done to achieve carbon neutral by 2030 - a tough but necessary challenge. As a P.C.C. we have agreed that we might move more easily towards this by the sale of the Tithe Barn. This will free up monies to ensure an appropriate heating source, updated kitchen and repairs that are needed around the church to take us into the future.

I believe this is a time of renewal and regeneration for St Mary's. As I was preparing this report a passage from John's Gospel came to mind.

Jesus is the gate (John 10) - Jesus opens our way into healing, being set free from old behaviours and rejuvenated, so that we can encourage others by our own story. Together we can continue the vision, mission, and values of our being church in our community.

Together we step forward into bold servanthood, radical loving and courageous discipleship, knowing we do this in the power of Jesus.

With love and prayers and heartfelt thanks for each of you.

Rev Alison
Vicar



Churchwardens' Report

Time flies when you are busy and this last year has flown by. It's also true that time doesn't stand still and this is demonstrated in all the significant things that have happened since our last APCM.

Many new initiatives have been added to make our Church open and active to all. We are free to come and go without masks, one way systems and constant hand-sanitising which became the norm when we were battling Covid. However, as we know from first hand experience...it still lurks.

We have enjoyed and experienced a rich variety of Worship Services during the year, always enhanced by the message and the music and often carefully constructed props.

In some services, we saw our young children, youth and young families taking a leading role with Amy leading the service. The outstanding Easter Journey through the Maze evoked many emotions and brought large numbers of people and our local school children to experience it. Easter 2024 has been a very special time. On Holy Saturday, the Area Choir sang 'Penitence, Pardon and Peace'. It was a particularly lovely precursor to Easter (which by the way, began at 6:30am on Easter morning in the Churchyard on the day the clocks went forward an hour, led by Alison and ably assisted by Derek).

There have been many significant and historical occasions during the last year. In May 2023, it was the Coronation of King Charles which called for us to have a shared buffet lunch in the Churchyard and all were welcome to join us.



In fact, 2023-24 has been full of opportunities for sharing hospitality and God's love, via Buffets, Big Breakfast, Pop Up Events, Cream Teas and warm meals during the Friday Warm Space in Church.



On the practical aspect of caring for our building, Richard and Colin have continued to keep the Church buildings and grounds in good shape and engaging the necessary folk for heating/lighting jobs. We thank them for their time, knowledge and energy!

During our recent Spring Clean of the Church, there has been a small change made to the space in the Lady Chapel – the whole area was cleaned and the chairs re-arranged to make them more inviting as a space for prayer.

The PCC meets monthly and the Strategy team usually more regularly. The PCC and Strategy team work well together. Eleanor and Philip work hard on all things financial and are very accomplished and generous with the time spent on this task.

Our vergers, Jill, Chris and Colin, continue to work quietly and are diligent in all they are called to do and we are grateful to them. Shelley continues to keep the Church and Barn clean.

The Church Library holds many books and is ably managed by Alison Harding, who keeps the shelves stocked with fresh items. Alison and Ian also are our link with the Foodbank. Thanks to them both for ferrying your generous donations of foodstuffs to the Foodbank.

Thanks to all who work quietly behind the scenes and generously give their time and energy in the myriad of jobs which keep our doors open for the Church Family and the Community. Also to those who keep the Churchyard tidy, and those who generously keep the flower beds and planters going, The list of thanks is endless. I liaise with Bristol City Council regarding the Churchyard trees and grass cutting, and with the City Archives and the Archivists ensuring that documents we need to keep but are no longer in use, are stored safely in The Bristol Archive Centre.

We give thanks for our Clergy – for Alison, Trevor and Duncan and all those members of the Clergy from the Mission Area who frequently join us for Worship. Richard and I have been grateful for your support during the last year.

I leave you with a quote from the Church Wardens and Church Council from 1963/64.

“It is our humble belief that your Council and Wardens have devoted, under God, their utmost prayer, time and earnest attention to the year’s work, and the resulting visible achievements are, in part, the fruit of their labours – the spiritual advances making up another part which, though intangible and immeasurable, represent, we believe a living and forward-moving faith, which under God, can accomplish great things in the furtherance of the Christian Gospel during the year ahead”.



Anne Ford - Churchwarden

Churchwardens' Report on the Fabric of the Church Building

The Church Building.

With heavy rain during the winter months the church sprang a few leaks. We had rain water ingress from the flat roofs into the church kitchen and the electrical cupboard in the south porch. Temporary fixes have been applied and Simon Cartlidge, the church architect, is working on a more permanent solution.

LED lighting has been installed in the kitchen and office, with LED light bulbs installed in the low level Nave lights.

The church heating has had a new programmer fitted with the aim of improving control of our heating system

Church Yard

Maintenance of the church yard is the responsibility of Bristol City Council following formal closure for burials. However, we continue to maintain our memorial gardens.

Two benches have been installed, one at the west end close to the High Street and the other at the far end of the memorial garden.

Church Security

The church alarm system continues to work well with remote monitoring and call-out facility of a key holder.

External metal on the building is protected with smartwater applied to all surfaces and the required notices displayed.

External lighting has been installed on the West End porch from dusk to dawn to improve visibility during the hours of darkness.

The external lighting above the south door has been replaced.

Routine Maintenance and Certification by Contractors

Annual tests and certification of the following are up to date:

1. Lightning conductors.
2. The church heating system and operation of its gas system and supply.
3. The security alarm system.

4. Fire Extinguishers.
5. Radio microphones licences.
6. The organ humidifier.
7. Portable electrical appliance testing (PAT).

Routine Maintenance – In-house

A schedule of routine maintenance continues to operate, ensuring a regular review of the condition of the building and any actions needed. The schedule includes frequent checks of such items as roofs, gullies, drainpipes, windows, toilets, water heaters, church ladders, timber door thresholds, tea/coffee water heater de-scaling and more.

5 Yearly Inspection of Electrical Circuits.

This was carried out by Daley Electrical on 8th April 2022. The recommendations from the report have been carried out which included improving emergency lighting.

Quinquennial Inspection

The next quinquennial (five yearly) church inspection is due in the third quarter of 2024.

Triennial Inspection

The next Archdeacons' triennial (three yearly) inspection to check church records, processes and property is due in 2025.

Finally

Grateful thanks go to:-

- Colin Godfrey for all his work keeping the Church and Tithe Barn up and running.
- Chris Hearn and Derek Sowton for their help in the church yard.
- Jill Eynon, Sarah Parry-Reid, Doug Jennings, Derek Sowton and Colin Godfrey for emptying the bins in the churchyard.
- Gem & Lee Widdowfield, Doug & Alice Jennings, Mark Baxter, Phil Fowler, Derek Sowton, Noah Laws & Dylan Bushell for operating the sound system and projection at our services.
- Thanks also to everyone who has worked so hard, not just on the building fabric but in so many other ways to make this church truly active, accessible and attractive for everyone.

Richard Powell
Churchwarden



Safeguarding Officer's Annual Report

Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Whilst Claire Staynings, Alison Sowton, Amy Boucher and our church wardens may be the first points of contact, or first notice a safeguarding concern, it is up to everyone to be mindful and vigilant in order to safeguard those around us.

Safeguarding plays an important part in our lives, and church lives. Robust policies and procedures are required to be in place to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. The central church embodies national safeguarding laws into policies and passes them down to each diocese that, in turn, produce their own policies, guidance material and training for parishes. Parishes are required to develop their own policies, procedures, training plans and records for all safeguarding actions/events and have in place named safeguarding officers.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, still in training, for children and adults of the parish of St Mary's Shirehampton is Claire Staynings who began the role in February 2022. Claire has completed five out of the seven training programmes: Basic Awareness, Foundations, Domestic Abuse, Safer Recruitment and Modern Slavery.

Details of how to contact Claire if required for advice or to report an incident can be found on the church noticeboard in the porch or on the church website www.stmarysshire.org.

Policies

Those in place at St Mary's are for:

- child protection
- vulnerable adults
- domestic abuse
- safer recruitment
- handling of disclosure information
- fair recruitment of ex-offenders
- lone workers

Policies are up to date and are reviewed annually by the PCC.

There is an area in the porch of our church where safeguarding information is displayed. The policies are also be kept here and on display boards in the church so, as long as the church is open, they will be accessible to all. Safeguarding information is also available on a notice board in the Tithe Barn, in the toilets of both the church and the Tithe Barn and comprehensive safeguarding information is available on our website www.stmarysshire.org.

Training

Bristol Diocese provides all types of training at different levels and for specific roles in safeguarding. Much of this training can be undertaken online.

<https://www.bristol.anglican.org/aboutus/safeguarding/safeguardingtraining/>

Safeguarding training is an ongoing requirement and in-person training is arranged as required. Courses include Basic Awareness, Foundation and Domestic Abuse training.

Thank you to those who have undertaken training and make our church a safer place.

Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau – CRB)

This is referred to as DBS and is a national service for checking the background of new employees and leaders of children's and vulnerable adult activities. The system can bar anyone whose record shows them to be unsuitable. We are up to date with our DBS checking for volunteers and thank all those who have taken the time to complete these. DBS checks at St Mary's are carried out by Eleanor Beddoes.

Records

It is important that any records containing personal details, such as notes written during the investigation of a safeguarding event, are kept confidential and secure. Our vicar and the safeguarding officer of St Mary's have access to a document safe and encrypted memory stick used specifically for this purpose. The new Dashboard offers an online system to store all the information on DBS and training needs. We can use this to monitor whose DBS and training is in date and can see when DBS or training is due for renewal.

Claire Staynings
Safeguarding Officer



Finance Report

I took over the Treasurer's role from Phil Fowler in June 2023 and am grateful that Phil is continuing with the background work around finances, as there's a lot of it! We have worked closely together over 6 years to ensure the accounts are as transparent as they can be and comply with all regulations, so you won't notice much difference in the day-to-day running of the finances. I am grateful to Phil for all his hard and diligent work, as it does take up a lot of time and much of it is unseen.

2023 saw a welcome increase in income after much effort, led by Alison, in making the church known in the wider community and accessible to all, meaning we welcome even more people through our doors – as we often say, all are welcome. Donations and legacies from church members and the wider community accounted for 53% of our total income in 2023 and we are grateful for all the donations we receive. The Art Group, Chair Aerobics and Mothers' Union all made donations for the use of the Tithe Barn for their activities. We also received donations collected at several funerals held at St Mary's or at Canford Crematorium and are grateful to those families for their support. The Youth Group had great fun raising funds for us via their stalls at our various Fayres. We were pleased to receive a £6,500 grant towards the salary of our Youth Worker and are awaiting news of whether further grant applications made are successful. Tithe Barn bookings brought in just under £10,000 income during 2023. Many kindly donate their time or items, which is not accounted for in the figures, but is just as valuable nevertheless.

There is a gradual increase in investment income each year as we repurchase shares in accordance with the agreed scheme whereby we sold shares to purchase the Tithe Barn. We repurchased £10,000 of shares in 2023, so the amount due to be repurchased by 2033 is reduced to £55,391.

Cost rises were a fact of life for all in 2023. Utility costs at St Mary's and Tithe Barn saw large increases when fixed rate contracts ended, and renewal prices were high. We ensured we compared quotes to obtain the best prices we could and a heating grant of £2,494 received in December 2022 helped dampen the full impact of the cost increase.

Our model of charitable giving changed in 2023 when Alison gave all the opportunity to choose different charities to support each year, one local, one national and one international. The community engaged well with this idea and the 3 chosen charities were St Peter's Hospice, Macmillan Cancer Support and Mary's Meals – they all received an equal share of £10,000, so just over £3,333 each. The timing of the payments meant it was made during Mary's Meals 'Double The Love' appeal, meaning the donation was in fact doubled as a group of generous donors to that charity matched donations received. All the charities were extremely pleased to receive their donations and wished to express their thanks to you all.

Parish Share paid in 2023 totalled £50,000, with £5,000 of this relating to 2022 Parish Share. This money is used by Bristol Diocese for mission and ministry, specifically for clergy stipends and housing, including training provision.

The Church Family generously supported other organisations during the year, including the following. A total sum of £374.11 was raised for the DEC Earthquake Turkey/Syria appeal; a total of £1,027.02 was raised for Christian Aid during Christian Aid Week (including the Big Brekkie) and via carol singing in December 2023; the Christingle 2023 service raised £52.10 for The Children's Society and the Dance Explosion event raised £256 split between Confidance and the Alzheimer's Society. Other donations include food items to the Foodbank and warm hats, scarves and gloves to The Community of the Sisters of the Church.

Whilst our bank account looks relatively stable at the year end, we need to look at building additional reserves for future costs we know are coming. All charities require reserves in order to both manage uncertainty and to enable planning for future developments. We have several areas where major expenditure is planned: the purchase of new chairs at church; the purchase of an additional Memorial Stone in the Garden of Remembrance, with associated groundworks; a new heating system at church requiring replacement of the old gas boiler, enabling us to become more sustainable and to move towards net zero aspirations by the end of the decade; and the repurchase of shares as indicated above. This means we need to look at ways in which we can increase our income and control our costs, no easy feat by any means.

The closure of another local bank branch has made the banking of takings an even more laborious task and I thank Chris and Jill Eynon and Phil for undertaking this task, along with continuing with the cash count. I would encourage all who have access to the internet to make donations via the Parish Giving Scheme which is administered by the Church of England – not only does this decrease the work required in counting cash, but it also means the administration of claiming Gift Aid is reduced too. Donating via the Parish Giving Scheme can be set up following the link on our website – www.stmarysshire.org. If any of you would like help in setting this up, I would be happy to help, so please let me know if this is something you would like to explore.

Finally, in addition to the thanks already given, I would like to thank Alison, Anne and Richard for all their support, and to all those I ask for help when needed to fulfil my dual role of Treasurer and Parish Administrator – I can only do this with support from all of you.

Eleanor Beddoes
Treasurer



Health and Safety Report

Hello Everyone,

Just a quick introduction from me as I have recently taken on the role of Health and Safety Officer for St Mary's. I grew up as part of St Mary's where I worshipped for many years until moving away from Shirehampton, but have maintained contact over many more years through family. I am happy to be back as part of the congregation on a more regular basis again and am keen to use my experience to help support church life. My background is firstly in teaching, so I still love being involved in activities with children, young people and families as well as multi-generational and community events, so I am enjoying lots of opportunities at St Mary's. Secondly, I am IOSH and NEBOSH qualified for Health and Safety and manage a team for St John Ambulance as well as training first aid, care, fire marshal, moving and handling and risk assessment so am pleased to be able to use this experience to support St Mary's Health and Safety needs.

As an initial audit of where we stand currently with our policies, procedures, risk assessments and practice, I was involved with a major review of the main Health and Safety policy and made a number of recommendations as to how we can improve our practice. These have been reviewed and accepted by the PCC, the policy has been updated (along with several others) and we are now working our way through a checklist of the improvements agreed. The PCC is continuing to review several other policies each time they meet too.

I also carried out Health and Safety review visits on the Tithe Barn and the main Church and although both buildings are already good, several recommendations are in the process of being actioned, as noted on the policy review, just to further improve our compliance to requirements and care of building users.

Policy folders for the Tithe Barn and Church need some updating and there are very few comprehensive, current risk assessments available so this will be one of our next tasks.

Thank you to Amy Boucher for ensuring that all the Policies, Procedures and Risk Assessments for Youth, Family and Multi-generational church activities have all been updated regularly to meet current standards and are effective for the activities carried out at St Mary's. Many thanks also go to all the other people who have continuously supported the implementation of Health and Safety requirements at St Mary's - Richard Powell, Colin Godfrey and Anne Ford for ongoing maintenance work and Fire Marshal arrangements, Tony Symons for continued building fire checks, our new team of Fire Marshals and Wardens, Shemma Laws for previous work in the Health and Safety role, Sarah Parry-Reid and Eleanor Beddoes for administrative work on policies and Alison Sowton and the PCC and Leadership Team for ongoing review of policies and procedures. Thank you also to everyone who was involved in the recent clean-up day which is starting to have a positive impact, particularly with reduction of clutter and trip hazards and the move towards the recommended safer

storage of chemicals. Also, thank you generally to everyone who is involved in any way in following or overseeing procedures to help keep us safe as part of their role. All team organiser and helper roles at events have elements of Health and Safety embodied into them so we are very grateful to you all for committing to keeping people and processes safe when volunteering at events etc.

Health and Safety requirements are that everyone should be responsible for the Health and Safety of themselves and others – that it is everyone's responsibility to notice and report anything that could be a hazard or risk in their work or meeting place or organisation, so as we set out on the next year of updating and improving, I invite you all to please be a part of helping us to note any elements that we could do better with Health and Safety and let myself or Alison know of any concerns so that we can act on them quickly.

Thank you all for your commitment to making St Mary's a safe and welcoming space for Church family of all ages and for our constantly expanding numbers of people visiting from the wider community for food, friendship, comfort, practical or emotional help and support or special events full of fun too.

Sharon Viney
Health and Safety Officer



Children's and Youth Report

Over the past year we have seen the model of 'multigenerational church' grow and reach into many elements of youth work and church life. I have been invited to take part in several focus and research groups for the Church of England this year and the multigenerational method of Church is a recurring theme - both in terms of outreach and discipleship success and in terms of a national shift in the church developing towards these methods of engagement due to their success in spiritually caring for the whole family.

Providing opportunities for people to mix across generations, cultures and life experiences has been really enriching to experience at St. Mary's. One of the places I see this in action is at our Friday morning Café - a real blend of people from all walks of life, it's great to see children playing and having fun, bringing conversation and joy to those who have come along to beat the loneliness. Hot food being served to those who need it, whilst not being singled out since everyone is welcome to eat. The smell attracting curious shoppers from the high street, unofficial toddler groups forming, child minder gatherings alongside those who have retired and are enjoying a cuppa, the relaxed atmosphere allowing the ins and outs of everyday life to be shared, advice and questions asked, quiet times and prayer, faith explored and Bibles handed out – a real hub of activity!

Many of the children's and youth provision outlined below now include elements of whole family ministry:

STOMP Dance Clubs:

Our dancers range from age 3-17 and they have been working hard on a variety of routines and confidence building activities. Break time topics have been used to help with team building whilst looking at various faith topics. The groups have enjoyed a range of performance opportunities such as dancing at a variety of All Age and Celebration services, as well as being able to participate in Bristol STAGES dance weekend in a professional theatre setting. The family room that is open whilst the dancers are in classes has also developed into its own thriving community - we see families of all ages use this area as a warm space, homework club, crèche area and social hub.

Youth @ The Barn:

Our sessions include young people aged 9-15 where we have a great core group of around 14 young people and each year we have a new intake from the year 5 classes in the area. Our young leaders have now both turned 18 and are going to go through the training process to become full leaders with us, which is wonderful to see. In addition to the weekly activities and talk slots, the young people have been keen to sign up to create a 'Youth events team' this is a group of our young people who want to help with other areas of church life. For example, with fayres, fun days, pop ups, All Age and celebration services and setting up special events such as the maze and creating decorations/ props/ scenery for plays and seasonal activities.

Pop Ups Outreach Events:

The Pop Ups have been in full swing throughout this year and have quickly become one of the most powerful tools of multigenerational outreach for us. We have had over 1,000 local people come to our pop ups spanning a large range of ages, cultures and faith beliefs. Families have expressed their thanks for a welcoming space with free activities and many have opened up with lots of soul-searching questions. A few of our young people have also signed up to be junior leaders at these events whilst developing their acts of service for their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. We are very keen to blend church and community across the generations to share God's love to all who come – if you are able to attend or help in any way we would love for you to join us!

GLOW:

We have a core group of 14 Young People who have been attending Glow sessions to ask bigger faith questions. The group has engaged well with the sessions and have looked at global events and news topics through a faith lens. A few of our members are potentially interested in doing a youth Alpha course over the next year to take their faith deeper, opening new opportunities to speak with their families too about their thoughts on faith.

Schools Work:

We are able to regularly attend Shire Primary School for monthly assemblies to both KS1 and KS2. We have also been able to support the school this summer by running a stall at their summer fayre and providing cakes for their fundraising. We were able to hold their Christmas Assembly at the Church and accommodate the visiting families to watch too – this also provides a good opportunity to advertise our Pop Ups and celebration services on a wider scale and to extend a warm welcome to more families in our community. This year we invited the whole school, nursery, support unit and all teaching staff to come and explore the Easter maze- a real highlight to see over 500 people interact and engage with the Gospel story!

Summer Sessions:

In August 2023, we held 4 summer sessions in the churchyard called 'The Wonder Zone'. The sessions were open to all ages of the community and ran on a drop in basis, meaning anyone who stumbled across our events whilst shopping in the village were welcomed to join us. We had 4 themes - animals, flowers, food and our world. These included free play, ice creams, craft, picnic, quizzes and scavenger hunt. Roughly 100 attended across the 4 sessions so we are keen to provide them again this year.

Sunday Services:

Rise and Shine has continued to run as a cafe style service with breakfast and a programme that follows the Lectionary content. Our regular families have been attending for some time now and their children are now becoming old enough to join the Youth activities held in the

week. Our next season of Rise and Shine will focus on development in 3 areas – deepening the faith journey of the children who are now in the top end of primary school to explore if confirmation may be of interest in the future, extending a welcome to the families who regularly engage in pop up events to give them a space to explore faith for themselves too and finally, to provide a safe and relaxed atmosphere for all adults to also explore and deepen their faith alongside the children.

All Age Worship Services continue to offer a wide range of worship and learning styles for our community to engage with both on communal and personal levels. It has been great to see our Children and Young People at Rise and Shine, STOMP and Youth Clubs get involved with these services throughout the year, both upfront and behind the scenes, as well as welcoming visitors, baptism families and seasonal attendees to engage with a variety of faith expressions.

We have also had a successful year of special celebration services, with a broad range of Church family and community families of all ages coming together for Harvest, Christingle, Nativity, Mother's Day Cafe Church, Easter Services and the Pentecost Birthday Party. It was also great to see some of our uniformed organisations at our Remembrance Day parade and we hope to invite them to future events to strengthen our links.

A huge thank you to all leaders, volunteers, young people and congregation members for helping on various teams and being present to share God's love in our community - you have made such a valuable difference to our local children, young people and their families, and we look forward to continuing to do this through many more all age opportunities.



Amy Boucher
Youth Worker







Mothers' Union Deanery

Our Deanery, which is Bristol West, comprises of only four branches now which are St Peter's Filton, St Mary's Henbury, Holy Trinity Horfield and ourselves. Unfortunately, St Peter's Henleaze closed at the end of last year due to lack of Leadership. We met throughout the year for a Deanery Festival, which was at St Peter's Filton. The Deanery Lunch was at Horfield and the Deanery Advent Service was at St Peter's Henleaze which was a lovely start to Advent. A few of us attended the lunchtime services at the Cathedral.



Branch

We took part in the President's Challenge. We were given a bag with £23 in and were asked to use our gifts and talents to make the amount grow. We raised £512.00 and were the fourth highest group.



A talk from Lynn Crew about the Gympanzees which is *'A world of fun and fitness for disabled children'* was very interesting as was The Clewer Initiative (*raising awareness of the plight of Modern-day slaves*) by Aurea Hart.

We had a Show and Tell afternoon when everyone brought a treasured possession and talked about it.

We held a potluck tombola stall in October and Christmas food tombola stall in December for St Mary's Church.



We were given 100 Bible Society books by Mothers' Union which were given to St Mary's children and Shirehampton primary school.

We enjoyed the Christmas meal at Shirehampton Golf Club again.

February saw us watching my family's trip to Lapland which was very entertaining. As it was Valentine's day, we all had a chocolate heart.

At our next meeting we all took a photograph of our Mums and then talked about them. It was a lovely and interesting time. We sent a Mothering Sunday gift to Mothers' Union which will help families support each other and develop their relationships.

At our April meeting Rebecca Cross and Gaye Senior-Smith talked to us about their trips to Uganda which was very moving. Rebecca was given a scarf and banner with the Mothers' Union badge on, which she kindly gave to us. I have put this on our notice board with some pictures – which is in Church.

Thank you to all the Committee and to all our members for their support and generosity. Also many thanks to Phil Fowler for auditing our yearly accounts.

Julie Smith
Branch Leader



Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings resumed in the church on Wednesday 3rd May 2023, following the Winter sessions being partly held in the Tithe Barn. The resumption of Coffee Mornings in the church was met with much enthusiasm by those patrons who were unhappy with the winter venue in the Tithe Barn.

Since that date all Coffee Mornings have been held in the church right up to the present time.

During the colder months Fridays has been considered 'a warm place' with Tea & Coffee served from 10am until 12 noon and free hot food thereafter until 2pm. This hot food has been prepared by Rev Alison, ably assisted by Pat Davidson and team who have served it up to the needy. There is an appetite within the community for this Friday set-up to continue as the provision of hot food is welcome by many, and we will look into how viable this is to provide all year round.

Since we returned to the church income from the provision of Tea and Coffee has much improved, though the church space is more costly to heat than the Tithe Barn.

This will be my last report, as earlier in the year I stood down as the Coffee Mornings Co-ordinator and I would also like to record my grateful thanks to Dot Mead who has had to stand down from her regular morning duties due to ill health. My thanks too for all the volunteers who regularly help and those who are happy to help at short notice.

At this point I would like to appeal for any person who would be interested in serving refreshments for the two hours between 10am and 12 noon to put their names forward. You will still see me about, as I stand in for volunteers who are absent for any reason - so I have not disappeared off the scene completely.

Jill Eynon.



Building Co-ordinators Report on the Fabric of the Tithe Barn

This is the fabric report for the Tithe Barn, prepared by the churchwardens of St Mary's Church Shirehampton.



Roofs

The Tithe Barn roof and the Orangery roof are in good order.

Walls, Windows and Doors

External walls of both parts of the building are in good order.

All windows are double glazed and have required routine maintenance during the year. They are all in good working order.

There is a small area of peeling paintwork on the pillar to the left of the door leading from the main hall into the extension. This requires attention.

Rain Water Goods

Gutters and downpipes of the original barn and the orangery are working and are routinely cleared of debris.

Interior

The kitchen and toilets are in good working order.

A new programmer has been fitted in the main hall with the aim of improving control of the heating system

Exterior

The exterior fence, gates and party wall are in good order.
The garden is maintained by Norman England.

Security

The building is secured with modern dead locks.

5 Yearly Inspection of Electrical Circuits

This was carried out by Daley Electrical on 11th April 2022 the recommendations from the report have been carried out which included improving emergency lighting.

Annual tests and certification of the following are up to date:

1. The barn heating system and operation of its gas system and supply.
2. The fire/smoke alarm system. (6 Monthly tests to BS 5839)
3. Fire Extinguishers.
5. Radio microphones licences.
6. Portable electrical appliance testing (PAT).

Thanks to:-

Philip Fowler and Eleanor Beddoes for managing the lettings and accounts of the Tithe Barn.

Colin Godfrey, Philip Fowler, Monica and Tony Symons for the opening and closing of the Barn, dealing with the routine maintenance and operational actions required including setting up and clearing away after each letting.

Richard Powell



Tithe Barn Report

All the activities that took place at the barn, including lettings and charity work are controlled directly by the PCC and the roles of caretaker/ manager, building fabric co-ordinator and health and safety officer were undertaken by Colin Godfrey, Richard Powell and Sharon Viney. Eleanor Beddoes and Philip Fowler provided administrative support.

St Mary's regularly used the facilities at the barn for Church activities, including STOMP dance groups, Youth Group and GLOW,

Our Mindfulness Group also met there on a regular basis, throughout the year as did Mothers' Union and our Art Group.

The barn was let for private hire with three regular monthly users and further lets taking place throughout the year.

Members of the PCC and the church family have supported the work of the barn and their contributions are much appreciated.

Whilst the barn provides the opportunity to raise much needed income to help offset the cost of the running the building, there is a significant reliance on volunteers to undertake the tasks involved.

Having considered the benefits afforded by the availability of the barn, the PCC has concluded that church led activities can all be accommodated without using the barn building and the disposal of this asset would release much needed cash resources.

Any net proceeds from the potential sale can be used to further enhance the facilities at St Mary's, and it is hoped that there will also be scope to carry out further works to help us to achieve our net zero carbon goal by 2030.

Philip Fowler



Church Music Report

The church choir has continued to lead the singing at services during the last year and they have sung the hymns, provided communion anthems and have been able to sing the communion setting at the first service of the month. Numbers in the choir are low, and we really would appreciate any volunteers coming forward to swell our ranks. Despite this they produce a good sound and lead the singing well.

The Shirehampton area choir were able to perform a Christmas concert in 2023 and a presentation of Pardon, Penitence and Peace by Maunder on Easter Saturday this year (2024). Numbers in the choir are also rather low and again new voices would be welcomed. Any willing volunteers should contact me either in person or by email at fordorgano@gmail.com.

The organ has been used regularly during the last year and is in reasonable order. The instrument has been tuned twice since our last APCM by Harrison & Harrison Organ Builders. The piano is used regularly for Communion anthems on a Sunday and occasionally at the Thursday morning Eucharist, subject to my availability.

We have started having a joint service with Rise and Shine members on the last Sunday of the month. The choir does not robe at those services and join the main congregation. The keyboard or piano is used at those services together with songs through our sound system.



Tim Forder
Organist and Director of Music

Electoral Roll Report

The current status of St Mary's Shirehampton Electoral roll at the time of producing this report stood at 106 members. 1 Member has passed away during the last year. There has been one new member, added to the roll. Out of the 106 members 41 live outside of this parish. Members of the Church will only be permitted to take part in any election of Officers and PCC members if they are on the Electoral Roll.

Tim Forder
Electoral Roll Officer



Social Events Team Update

We kicked off 2023 with an afternoon cream tea event for the St Mary's Patronal Festival.

On a very hot and sunny Sunday afternoon in August, we welcomed many lovely people into the cool of the church and to a feast for the eyes of beautiful flower displays, colourful quilts, a history of St Mary's in photographs and models (very nostalgic for some...) and flower crafts for the youngsters, all accompanied by Morgan Williams who played beautiful music in the background on his harp.



We were able to serve over a hundred cream teas – up by 42 on 2022, raising £308.50. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen with particular thanks to Elizabeth Harvey who helped bake the delicious scones, Amy Boucher for the brilliant photographic display and Christine Porter for the beautiful quilts. It was a great success.

This was followed by an Autumn Fair at the end of September. We were blessed with dry weather, allowing us to have a variety of stalls outside as well as inside the church. Once again, we were able to accommodate several independent sellers. There was a lovely buzz inside and out with lots on sale from cakes to hot dogs, sweets to crafts and a variety of games. All topped off with a super dance display by Stomp. We raised £1,262.38. Finally, we held a Christmas Fair at the beginning of December when the weather wasn't so kind. And rather than have gazebos blowing around the village due to a forecast of very strong winds we squeezed everyone inside.

It was amazing how we all fitted in, as we welcomed quite a few more artisan sellers as well as there being more St Mary's stall holders. Santa welcomed younger visitors to his Grotto with help from Mrs Christmas and a little band of elves. The atmosphere was just great. Our guests were able to get just about everything they needed to make Christmas special from beautiful knitting and handmade crafts, cakes and preserves, books and toys, paintings, creative metal crafts, gifts that could be personalised while they waited and the children were even able make their own reindeer food.

Everyone really got into the Christmas Spirit and while enjoying the refreshments on offer, STOMP gave us a spectacular dance performance and Rev Alison rallied everyone to sing carols accompanied by Tim Forder. Once again this was a great success and we raised over £1,500.



It can never be said enough but not one of these events could happen without the commitment of all those who gave their up their time to help.

So, whether you rearranged the heavy chairs and set up the church, manned a stall, baked a cake, knitted or sewed, served refreshments, came along to support us, cleared away and prepared the church for the Sunday service, you all know who you are. Thank you. You are stars every one of you.

Together we have been very successful in bringing our church family and our wider community together.



Mary Powell





Avonside Mission Area (ASMA)

The Avonside Mission Area is a covenanted partnership of five churches in North West Bristol which includes Lawrence Weston, Shirehampton, Sea Mills, Coombe Dingle, Avonmouth and Stoke Bishop. Whilst the churches run separately, there is a strong sense of family and sharing of resources and ideas.

2023 saw more change in the clergy team across ASMA. Rev Andy Murray, Vicar of Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston returned from a period of Extended Ministerial Development Leave, and later in the year was made Dean of Priority Communities. He will continue to be Vicar part time alongside this new role, with plans in 2024 to appoint an Associate Minister.



In September we welcomed Rev Sally Thomas as vicar of St Edyth's Sea Mills. The team at St Edyth's navigated the vacancy amazingly and Sally landed in a church ready to welcome her but in great health. ASMA clergy were pleased to be able to offer continuing support throughout the period of vacancy in 2023 and then to serve alongside Sally as she settled quickly into her role. Her husband Neil has already led worship at several ASMA events.

Sonia and Julie, our ASMA curates, were ordained as priests in July, enabling them to serve in new ways across the mission area. They have enjoyed learning the different eucharistic traditions and presiding across the Mission Area.

Llewelyn Lawton, Churchwarden at St Peter's Lawrence



Weston, also joined the ASMA team as Ministry Experience Scheme worker. He has helped serve in a variety of ways across the Mission Area including the student ministry in Stoke Bishop, toddler groups, and listening cafes.

Alison Sowton, Vicar of Shirehampton, is already a much-loved member of the community there. As part of her role as ASMA Life Events Missioner she has led two Bereavement Course groups in 2023. These were offered to those recently bereaved from across the Mission Area and greatly appreciated by those who attended.

In Lent we gathered together across the Mission Area, firstly on Ash Wednesday at St Andrew's Avonmouth, and then weekly throughout Lent to worship and reflect together on the topic of forgiveness. Approximately 60 gathered each week, moving around the Mission Area churches, and enjoyed the chance for connection and learning. July and October saw Prayer and Praise gatherings bring the churches together again, something that will be continued termly. Gathering together also happened monthly at the informal prayer and worship event now rebranded as 'Deeper'. This is a great chance to worship together and listen to God.

As members of the youth and children's team across ASMA have had periods away from work, the teams have been able to support one another, drawing in volunteers able to serve in this area too. This continues to be an area of need it would be great to have additional team members for.

Providing cover is one core way the Mission Area provides mutual support. This happens across the church for life events, preaching and leading Sunday services and mid-week communions. Support can also be provided for new initiatives such as the More@4 service that started at St Peter's Lawrence Weston this year, which gives families who have attended Messy Church the opportunity to attend a weekly service more similar to that creative format. Ideas have been shared from St Mary's Stoke Bishop Explore@4, and the service has grown through the year with a regular group of local families now attending. Other new initiatives include bacon butties and prayer for the community that gather in the churchyard at St Mary's Shirehampton.

The Ukrainian Hub and North West Bristol Foodbank continue to be places where volunteers from across the Mission Area serve, meeting vital needs. Wellbeing groups have also continued to serve the area. In 2023, three groups took place across Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills, serving 18 people in a variety of locations including local schools. There are two small follow-on groups that continue to meet regularly, and ad-hoc meet ups too. The partnership with Kintsugi Hope, who provide the materials for these courses, is funded and administered by St Mary's Stoke Bishop.

The ASMA clergy continue to value their breakfast meetings as an opportunity to pray for one another, share needs and updates. Prayer needs have also continued to go out across the Mission Area by way of the seasonal praise and prayer newsletter. This has been supplemented by the occasional video update.

Bristol West Deanery Synod Report



Diocese of Bristol

Introduction

Three Deanery Synods took place, all were held in person, unlike the two previous years when many meetings had to be conducted by Zoom.

In 2023 and the key themes were:

- Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T
- Understanding the TC.T Value - Generosity
- DLT Elections and understanding the TC.T Value - Creativity

March Deanery Synod:

Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T

Deanery Synod on 14 March 2023 focused upon this being a Triennial Year and exploring the missional opportunities with Bristol West. The Meeting was held in person at St Mary's Leigh Woods.

Triennial Year

Synod was reminded by the Area Dean that this is a Triennial year. Consequently, Deanery Representative will need to be elected at APCMs for a three-year term of office and in accordance with the number stipulated for parishes and united benefices.

The Deanery Synod Annual Report will be ready for circulation prior to the commencement of APCMs.

The Main Theme: Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T

The Area Dean welcomed Rob Mountain, Director of Transformation, and members of the Diocesan Transformation Team. Rob introduced the session with some slides demonstrating the reason why this Diocese is participating in the National Emerging Church programme and how this begins to translate at a local level.

Following the TCT overview, Synod broke into discussion groups to identify the active opportunities that might start to shape the projects across the Deanery that could form a focus for TCT Missional Community activities. Recognising that some of these projects could and should cross boundaries of geography, parish, deanery, denominations, inter-faith and other organizations.

Discussion output is included with these minutes (see attachment) and have been gathered under the emergent headings:

- Activities and Events
- Worship and Teaching
- Crossing Boundaries
- Culture Shift
- Resourcing

The Uganda Link

Rev Janet Hill and Sarah Thomas updated Synod on the Deanery trip to our link Dioceses in N Uganda which took place at the end of October 2022.

May Deanery Synod:

The 'Transforming Church. Together' Value 'Generosity'

Deanery Synod on 17 May 2023 focused upon our understanding of the TC.T value – 'Generosity' - and how this is exhibited in our words and actions. The Meeting was held in person at Christ Church Clifton.

The Main Theme: Generosity, one of the four values within Transforming Church. Together

The Area Dean reminded us of the four values of the diocese, Openness, Creativity, Generosity and Bravery. We reflected in pairs and groups on the diocesan definition,

'We value generosity and receive and give sincerely. We give our time and resources to share what we know of Jesus' love. We want our communities to feel supported and cared for in the way Jesus would do, to experience God's love through our action and an opportunity to journey into faith if they choose.'

Then in different groups we discussed what generosity looked like, we shared ideas and wrote on post it notes. There was feedback from every group, including a range of suggestions, from publicising food baskets in churches to showing generosity in our listening towards others stories.

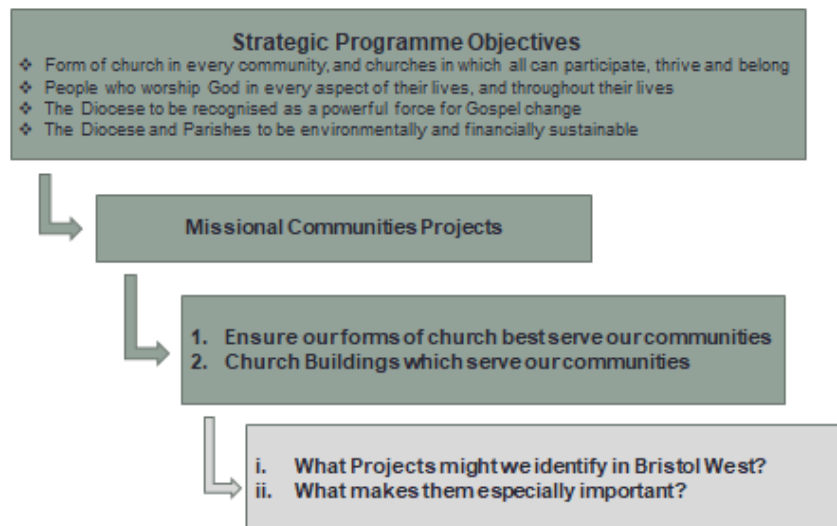


Bristol West Deanery Synod Annual Report 2023

Synod Output following Key Theme Discussions

- Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T
- Understanding the TC.T Value - Generosity
- Understanding the TC.T Value - Creativity

Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T Deanery Synod 14 March 2023



Discussion Groups – on Missional Communities Projects

Following the TCT overview, Synod broke into discussion groups to identify the active opportunities that might start to shape the projects across the Deanery that could form a focus for TCT Community activities. Recognising that some of these projects could and should cross boundaries of geography, parish, deanery, denominations, inter-faith and other organizations.

Discussion output has been grouped for ease of reading.

Activities and Events

Missional Ministries – these were seen as contextually dependent opportunities to align resource to respond to specific needs where there was energy.

- Ministry to the mature (older age groups) and those living with dementia
- Young people and young family's ministries
- Outreach through the arts (exhibitions and concerts)
- Local business networks, business breakfasts and meeting venues
- Education Centres – educational hubs on racial justice or deprivation or industrial change
- Foodbanks and Community Support (Bristol NW Foodbank and 'Loaves and Fishes')

Regular Programmed Events – Activities offered by local churches (in partnership) that focus on specific groups within the local community.

- Lunch Clubs and Café – such as: Friends on Friday (Dementia Café), Community Café, Listening Café, Table Talk, Drop-In Centres, Community Lunch
- Open Church Buildings for - AA, Art Group, Bereavement support, well-being (Kintsugi course), Ukrainian Hub, English Conversation, After School homework or pick-up points
- Special Events, such as 'Open Mike Night', Barn Dance, Beer and Prayer
- Community Venue for meetings, concerts, talks

There was some discussion as to the extent to which these events should be stand alone or be connected to a more open sharing of faith, or should the relationship be built first and then faith is shared.

Additionally, there were question as to how the church can make contact with 'users' and 'visitors' in those churches with open-door policies.

Worship and Teaching

Many focused upon worship and teaching as key activities for local church contexts. There was recognition of what some churches do well and the opportunity to share or spread this across boundaries.

- Growth in children's work, messy church
- Opportunities for family worship
- Mission to the more mature generations
- Worship – evening services and the offer of other times in the week (not just Sunday)
- Community located – not necessarily in 'church' buildings

Also, opportunities to have local teaching and lectures to gather people from across different boundaries. Such as '*Christians in Science*' or the Churches Together Lent Course, '*Faith and Art Today*', based upon the Methodist art collection.

Crossing Boundaries

Though challenging to think more broadly than 'parish', the discussions did recognise the importance of stepping across the usual boundaries. In particular current activities include:

- School work and support in education and training (for example - Spear Bristol)
- Combination of response to people's needs (foodbank, café, lunch clubs)
- Training and equipping leaders - for ministry to families, children and the older age groups; or in specific contexts - work and community
- Work across ecumenical boundaries (Churches Together) and inter-faith
- Collaboration with other social and community organizations

Culture Shift

How do we enable ourselves to think differently? How do we cross the various boundaries emphasise our collective tendency to 'bordered thinking' – geography, denomination, parish, community, ethnic, and so forth? How do we enable churches to look outwards – from drains and chairs to community?

Various activities emerged:

- Keep churches open all day ensure they are part of the community
- Engaging in a community audit will focus the missional lens and also demonstrate active listening to our people and communities
- Post-Covid has reduced numbers of volunteers, giving and worshippers – but also provided opportunity for active engagement within the community
- Must look out from church – mission is community focussed, meet people where they live/work/connect
- Enthuse and encourage each other with clear, defined projects (and easy wins to raise expectations)
- Provide 'specialists' to work with churches and groups of churches to identify opportunities for parishes, church communities and groups and plan for action
- Make use of the vacancy period to help parishes think differently – provide facilitation during this period (South Severnside and Henbury)
- Support parishes in the creation of strategic approach (Mission Action Plan)
- Keep 'an eye out' for and join in with what's 'bubbling up'

Resourcing

Recognition that many of the Missional Community Projects can be identified and driven locally – however, many parishes do not have the resources. Also, many stipendiary clergy are more than fully occupied in maintain things as they are now – the idea of adding to this is hard to contemplate. Ministry teams (lay and ordained) often have issues of capacity, many parishes do not have volunteers to fulfil existing roles, let alone new projects.

Ideas to address these issues might include:

- Provision of Resource Hubs in local patches – this might be a whole range of offerings, including (for example) lay/ordained ministers or administration services
- Deanery located bookkeepers, Safeguarding Officers, H&S, etc; some parishes have to pay a treasurer (is cash available for support staff?)
- Deanery specialists to work on opportunities to build resource for outreach to address the big missional ministries
- How do we address the questions like ‘what to do with a medieval church with no toilets?’
- Recognise the suites of skills within parishes and Deanery and communities and make these more widely available

The ‘Transforming Church. Together’ Value ‘Generosity’ Deanery Synod 17 May 2023

The four values of the diocese: ***Openness, Creativity, Generosity and Bravery.***
We reflected in pairs and groups on the diocesan definition: **Generosity**

‘We value generosity and receive and give sincerely. We give our time and resources to share what we know of Jesus’ love. We want our communities to feel supported and cared for in the way Jesus would do, to experience God’s love through our action and an opportunity to journey into faith if they choose.’

In different table groups we discussed what generosity looked like, we shared ideas and wrote on post-it notes. There was feedback from every group, including a range of suggestions, from publicising food baskets in churches to showing generosity in our listening to the stories of others.

Table group output has been categorised below:

Provision – Showing Generosity now

- Keep the food baskets topped up
- Maintain local food banks
- Offer warm spaces
- Provide choir and concerts for the community
- Provide a community hub – for personal use and small businesses
- Food banks and home banks, warm spaces, work with homeless. Offer prayer
- Welcome all – fully inclusive
- Be generous in our support to those who provide support
- Provide Dementia Friendly church
- Working with gardens and growing things
- listening opportunities in cafes and prayer on the street
- Publicise our food banks and homebanks
- Not only young people – also older people
- Develop mental health first aiders
- Boost school and youth work

Understanding – listening and learning

- Serving practical needs in the community
- Listen to people's practical needs and desires
- Training for discerning the needs of the community would help
- Engage in serious outreach:
 - messy vintage church
 - messy church
 - School prayer space
 - Youthwork
 - Musical opportunities
- Research the needs of the community (ask)
- Identify deprivation and determine ways to respond
- Recognise issues of cost of living, food, fuel, housing
- Find out what people need rather than what we think they might need
- Need to find ways to approach our local communities to find out how we can help to build relationships. Hopefully to bring people to the church family
- Ask people questions to learn about their needs – we could benefit in training to know how to do this most effectively

Social Centre – Church as community

Offer church as a social centre

Ukrainian response – hubs

Refugee response – hubs

Outreach – Recognizing the missional significance

Be generous in spirit and find time to listen to one another

Support with missional ministries across the parish boundaries

Engage in the current cultural conversations in a distinctly Jesus shaped way (creation, Identity, economics, Poverty)

Build people's confidence in sharing their stories about the transformation Jesus brings to lives

Working Across Boundaries and Parish Hubs

Give practical support to neighbour parishes

Share resource – people and physical

Are there ways in which better-off areas in the Deanery could support poor areas? For example a Deanery hardship fund. Individuals could contribute and those in need could apply. Church to administer process

Are there parishes with needs that could be met by people from other parishes? For example provide homework clubs, career guidance

Share resources across churches – especially in the mission area

Sharing hubs around the Deanery – admin and finance and safeguarding

Share human resources (skills, ideas, money)

Share resources across churches – especially in the mission area

Sharing hubs around the Deanery – admin and finance and safeguarding

Share tips and practical ways of doing things – look for good practice

Equipping and enabling

Develop community action skills – some are more experienced than others

Provide training for community engagement and development.

Share resources and skills

Provide training

for equipping befrienders

listeners and story tellers

listening

Change Culture – changing our Thinking

Relationship we have in Diocese and Deanery and church seen to be generous – in times of struggle be seen to be supportive

Be more 'snake' – church not a butterfly but snake, shedding skin, adapting and moving around the community

Work ecumenically – share with partners in social prescribing and warm spaces
Actively discuss at PCC
Avoid parochialism
Do with and not to
Aspirational values require the development of a new culture. How do we recognise and reward behaviour which fits with 'generosity'
Look after interests of others, show interest, offer support, provide friendship
Risk of burden by becoming over generous

The 'Transforming Church. Together' Value 'Creativity' Deanery Synod 5 October 2023

The four values of the diocese: ***Openness, Creativity, Generosity and Bravery.***

We reflected in groups on the diocesan definition: **Creativity**

*'We value **creativity** and we co-operate with the work of the Spirit. We are faithful, rooted in faith and responsive to the Spirit. Our communities feel inspired, this is bold and joyful faith, work and worship that engages us all. We want our communities to experience a variety of projects and worship styles, celebrating tradition and innovation in connection to God.'*

How do we understand this value?

If we were to see it in the Deanery, what would it look like?

Alternative Ideas

Tell the stories of contested heritage
Booklet on each value with theological reflections
Deanery wide creative calendar
Provide welcome packs for housing estates and people who have moved in

Significance of Music and the Arts

Music – school, children.
Music as encouragement
Music for relationships and to give context
Dance groups
book group
Pop Up events
Open doors and arts trails – join in with these events
Open doors for environment day
Artisans Market
Carol singing in pubs

Christmas tree display
Film evenings – especially films that teach
Taylor Swift music played by string quartet
Wine tasting evening

Schools, Children and Youth Groups

Access to youth workers
Charing in the community – cafes
Access to youth workers help and inspire
Link across secondary schools and

Worship Style

Have variety of worship styles in each parish and benefice
Regular services like harvest and remembrance in different styles
Open air carol service in the streets (Almondsbury)
Do services and events on key national days
Blue Christmas events – grows from grief services
Advent easter trail
Advent calendar display in windows of parish
Offer wider variety of activities for community – messy church, Christmas market easter trail
Saturday afternoon events for families with food, creativity, prayer and music
Church@4 instead of Messy Church <https://www.avonriverteam.org.uk/church4.htm>

Cross Boundary

Mission area – Henleaze, Westbury Park Westbury on Trym – growth chaplain
Encourage churches to work together across the boundaries
Take church outside to get over the barrier of the building
Share knowledge and information across churches and parishes

Church Building

Church is a focal building in the community – encourage people into the building in creative ways

Research

Ask people if they'd like to be prayed with/for – have activities to engage with them
Ask people in the community what they would like and what they believe

Café Church and Events

Weekly café
Café create – music, story telling, - relaxed and inclusive
Listening café with still point
Listening Café where people can chat and talk about problems
Café with bible and prayer slot



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Be: renewed
Go: share God's love

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