

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH HIGHER BEBINGTON

England & Wales · Charity number 1132356

Details

Other names	CHRIST CHURCH HIGHER BEBINGTON PCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2009-10-27
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	1 Blakeley Brow Wirral CH63 0PS
Phone	01513341956
Email	parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk
Website	www.christchurchbeb.org.uk

Activities

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

Activities: Regular public worship open to all. Pastoral work including visiting the sick and bereaved. Teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups. Promoting the whole mission of the Church through provision of activities for senior citizens, parents and toddlers and other special need groups. Supporting other charities in the UK and overseas.

Classification

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

Geography

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

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£264,630	£273,136	-	-
2023-12-31	£264,566	£262,426	-	-
2022-12-31	£274,783	£246,514	-	-
2021-12-31	£194,778	£198,678	-	-
2020-12-31	£239,398	£221,718	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
CHARLES FREDERICK VAN INGEN		
Diane Susan Shaw		2023-05-07
Dr Paul Damien Price		2016-04-24
Fiona Christine Murphy		2023-05-07
Helen Maria Byrne		2021-01-13
IAN DAVID MILLINGTON		
Ian Carr		2025-04-27
Ian Murray		
JANE ELIZABETH DALZIEL		
Jacqueline Jones		2025-04-27
June Bickford		2023-05-07
Lynn Ion		2025-04-27
Mark Gleave		2018-04-29
Nydia Gibson		2021-01-13
Rev EUNICE BLACKMORE		
Sandra Evans		2023-05-07
Stephen Michael Stapleton		2025-04-27
Terry Cunningham		2018-04-29
Victoria Jane Midgley		2021-01-13

Accounts

Diocese of Chester

Christ Church Higher Bebington

Parochial Church Council

Annual Report 2024

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral
CH63 8LX

Christ Church Higher Bebington - Annual Report 2024









Christ Church Higher Bebington

1 Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Higher Bebington's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and the Community Centre.

2 Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to know the love of God through worship at our church and engagement with our members in and around the parish. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we properly maintain the fabric of Christ Church, which is a Grade II listed building dating back to 1859, and the Community Centre which opened in April 2011.

The PCC's policy is to deliver Christmas and Easter cards to every home in the Parish giving details of the church services and outreach activities planned for these festivals.

3 Achievements and Performance

3.1 Report from the Chair of the PCC (Ian Millington)

Change is an inevitable part of life. Although many of us struggle with change and are challenged by uncertainty, without change we cannot grow. Naturally the first observation of the year just gone is the departure of Reverend Mike Loach and his family.

Mike and Sarah's farewell service was a time of great joy and I know that the family were very grateful for such a warm and loving send off. Thank you to all those who contributed to pull together such a fitting farewell.

Notwithstanding the departure of Mike, Sarah, Sam and Harry (and Jumble!) we continue with our work to share God's abundant love with those in our Parish and in our wider community. For all those involved in that work it can be difficult to adjust to new lines of authority and new voices 'leading the charge', and so my prayer for us all is that we continue to work together respecting the views of the other and seeking to discern God's will for our church and reflecting God's love in all we do.

For fear of missing out anyone's valuable contribution during the past year I will not attempt to 'name-check' all those involved in activities in our church. We work together as a family of

faith and we all share in our successes (and very occasional failures) knowing that we are stronger together in communion.

Interregnum

The Oxford dictionary definition of interregnum is “an interval or pause between two periods of office or other things”.

Indeed, we are between two periods of office. We give thanks for the ministry of Mike and Sarah and the boys and we look forward to the arrival of a new incumbent, not knowing who he or she may be, and unsure as to when they might arrive.

But we need to remain faithful and hopeful. God always provides and God has a plan for us and our church. And so, whilst we are between two periods of office we are not “between two things”. God’s love and care for us is constant and that love and care will continue throughout the interregnum and beyond.

The work of the church

For the most part it remains ‘business as usual’! We continue to offer regular Sunday morning services at 8.30am and 10.00am, Sunday evening services, a midweek communion service and will continue to mark our Festivals at Easter and Harvest and Christmas with special services and special activities.

Over recent years our Electoral Roll has shown net growth, that is an increase in overall numbers despite the sad loss of some of our faithful members or some moving away. Against a backdrop of national church decline and regular headlines of dwindling church attendance it is a great encouragement that Christ Church is still attracting new people to join our church. At the time of writing, this year’s Electoral Roll numbers are not yet finalised as we continue to collect in new Roll forms.

Our Ministry Team meet regularly to reflect on past services and plan for future services. We are always willing to take on feedback (good and bad!) and will continue to strive to bring a message of hope to those who attend, whether that be physically or virtually through our online platform.

We give thanks for all those quietly involved behind the scenes to assist with our services - the Vestry Team, flower team, cleaning team and our technical team who make sure that our sound and vision all works and that our services and funerals are live-streamed. What a blessing!

Jackie Jones continues her studies and is now coming to the end of her second year of Pastoral training. Fiona Murphy completed OWL training with the Diocese – ‘Occasional Worship Leader’ which I am sure will be of great benefit to us (and her!).

Over the course of the year, we recorded 21 baptisms, 7 weddings and 27 funerals (16 in church and 11 at the crematorium). There were no confirmations in the year.

It is fair to say that the numbers of children attending church regularly remains low. We are not alone in this and many churches are continuing to feel the after-effects of the pandemic and a shift in societal norms that see an ever-increasing demand on family time from secular and sporting pursuits.

That said, numbers attending special events such as Experience Christmas and Experience Easter have been really encouraging and we continue to enjoy really strong engagement with our local schools, including leading assemblies for them. This is great work and is testament to the dedication of those co-ordinating such events, who are so wonderfully generous with their talents.

Likewise, we continue to offer "church" in other formats – Lego Church, Praise and Play, Toddler Group, Baby Group, the list goes on.

Our Pastoral Team continues to work tirelessly to give spiritual and practical support to all those we know about in our hospitals, hospices, care homes, as well as those who are housebound – indeed anyone who asks for help.

Alongside all her other important ministry, Rev Eunice continues to run the Bereavement Journey course. The demand for these courses highlights just how valuable a ministry bereavement support is, and it is really encouraging to see those that have attended the courses come back to our church, whether for services or events, always with a message of how much the course has helped them.

Our Befrienders Group remains active also, as do various other groups which are run to offer support to those feeling grief, loss or isolation – Oasis Mental Health and Wellbeing support, Carers Group, Men in Sheds, Knit & Natter, Sewing Group, Walking Group, Indoor bowls, Lunch Club, 'Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone'...again the list is extensive and as members of this thriving church we should be proud of all the outreach activities we offer and give thanks to God for equipping us with the skills to deliver them, and the energy to carry on!

Around 30 joined us at our Alpha course in 2024 – admittedly mainly faithful members of our congregation, though there were some attending on the fringe. And of those who we did already know, they felt it valuable to share and discuss stories of their faith and to grow together in fellowship.

In addition, we also organise a wide range of events to bring the parish and the wider community together – the Summer Fair, Christmas Fair, Christmas coffee morning, Easter coffee morning, Bonfire & Fireworks event, and many other charity fundraising events to support third party agencies. And we must not forget the work of our Rose Queen and family and retinue who bring such joy and happiness to our church with the events they organise throughout the church calendar, whilst simultaneously fundraising for their chosen charities.

And special mentions also of course for Mothers' Union, Men's Group and for the ever-popular Ladies' Nights, and occasional drinking groups supporting the hostellers of Bebington!

A particular highlight of the past year – and which continues – is the New Testament in a Year group. Taking one or two books of the Bible in turn, I know that many have felt a new sense of wonder in learning together.

We should not forget the work of our Housegroup leaders which offer regular encouragement, and we should also give thanks for those involved in our music – our choir, our band, and in particular all of our organists in the past year who have stepped in and helped lead us in our services.

Our Eco group, now the 'Green Team', continue to work hard to improve the biodiversity of our church footprint – and new helpers are always welcome!

Our church building remains open to the public every day and continues to offer a place of sanctuary for many folk. A word of thanks to all those involved in opening up and locking up, particularly now that Mike and Sarah are no longer around.

We also need to acknowledge the work of those updating our church notice boards – internally and externally – and those whose creative gifts and talents make our church look such a welcoming space – both for special services like Remembrance and our Experience events, but also throughout the year.

And finally... special thanks to all those involved in the administration of the church and its buildings who offer so much of their time in dedicated service to Christ Church – our PCC (and PCC Secretary), our Treasurer, our Buildings and Finance Committee, and our wonderful Church Wardens.

And not forgetting, all those who work in our Parish Office and offer such valuable support to the Ministry Team and the wider church and community and who are always on hand to act as the 'first face' of the church with a warm greeting and a smile.

Be thankful!

On the occasion of Reverend Mike's last service with us in February 2025, he reminded us that we have much to be thankful for – and indeed we are truly blessed in Christ Church with such willing, enthusiastic, energetic and creative people who share so much of their time and their talents with the church and the wider community. Without you the church would not be the dynamic and caring community that we witness week on week and it is a great encouragement and inspiration that so many are willing to give of themselves in worship and praise to God.

We say it every week at church but it is still worth remembering those principal commandments - to love your neighbour as yourself and to love your God. If we truly keep these commandments as the cornerstone of our lives then we will not go far wrong, and will be doing what we can to honour the word of God.

On behalf of the PCC can I thank you all for what you have done and all that I know you will continue to do in the year ahead. God bless you all!

3.2 Churchwardens' Report (by June Bickford and Ian Murray)

An average of 85 people take part in our Sunday Service. Grateful thanks go to Ian Carr who manages our live stream for those members of the congregation who are unable to attend.

Wendy Tucker our organist returned for a short time before the birth of her twins Sophie & Felix. Grateful thanks to Rose MacPherson, Dan Bishop, Nick Owen, Tim Asbridge & Tom Yeomans who have stood in during Wendy's maternity leave. Our choir is led by Pam Hollinshead and Tim Asbridge who bring something special to our services as well as our 'band' who perform once a month.

We are so blessed in having a team who lead and support our worship. Grateful thanks to Revd. Mike for the last 10 years of faithful service, I'm sure that you will all agree that he will be missed, and we wish him every happiness in his new role as chaplain in the RAF. Many thanks to Revd. Eunice, Colette & Ian Millington, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Lynn Ion and Jackie Jones. The team is very much appreciated.

Many thanks to Sarah, Sam & Harry Loach for all that they have done, not only in supporting Mike but for everything they have done for Christ Church. We wish them well.

Our thanks go to Victoria Gleave and Jane Dalziel, who along with the 'office volunteers' ensure that the Parish office runs smoothly. Your help is very much appreciated.

As well as our Sunday services throughout the year we have managed to have our special traditional services, Easter, Remembrance, Blue Christmas, Carol Service, Christingle and Midnight Mass. Our thanks go to all who help at these much-loved services. Grateful thanks go to Libby Potter along with her team of volunteers have made 'The Christmas' and Easter Experience' enjoyable for 400 local school children at each of these two special events.

We very much appreciate the work of 'Classy Cleaners' and the 'Flower' team who work behind the scenes throughout the year to make our church welcoming.

As Church Wardens, we thank our deputy wardens, and sidespeople who supported us throughout the year, we also thank our loyal congregation together with all those 'unseen' heroes who regularly help behind the scenes, to ensure the smooth running of Christ Church. Grateful thanks to you all.

3.3 Deanery Synod Report (by Helen Byrne)

The Wirral North Deanery meets quarterly in venues across the Deanery.

A new Synod secretary has been appointed: Dawn Inman-Wyness. Meetings continue to be chaired by the Rural Dean, David Vestergaard.

Our Synod members are Helen Byrne, Ny Gibson, Mark Gleave, Fiona Murphy and Diane Shaw who serve on the PCC in that capacity.

CCHB hosted the October 2024 meeting in our Community Centre and we were supported by our Brownies who helped to set up the Hall and welcome our guests. That meeting focussed on Safeguarding which has been a priority for all of us this year and will continue to be so.

All members are very happy to answer any queries that the congregation may have and if anyone would like to attend a future meeting please speak to us so that we can arrange that with the Secretary.

3.4 Buildings Report (by Terry Cunningham)

- The vicarage cellar damp issue remains of concern, despite works on the local drainage arrangements and sealing of the access door. The diocese is currently looking to isolate the cellar and the top floor from the other habitable parts of the vicarage, though how effective that will be remains to be seen.
- Church roof & Guttering – this remains a major concern with a further loss of tiles, during high winds, and associated damage to the guttering. Remedial works are due to take place shortly but it is looking likely that a major replacement/refurbishment will be required in the short to medium term.
- Churchyard – the emotive issue of grave/ashes plot inappropriate and excessive adornment, plus encroachment continues to dominate. Steps are being taken to try and resolve this.
- Church tower – the netting has proved effective but the stonework damage required repairing. This is the subject of an ongoing insurance claim.

- Kings Hall lighting has been replaced by LED fittings and the dimming function restored.
- Community Centre emergency lights have been replaced as required, with just the external ones remaining.
- External CCTV has been installed on the Community Centre and is now fully operational.
- The external noticeboards were replaced, courtesy of George Nelson.
- A Quinquennial inspection survey is to be completed this year, following postponement from 2024.
- Our thanks are extended to Ian Carr for his tireless proactive and reactive work on many issues around the centre.

3.5 Pastoral Care including Care Home Visits (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

We have a small team who, behind the scenes, visit often with home communions, or go into care homes or the hospitals to talk, pray and support any that we are aware of in the congregation who are going through a difficult time. As a team we aim to meet regularly to ensure that nobody is forgotten – but if we have overlooked someone – please forgive us and don't hesitate to tell us! I'm really grateful for the willingness and support of this team.

Each month, a few of us visit Bebington Care Home which has been totally upgraded. We receive a very warm welcome and have good relationships with the staff. We provide a short service – a few hymns, verse and prayers with the help of YouTube on their large TV screen in one of the main lounges. Typically, 12 – 20 residents attend and we have good chats with the residents afterwards. We also have occasional visits to Birch Tree Manor – outside the Parish – but through various contacts (and local agreement) have invited us in.

3.6 Communication

Our weekly Parish newsletter is available both on-line and as hard copy. The website is being upgraded to provide a vital link for many members of our community who cannot reach church regularly. Our Facebook page has grown considerably over the past couple of years and, in connecting with other community groups, can now attract thousands of views for a single post. The YouTube channel continues to provide another way for people to join in with our services.

3.7 Pastoral and Social Initiatives run by Christ Church

3.7.1 Men in Sheds (by Terry Cunningham)

The shed(s) continue to provide a valuable resource for, mostly mature gents, to come and socialise, as well as doing a bit of practical work, if they so wish.

We maintained our “bread & butter” output of bird tables, planters etc, allowing us to offer membership for free, to anyone who wants to join us. We have been involved with a few other bespoke items such as doll's house refurbishment (subsequently donated to Claire House Children's Hospice) and a community library, on behalf of Higher Bebington Junior School.

The shed continues to support both the church and community centre with various DIY tasks, reducing the reliance on paid contractors. We have also shipped out a lot of tools etc, due to our connection with Tools With A Mission (TWAM), and will gratefully receive any such donations.

Our attendance can be a bit sporadic, with anything from 4 -14 coming on any one day. However, should you wish to come along, you can be assured of a friendly welcome and cup of tea/coffee, if you're there at 11.00am!

3.7.2 Singing Café (by Lynn Ion)

Singing Café has continued twice a month throughout the year. The singers and musicians from Heswall lead the sessions, bringing great enjoyment to all. The numbers attending have been gradually increasing. There is now an average attendance of around 25-30 at each session. All those who attend Singing Café greatly appreciate the group for providing the wonderful entertainment.

Thanks go to Jean Silcock, Chris Youngman and the rest of their musical group for so generously giving up their time to support Singing Café. Thank you also to the kitchen team who provide the refreshments.

3.7.3 Caffi Cymraeg (by Pam Hollinshead)

Caffi Cymraeg continues to flourish albeit without the direction of our wonderful Sarah Loach.

New faces appear amongst the regulars, new conversations are started and shared. People are encouraged to use as much or as little of the beautiful Welsh language as they are comfortable with, resulting in great sgwrs - conversation!
New members are always welcome.

Thanks to Judith Van Ingen for continuing to bake gorgeous Welsh cakes and bara-brith.
Thanks to Lynn Ion for her company in this exciting venture.

3.7.4 The Sewing Group (by Rhona Snelson)

In our meetings on the 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month, we work together to foster our love of Needlework in its many forms. We mainly sew items for fund-raising events at church and have also worked on items needed by charities. With encouragement and support we share ideas and help with personal projects. We have happily been able to offer help with minor repairs and alterations brought to us by people seeking advice and help, these for a donation to church funds.

We work in a friendly atmosphere and really enjoy our time together.

3.7.5 Connect Café (by Rhona Snelson)

Connect Coffee, under the umbrella of "Places of Welcome", runs every Wednesday throughout the year, providing a meeting place in the Community Centre from 10.00am - 12 noon. A warm welcome is always readily given to all who visit. It is manned by a faithful, friendly group of helpers, who offer tea, coffee, and toast. Here members of the community and church have the opportunity to meet with others in friendly conversations or just to give a "listening ear" when required. During the colder months, Connect Coffee provided a "warm space" when the cost of domestic heating rose dramatically.

In a relaxed atmosphere, visitors have the opportunity to seek advice from Community Connectors, who regularly call in. Also during the year on several occasions, it has been a joy to welcome a small group of pupils from the Co-op Academy in Higher Bebington, who have run a Cake Stall to raise money for charity and also for planned outings. There is always a friendly “buzz” about the place, lots of different things happening and open to all.

3.7.6 Knit & Natter Group (by Joan Rippon)

The ladies have had a busy year knitting various items including poppies for Remembrance Sunday and Easter chicks. Knitted goods have also been donated to the Teams 4U shoe box appeal, Claire House Children’s Hospice and to support a cancer charity.

The following donations have also been made-

Make a Wish Children’s charity £25

Rose Queen £50

Mary’s Meals £50

Sundowns (Seacombe) £50

Christian Aid £50

The ladies also manned a stall at the Summer Fair and Christmas Coffee Morning with all proceeds going to Christ Church and Rose Queen charities.

A Christmas lunch was enjoyed by ladies at The Acorn.

Future project in hand is to support Mothers’ Union in donating knitted children’s clothing to Styal Women’s prison.

3.7.7 Oasis Group (by Lynn Ion)

Oasis is the Mental Health and Wellbeing Support group at Christ Church. The group meet once a month having presentations and discussion about topics they have chosen. These have been led by Jill Wright and Steve Flatt.

The Oasis group have continued to meet regularly throughout the year. In July, Jill Wright, who has been running Oasis for many years, retired. Oasis would like to give a big thank you to Jill for all the work and support she has given them for many years. Lynn Ion then took over co-running the group with Steve Flatt.

Oasis would also like to say thank you Steve for all his continuing support of the group.

3.7.8 Don’t Eat Sunday Lunch Alone (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Don’t Eat Sunday Lunch Alone – the first Sunday in the month - continues to be enjoyed by anything from 8 to 15 people who otherwise would be short of company on Sunday. It’s a great time of getting to know one another better while having a really good meal without the hassle of cooking for ourselves! We are well looked after by Broadway Steak and Wine who are really flexible about numbers fluctuating and always provide an excellent meal and welcome. If you’d be eating alone – why not consider joining us?

3.7.9 Church Walking Group (by Lizzie Roach)

Our walking group has continued to meet on the first Friday of the month, for leisurely strolls (between 3-5 miles) along the coast and countryside of Wirral. We have a turnout of anything between 5 and 15 people depending on weather conditions and availability; last

year we welcomed a couple of new members from outside the parish which has been very pleasing. Refreshment stops have become a very important feature of our walks, and we have discovered some excellent cafes on our travels!

3.7.10 Befrienders (Bereavement Support) (by Vera Jackson)

The Befrienders' lunch time meeting continues to be much appreciated on the first Thursday of every month. Generally, about 20 people attend and it has been good to welcome 'new faces' who have begun attending following the Bereavement Journey course. We shall continue providing this service as long as the demand is there.

3.7.11 Bereavement Journey (& Time to Remember & Blue Christmas (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

I continued to be amazed and humbled by the Bereavement Journey course. We ran 3 courses in 2024 (all afternoons) attended by 35 people. We saw significant changes in each person's journey through bereavement and many friendships were formed with several continuing to meet up and support one another. It was also encouraging to see many again and others at Time to Remember and Blue Christmas which prove to be highly valued services. I am very grateful of the support given by Mal Hattersley in sharing the leadership of the discussion groups and for Sharon Philpotts and Barbara Percival who provide such a great welcome and refreshments (delicious cakes).

Remembrance Book

This book which is kept in church is made available for families that wish to have their relatives name added to it.

3.7.12 Carers' Group (by Rhona Snelson and Graham Loach)

4Cs Carers Group – 'Carers, Coffee, Cake (and sandwiches!) and Chat'

The 4Cs provides opportunities for carers, those who have previously been carers and all who would like to join with us to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship together.

2024 was a very good year with a full programme, during which we enjoyed visits from a wide range of speakers and services.

It is always good to hear from speakers who are part of the amazing Christ Church community, and this year was no exception.

In January, Alan Jackson took us on a photographic tour of the Dolomites. In March, Vicki Roberts and a colleague told us about the work and support provided by Wirral Community Connectors. In April, John Little gave us a very entertaining account of his life as a Police Officer. Pete Roach had us doing Tai Chi exercises in September and, in October, Libby Potter gave us a truly moving account of her voluntary work with the 'Signing for Babies' charity.

Our outside speakers were all wonderful. In February, Police Constable Julie Metcalfe gave us a very entertaining and informative talk on how to avoid being scammed. In May, David Hearn took us on a nostalgic memory trip through the 1950s. In November, Helen Wade told us of the work done by Ferries Families and it was lovely to see the church response via toys given at the annual toy service.

Our day trip to Llandudno took place in June and has now become an annual event as has our Summer Lunch (with strawberries and cream!) in July.

The final event of 2024 was our Christmas meeting where we remembered the Christmas hits from years gone by.

We are very grateful to our wonderful caterers who provide sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee at all our meetings. Thank you, Lorna, Rhona Snelson and Jill Loach.

New members are always welcome, and we look forward to seeing friends old and new at our lunchtime meetings. These are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except for August, at 12.15pm in the Community Centre.

3.7.13 Indoor Bowls

The introduction of a bowl of soup along with a game of bowls on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month during the Winter (October – April) has proved popular and thanks go to Sarah Loach for providing this.

3.7.14 Friday Lunch Club

Ann Bell kindly continued to run the Friday Lunch Club, following its introduction by Vicki Roberts (when she was in post, as our Community Engagement Officer). Ann has provided a hot meal once a month on the 4th Friday, which has been gladly received by those attending. A willing team of washer-uppers assisted her in the kitchen.

3.7.15 Christmas Day Lunch

We welcomed approximately 90 guests to enjoy Christmas lunch together this year. All who attended were well looked after and along with a delicious meal, were able to enjoy carols and company before heading home with a gift, kindly provided by Home Instead. So many people give generously of their time and resources in the preparations for the day and on Christmas Day itself, to ensure that all who attend have an enjoyable time. Although there are too many to mention personally by name, a special 'thank you' to local businesses Whieldons' Butchers and supermarkets (Co-op, Sainsburys and Tesco, Dacre Hill) for providing food items for the meal.

A very special thank you must be given to Sarah Loach, who introduced the Christmas Day Lunch in 2015 and has worked tirelessly each year to ensure that the event is a success, even arranging for meals to be delivered for the two years impacted by Covid! The logistics that sit behind the event are tremendous but she always approached it cheerfully.

All who help out as part of the team have been happy to do so by offering their support both on the day and in the preparations beforehand.

3.7.16 The Green Team (by Pam Hollinshead)

The team felt that a more encompassing eco name change to The Green Team would better describe our aims and objectives. We grew from the fantastic work put in by everyone for our Eco church awards; we have never been simply a gardening group.

The Anglican church has defined the Fifth Mark of Mission thus – "To strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth, an integral part of proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom."

This covers five key areas of church life:

- Worship
- Buildings and energy

- Land and nature
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

As The Green Team we seek to return to highlighting these five areas; we've always had great support and guidance from our Church buildings committee along with Men in Sheds for which we are very grateful.

During this period of Interregnum please consider if you are able to offer a small amount of time on one of the above 5 areas. Find Pam and talk to her if you can!!!

3.7.17 Boulders (by Joanne Turner and Linda Wilkinson)

Our Boulders invites young people between the ages of 11 – 18 years. Our current age group that attends is between 10 and 14 years of age. We have admitted one new member this year who is a sibling and has been attending Church and Sunday club from the age of 4. We meet twice a month. On the third Friday of every month, we meet in the evening for a couple of hours at our Community Centre.

Boulders is open to all youths in the area. Currently all children that attend are part of the church family, all of them originally started attending from Sunday club at a young age moving though. Since Covid we haven't had as many young children attend Sunday Club, which has affected the numbers moving through to the Youth Group Boulders. I know we are actively trying to attract new children into our Sunday Club. Our Boulders have also invited friends to join them and at times our group has expanded with friend group who have attended, especially when we meet on Friday evenings.

Our Boulders have grown up together in the church family and our group have a great supportive friendship with each other. We are a diverse group and do plan our events to be inclusive. We consider access when planning events and mobility in our games as one of our youths is currently in a wheelchair. We consider written and reading activities to support one another as one of our members needs extra support. All the members support each other too and work together thoughtfully, kindly and instinctively. We had an activity recently which involved maths, weighing mixture, combing it and baking. They all worked extremely well together supporting each other.

Our Boulders make things throughout the year for the congregation to enjoy. For Mothers' Day we made over 100 gifts for the ladies of our church to give out on the day. We support with the preparation for Christingle. Our Youth Group support many Rose Queen events that happen several times in the year.

3.7.18 Sunday Club (by Janet Wallace)

It's been a busy year for the Children's Team. After reviewing what we had been doing to reach children and families, we decided to focus on providing activities for children at Church events and all age worship as well as changing the format of Crafty Church.

Lego Church has continued with a loyal group of supporters. We had hoped to grow the attendance but even though numbers are still low, those who come enjoy the activities on offer.

After running the Crafty Church for 12 months and trialing different times and formats we have moved from mid-week meetings to Saturday afternoons. The change of timing has

been popular with young families, as has the introduction of pizza and cake. With up to 60 people attending and very positive feedback, the format is being continued in 2025.

On All Hallows Eve, we put on a drop-in event outside church on the theme of the 'Happy Pumpkin Patch', to promote a positive attitude to "Halloween". We made lanterns, roasted marshmallows and had over 40 children engaging in the activities. This again is something we are hoping to do again in 2025.

Providing crafts and activities for Church events and All Age Worship has also been very successful. The team have provided children's activities at the Easter, Christian Aid and Christmas coffee mornings.

We developed a range of activities for Sunday mornings to engage with children. On the first Sunday of the month, the older children have been meeting in the Troughton Room for their own activities. On the second Sunday, as part of All Age Worship, there have been children's activities to complement the service theme. When there is a baptism as part of the Sunday morning service, activities have taken place in the children's area for families attending the baptism. In 2025, we are planning to develop the children's area so that there will be children's activities available for every service.

The Nativity is always very popular with families wanting their children to take part and this year was no different. Many of the baptism families choose to be involved and the actual service attracts a full church.

3.7.19 Praise & Play (by Jackie Jones)

Over the past year we have had positive feedback from the parents of the children who attend. We have regular children, who attend month to month. During each session, we have songs, video, story, prayer, activity, craft, and we always finish with cake for the children and the adults.

Some of the themes we have covered in 2024 are:
Baby Moses - Wise and Foolish Builders - New Life - The Lost Sheep
Love God, love one another - Jesus Calms the Storm
Nativity - Palm Sunday - Easter

We have a good team that work well together, we have excellent bakers, who keep us supplied with cake, which is very much appreciated.

We pray that God will keep us inspired, and that we will be able to keep the children focused, to continue to enjoy the sessions, and remember that they are Loved by God.

The Travelling Crib

Once again throughout Advent, the Travelling Crib moved throughout the Parish, spending one night in each of twenty-three homes. We had positive feedback. The children enjoyed the Christmas story, and meeting the families who had or were going to host the crib next.

3.7.20 Experience Easter & Experience Christmas (by Libby Potter)

We welcomed Town Lane Infants School, Higher Bebington Junior School, Brackenwood Infants, and Bedford Drive Primary School to both events. At Christmas 2024 for the first time a small group of year 7 students from Co-op Academy attended the event too. A total of over 350 children and 200 accompanying adults. Each Experience was run over 4 days with a team of 20+ volunteers telling the story using pictures, drama, song and storytelling in

sessions of 1.5hrs per school. Experience Christmas was spread over 2 weeks for the first time allowing 1 week for schools and a 2nd week for the uniformed groups and church led children's groups with Rainbows, Brownies, Toddlers and Baby Group all visiting the stations. Schools created displays of artwork decorated the church for the season and we encouraged families to come and see their child's artwork at the Easter Egg Hunt and Christmas coffee morning which followed the Experiences. At Christmas schools, and many of our children's groups, decorated paper Christmas trees which were displayed all over church and the community centre. The hope is that this will extend to other adult groups in 2025 and we fill every available wall with joyful Christmas trees.

We welcomed students from Co-op Academy Bebington Special Educational Needs Base to work alongside us as volunteers as they have done since Easter 23. We offered them the opportunity to help on the stations in a variety of ways, create displays of artwork, welcome and direct children and take on acting roles. They did this with great enthusiasm and have brought a real sense of joy and fun to our Experience. They shared their singing and British Sign Language signing skills with us leading to the "Experience Song" now being a regular feature of every Experience. The Coop Academy students and their staff are now a vital part of the Experience Team and make a huge contribution to each Experience. The staff tell us that the opportunity to work in their local community provides many benefits for these students. The students look forward to it and have a great deal of fun. The benefits of having these students as part of our team extend well beyond the actual Experience itself.

The number of members of our congregation who wish to help at the Experiences has increased with volunteers saying they enjoy the company of the school children and Co-op students and the fellowship created through working together. We continue to welcome about 3 new volunteers every time at each Experience. We also see some volunteers taking on different or more challenging roles with each Experience.

3.7.21 Thornleigh Friendship weekend 10-13 May 2024

In May, 43 of us, predominantly people associated with CCHB, appreciated a great weekend at Thornleigh Christian Hote, Grange over Sandsl. The weather exceeded expectations, and we had a great day out at Holker Hall which happened to be their annual Spring Fair with lots of additional activities going on. Each evening, we enjoyed a variety of in-house entertainment and ended the day with a thought about God's character – he loves, creates and speaks. Many friendships were deepened and we all were refreshed by the time spent together.

3.7.22 Toddler Group (by Diane Shaw)

The Toddler Group is held every Monday morning from 9:30am until 11.00am in the Kings Hall during term time.

It is a very busy and happy place to be with lots of toys and songs keeping the little ones occupied. On average, there are usually between 20 – 30 toddlers arriving with parents, grandparents and sometimes siblings. Refreshments are served from 10:30 and then time for nursery rhymes and songs, always finishing with the hokey-cokey which is a firm favourite.

Sarah Loach has been the coordinator for the Toddler Group for the last 10 years and we have been truly blessed by her commitment and excellent organisational skills. We miss her and wish her the very best of luck!

We are also happy to welcome Cathy Doneo, who has agreed to take on the leadership role as from March 2025. We are also very grateful to Margaret Theobald and Barbara Percival who help in various ways to keep our popular Toddler Group open and available to any family with pre-school children who live in our local community.

If anyone would like to join in and help with the Toddler Group, please feel free to talk to Cathy or Diane who would be more than happy to welcome new volunteers once all the safeguarding requirements have been met.

3.7.23 Baby Group (by Victoria Gleave)

Baby Group continues to offer a safe and welcoming environment to mums and their babies (and dads and grandparents whenever they are able to join in too!). Numbers fluctuate depending on how long a mum has for maternity leave but there have been a steady 8 – 10 on the register for most of the year.

As a group we try to recognise seasonal events throughout the year, with a small gift being shared for Mothers' Day, Easter and Christmas. Many thanks to Steph Carr who crafted beautiful Christmas baubles depicting the Nativity scene.

In addition, the children receive a small wooden heart with their name on for their birthday, courtesy of Men in Sheds.

Each year, in October, Baby Loss Awareness Week is acknowledged, and tea lights are shared with the group so that a 'Wave of Light' can be created in our homes. Thanks to Rhona Snelson who sews lapel pins in pink and blue ribbon which are worn throughout the week.

Many thanks to Beckie Jones who has supported the group for many years but has now had to step away and also to the Connect Café Team, who are always willing to wash up after us!

I feel privileged to be able to facilitate this group and enjoy getting to know both the mums and their babies whilst they are part of the group and for many years beyond!

3.8 Choir (by Pam Hollinshead)

The choir continues at a steady number not only singing at weekly services but at funerals when requested. New members are always welcome!

Tim Asbridge, occasional organist at CCHB, has developed the choir's singing techniques and encouraged confidence in singing notes which many of us didn't think possible!

We look forward to the future.

3.9 Organ Report

It was good to welcome Wendy Tucker back to the organ stool in February following her maternity leave after giving birth to Arthur in 2023. We enjoyed her playing and having her family as part of the congregation each Sunday. We were delighted to hear the news that the Tucker family was expanding further and in October, Sophie and Felix arrived safely. We are grateful to Tom Yeomans, Rose Macpherson and Tim Asbridge who have played the organ each week in Wendy's absence and look forward to her return in Spring of 2025.

3.10 Music Group/Band (by Pam Hollinshead)

The band continues to enjoy playing for the congregation when required especially for the monthly All Age Worship services.

We were delighted to have Andrew Potter join us on his drums for Rev Mike and Sarah's final service.

We continue to learn new worship songs and look forward to playing them in the future.

3.11 Mothers' Union (by Helen Young)

Our branch continues to be proud to belong to this Worldwide organisation which has 4 million members across 84 Countries.

In 2024 our branch continued to retain healthy member numbers and meet on a monthly basis in the Community Centre. The morning meetings continue to suit most members and attendance has been steady.

We were delighted to enrol a new member Helen Byrne to our branch in 2024 and there is interest from other people to join too which is great news!

Our branch was sad to hear that Jeane Bamforth had died early in the year.

Jeane was a long-standing member of our branch before she moved from the district. Some of our members were able to attend her funeral in April which Rev Eunice officiated at.

Our programme of monthly fellowship meetings centred round a mix of devotional, informative and social events.

A big 'thank you' to our speakers in 2024, who gave their valuable time, skills and life experience to support our meetings.

- Feb Terry Cunningham: Men in Sheds
- Mar Mandy Fair: My Life's Journey
- April Vickie Roberts: Community Care
- May Greer Lacey: Hedgehog Rescue
- June Rev Eunice Blackmore: Creations Voice - Come to a Garden
- Oct Emma: Women and Children's Aid
- Dec Helen Byrne: A Christmas Meditation.

Other notable events for 2024 were as follows:-

March

Mothering Sunday the Mothers' Union 'Make a Mother's Day' fundraising campaign. This received generous support from our congregation and went towards making a real difference to women and their families both locally and worldwide.

MU brings hope and practical support to millions of people every year through parenting, literacy and community development programmes.

May

Our branch participated in the Diocesan MU Wave of Prayer in May.

The MU Wave for prayer is a special way of connecting MU members with each other around the world through the ministry of prayer.

Our branch is proud that it participates in this 'wave' each year.

October

1. Shoebox Gifts - Our branch members, (with the help of donations from our congregation) collected items to enable us to send shoebox gifts to children in Eastern Europe via the charity Teams4u. These would be used as Christmas gifts for children aged from babies to Teens.

2. Kidsbank – ‘Bags for Babies’ Our branch members collected items for baby bags to be given to a local Charity supported by our MU within the Diocese.

November

Our Annual AGM was held.

December

- Women’s Refuge - Our branch continues to strive to support the Refuge each year. Very generous funds were raised by our congregation and branch to provide our local Wirral Women’s Refuge with special gift tote toiletry bags for its women residents at Christmas.
- A Chorus of Angels

As a branch we made 30 lovely book angels to use to create a display in Church with our MU Banner proudly on display next to them. These were made by our members folding paperback books over the course of a few weeks.

One of our members Helen Byrne had the vision and creative skill to lead the project. We were delighted with the final display in all its glory contributing to our Christmas decorations, and for raising the profile of our MU branch.

Ongoing Baptism Preparation support though out the year.

Two of our branch members supported families during the year as they prepared for their children’s baptism. Our branch members pray for these families prior to their baptism dates.

Helen Young has continued to take on the role as Acting Leader for the Branch. She will be well supported by our Branch Committee which will look to the continued running and healthy future of our Branch whilst upholding the Mothers’ Union values and missions.

3.12 Zoom courses (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Our Zoom activities have continued throughout 2024.

- Start the Week – morning prayer Mondays at 9 am – has even grown in numbers and is a great way to start the week!
- “nearly” Alternate Thursdays Lectio Divina – when we read, mediate and share Scripture together continues to be a great link with Audrey Smith in residential care. We often look at the next Sunday’s gospel reading.

3.13 Illuminations Report (by Charles Van Ingen)

The cool blue and ice-white lights on the Community Centre Roof are now a permanent fixture along with the penguins and the polar bear. We put up and take down the coloured lights on along the front of the car park to avoid them being damaged by high winds when the leaves are out putting stress on the cables. However, choosing the day with care – dry and not windy - with ladders, cable-ties and some elementary gymnastics, the job is done. The general plan is to have the illuminations operational from just before the Rose Queen Christmas Coffee Morning until the clocks go forward. We receive much positive feedback from local people saying that the lights (1300 of them!) cheer them up on dark winter days.

3.14 Christ Church Community Centre (by Charles Van Ingen deputising for Sarah Loach - now at RAF Waddington)

Now in its 13th year of operation, our Community Centre remains very busy used by a wide variety of groups on a regular basis including Bebington Bridge Club, Vibe Dance Group, TAI CHI, Weight Watchers and many more.

Christ Church volunteers run a Toddler Group, Baby Group, Indoor Bowls, Singing Café, Happy Reading Group, Knit & Natter, Sewing Group, Oasis Mental Health Support Group, Befrienders' Group, Carers' Group, Bereavement Journey, Mothers' Union, Boulders,

Sunday Club, Lego Church and Praise & Play. Uniform groups include a Rainbow Group and two Brownie groups.

During the year the Centre hosted a wide variety of events including a Christian Aid Coffee Morning, Rose Queen social/fundraisers, Summer Fair etc.

We also host children's parties, baptism celebrations and funeral receptions.

We are very pleased that our Centre is used by so many people of different ages with varying interests and hosts a range of popular intergenerational events.

3.15 Projects with Co-op Academy Bebington (by Libby Potter)

Since Autumn 2023, Co-op Academy students have been running charity cake sales at Connect Coffee providing the students with opportunity to work in their local community and develop their independence skills. They have started at one cake sale per term and since September 2024 are running two per term. The students and staff are very comfortable working alongside the Connect Coffee volunteers and there is always a happy atmosphere when they are with us. Charities supported so far have included Wirral Hospice St Johns, Wirral Mind and Wirral Food Bank. Possible future projects include our Knit and Natter Group teaching students to knit.

School visits to the gardens

As we had done in 2023, we welcomed the nursery children of Town Lane Infant School for two sessions of exploring the woodland, looking for tadpoles and bug hunting. In 2024 Bluebells Nursery also attended. We hope to offer more similar visits to our local schools in 2025.

4 Rose Queen (by Eva Wilkinson and Amy Midgley)

Eva Wilkinson (Rose Queen 2023-24)

I ran a pop-up fashion show in March which was lots of fun with 92 women attending. This raised £550.

In April, we had the Beetle Drive which is always a favourite and very competitive so we all enjoyed that.

At an extremely busy Summer Fair I handed my crown over to Amy Midgley whom I'm sure will be a great Rose Queen.

I've had a great experience being Rose Queen and enjoyed raising £3900 for Hayfield Specialist School and the Community Centre - thank you.

Amy Midgley (Rose Queen 2024-25)

I was crowned Rose Queen in June at our Summer Fair. I chose Incubabies as my charity as I was a premature baby born at 33 weeks and so this charity is close to my heart. I started the year with Bingo in September kindly assisted by my retinue and John and Andrew Potter. My next event was the Christmas Fair which was a great success and we even had a visit from Santa. I am looking forward to events planned in 2025 to include a Family Quiz and a Spring Afternoon tea.

5 Electoral Roll (by Sharon Philpotts)

A new Electoral Roll is currently being compiled. At the time of writing this report, there are currently 171 members but this number is expected to increase when further responses are returned.

Since the last APCM, 8 members have passed away.

With regards to the geographic make up of Christ Church, there are 64 members living outside the parish, this figure is 37% of the overall total.

To ensure the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, can I remind all members of the need to notify the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their name or contact details (address, home telephone number, mobile number & email address). This can be done in a number of ways: by completing another application form or detailing the changes in an email which can be sent via the Parish Office (parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk

6 Safeguarding Report (by Diane Shaw)

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), along with Rev. Mike Loach and Victoria Gleave held a number of meetings throughout the previous year to update the Safeguarding file and to complete DBS documentation.

The PSO has also attended a number of Deanery safeguarding meetings in order to share good practice and offer advice and support to all PSOs.

The Chester Diocese has initiated a new form of ensuring all Safeguarding procedures are being carried out and this is called the Dashboard. During this last year the current PSO has completed a number of the tasks required on this Dashboard and as a result our Parish has reached level 2/3.

There were six reported Safeguarding incidents during this last year. All have been thoroughly investigated, recorded appropriately and if necessary, monitored carefully and confidentially.

A large number of personnel including all PCC members and any Church activity leaders have been advised to attend Basic Safeguarding Training and Foundation Training which at the moment can only be achieved online. It is essential that anyone completing any training, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Parish Office who continues to keep a record of all Safeguarding Training.

As from November 2024 Diane Shaw has resigned from the post of Parish Safeguarding Officer and the PCC are in the process of appointing a new PSO alongside a small team of assistants due to the extra work load involved with the new documentation and the Dashboard.

8 Financial Review (by Charles Van Ingen, PCC Treasurer)

8.1 Introduction

The overall financial situation is presented in the Financial Statements which appear as Appendix I to this report. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission which has created the Charities SORP (Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice). This gives charities clear guidelines on what information to keep and what reports to produce to meet their legal obligations.

The Church of England has adopted the SORP as its standard basis for annual reporting by parishes so that a single set of information and reports meets the requirements of both the Charity Commission (accessible by the general public) and the wider Church.

The accounts presented here have been prepared on an Accruals basis.

The negative effect of the coronavirus pandemic largely dissipated during 2022 such that the financial situation now presents an encouraging picture apart from the substantial negative impact of very high costs for electricity and gas.

As shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (commonly known as the SOFA), the total incoming resources were £264,566 (of which legacies contributed £50,000 - see 5.7 below) against total expenditure of £262,426 including depreciation of £29,150 principally relating to the Community Centre and its contents. The total funds carried forward increased slightly from £1,071,435 to £1,075,413 the bulk of which reflects the capitalisation of the Community Centre.

8.2 Day-to-day operations

Christ Church

A strong Q4 2023 resulted in our Operating Income for the year usefully exceeding our Operating Expenditure despite the substantial increase in the cost of gas and electricity compared to 2022; see Note 20.

Community Centre

The Centre's operating income was slightly down at £34,489 compared to 2022's record £37,175. This reflects problems with bookings on a Thursday morning but we are organising a weekly Line Dancing event to fill the vacant slot. We also received £7,954 in grants to directly support operating costs, events and activities; see Note 8a.

With the building now being 12 years old, we were again faced with costs of repairs, refurbishments and improvements totalling £9,055; see Note 8b. This covered an upgrade to the access control system, various repairs to the lighting and a new water boiler in the kitchen. However, the most striking figure in the whole of the 2023 accounts is the cost of electricity for the Community Centre at £19,900. This is triple what it was a few years ago. Electricity is used to drive the air source heat pumps which heat the building. Although we have increased the level of User Contributions, this will not cover the high cost of electricity. We do not expect to see this fall until later in 2024.

Through Kate Lewis and Vicki Midgley, we secured a substantial Community Engagement Grant in 2022 which supported specific events and activities run in the Centre through to 31 March 2023.

8.3 Fabric Fund for Church Repairs & Improvements; See Note 6 in the Annual Accounts

Whilst we expected to spend some money on repairs and realignment of the church gutters plus some masonry repairs and repointing during 2023, in the event, for various operational reasons, no such work took place. This work is now scheduled for early 2024. So the Fabric Fund expenditure in 2023 was zero (2022 = £6,194).

8.4 Men in Sheds

For accounting convenience, Men in Sheds is incorporated under the Community Centre heading. However, the group endeavours (and is succeeding) to be self-sufficient covering its costs through donations and grants.

Overall, the Group contributed £655 to Community Centre income as shown in Note 8a.

8.5 Investments; See Note 15 in the Annual Accounts

The value of the PCC's investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares for the Fabric Fund increased by 9% to £19,091. The investment to support work in the churchyard and church grounds increased similarly to £2,261. However, the dividend income from the two holdings totalled £583.

8.6 Legacies

Mary Garland, who died on 11 July 2023, left Christ Church Higher Bebington the sum of £50,000 “for the general purposes of the church”. We expect to receive the money during Q2 2024. On the Balance Sheet, it is shown as a debtor. In recent years, legacies have enabled us to complete many worthwhile but expensive projects.

8.7 Reserves Policy

Given that our Grade II listed church building is over 160 years old, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance in the Fabric Reserve accounts of at least £10,000 in cash to cover emergency situations coupled with the circa £20,000 holding in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares which are easily realisable if required.

8.8 Forward Guidance

It is anticipated that, given the positive outcome of our Autumn 2023 Thanksgiving Campaign and increases to User Contributions for the Community Centre, the overall operating income in 2024 will match or exceed that of 2023. However, we are faced with exceptional energy costs for the church heating (gas) and electricity in the Community Centre. However, whilst energy costs are expected to abate during 2024 it is clear that the PCC will need to draw on its reserves to maintain its facilities to a high standard and to continue to deliver the wide range of services, activities and events as described elsewhere in this report. Whilst the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations in 2024, it will need to carefully monitor income and expenditure during the year and be ready to take any necessary steps to avoid excessive reliance on existing reserves and legacies.

The Church of England is developing its ideas to deliver Net Zero by 2030 and we are beginning to consider how best we can contribute to this goal in Higher Bebington.

5.9 Acknowledgements and thanks

My thanks are due to Barbara Thomas for monitoring the standing orders (and watching over the interest-free loan portfolio), Michael Blackburn for recording the envelope giving, the many sidespeople who assist with counting the cash on Sunday mornings, all those who count the cash arising from our many social initiatives during the week in the Centre, Jim Wallace for standing in during my holidays, Bev Price for running the 100Club, the Churchwardens for maintaining a general oversight and to Janet Wallace for once again being our Independent Examiner to ensure that we meet all the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Church of England.

And finally, to Terry Cunningham who handles the challenging task of purchasing and managing the supplies of electricity and gas through the Church of England Parish Buying Scheme; also for keeping the Treasurer informed so that the direct debits from Total Energies appearing on the bank statements don't come as too much of a shock.

8.10 Changes to Processes

Accounting software

During 2023 we continued to use MyFundAccounting, a charity specific software package from the well-established Wolverhampton-based company, Data Developments. This software runs “on the Cloud” and so is available on any suitable internet enabled computer. The data is professionally backed up and aspects of the system can be made accessible to a range of people. The software is recognised by Chester Diocese who have a deal with Data Developments with the result that we enjoy a special low monthly usage charge.

Banking

We still bank with HSBC. However, our local branch in Town Lane, Higher Bebington, closed a few years ago and in July 2023 the Bromborough branch also closed. The nearest HSBC branches are in Birkenhead and Chester; there are no other HSBC branches on Wirral. We now deposit cash and cheques through local Post Offices. This is not as convenient as using an HSBC branch as the Post Office will only accept coin in full bags and, on occasion, have been reluctant to accept large volumes of coins. Also, using Post Offices in the run-up to Christmas is not ideal.

The reducing acceptability of cheques and the associated bank charges mean that we will be looking further at moving to online banking during 2024. Proposals will be brought forward to the PCC for discussion and approval.

Longer term cash deposits are held through CCLA Investment Management's Church of England Deposit Fund. However, CCLA's processes (interminable forms) – designed they say to prevent money laundering – militate against swift movements of balances away from HSBC but we will make greater efforts in 2024 to take advantage of higher rates of interest now available.

The "cashless society"

As well as being able to accept on-line donations via SUM-UP, we can now accept in person donations by card or smartphone using a SUM-UP card reader. Many people now no longer carry cash and so this is an important development to secure income for events at the Centre, PCC fees etc. Also, during December, we installed a PAYAZ machine at the church entrance to take electronic payments. This is principally of advantage at special services such as baptisms, weddings and funerals when people from outside the usual congregation attend. Overall, income through on-line routes totalled £5,400 during 2023.

9 Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and to consider standing for the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

10 Risk Management

The PCC continues to identify and manage the risks which arise from the day-to-day activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC categorises the risks that face Christ Church Higher Bebington under the following headings:

Financial - Risks relating to the fiscal activities of the PCC and the management of the financial affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington. These risks include those applicable to the best use of the PCC's financial resources, the availability of funds and risk of fraud.

All cheques (and all new direct debit mandates) require two signatures. Authorised by the PCC, there are four signatories: Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer. Any move towards online banking will need to be carefully considered to ensure that proper controls are in place.

HMRC has rigorous administrative processes surrounding Gift Aid tax reclaims. To ensure that we only claim the Gift Aid to which we are entitled, our Pledge Forms include the Gift Aid declaration. We claim Gift Aid on a monthly basis using HMRC's online reclaim system. We provide HMRC with monthly information about salaries paid to our part-time staff through their on-line Real Time Information system – known as RTI.

Strategic and Operational - Risks relating to the way in which the PCC undertakes the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC has developed policies for: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Environmental, Equal Opportunities and Lone Workers. These are kept under regular review so that they can be amended in the light of changing needs, emerging best practice guidelines and statutory regulations.

Governance & Regulation - Risks relating to external factors which affect the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington and the regulatory environment in which we operate.

Reputational - Risks relating to the image and perception of Christ Church Higher Bebington in the wider community.

The PCC maintains careful oversight of the groups, activities and events that operate under its aegis and authorises appropriate leaders. The PCC is particularly conscious of the inherent reputational risks of websites and social media generally and takes steps to ensure that proper control is exercised.

Appendix I

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC

Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2024

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Christ Church Higher Bebington

General Information

Status

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission reference is: 1132356. The parish is within the Diocese of Chester's Wirral North Deanery; the parish reference is 0806.

Incumbent

The Reverend Michael G Loach
(resigned on 24 February 2025 to join the RAF as a chaplain)

Associate Minister

The Reverend Eunice Blackmore

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Details of the membership of the Parochial Church Council during 2024 are set out in Appendix II of the Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral CH63 8LX

Honorary Treasurer

Charles Van Ingen
1 Blakeley Brow
Raby Mere
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 0PS

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

Bankers

HSBC plc
31 The Pyramids
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 2ZL

Accounts

01466909 PCC General Account
01466917 Community Centre Operating Account
61043358 Planned Giving Account
61043374 100 Club Account
71059998 Community Centre Capital Account
51070916 Fabric Reserve Account

Investment Managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
The CBF Church of England Funds
One Angel Lane
London EC4R 3AB

Deposit Fund Accounts

CB3023015-001 Fabric Reserve
CB3023017-001 Community Centre

[All cheques require two signatures. The authorised signatories as approved by the PCC are: the Vicar, the two Churchwardens and the Treasurer]

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Church Customer Services
Beaufort House
Brunswick Road
Gloucester
GL1 1JZ

Insurance Policy

04/XPG/0256401 ParishPlus (covering the Church and the Community Centre).

Statement of the PCC's Responsibilities for the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require the members of the PCC to prepare financial statement for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC and of the incoming resources and the application of resources in the year ended.

In preparing these financial statements, the members of the PCC are required to:

- a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- b) Make adjustments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The members of the PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

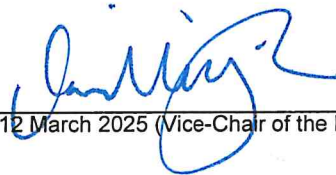
PCC members are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These accounts were prepared by the Hon Treasurer to the Parochial Church Council:



Charles Van Ingen 25 February 2025

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Ian Millington 12 March 2025 (Vice-Chair of the Parochial Church Council)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Higher Bebington

I report on the accounts of the Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2022 on pages iv to xv which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out herein.

Respective Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and the Independent Examiner

The members of the Parochial Church Council (who are the trustees of the Charity) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Parochial Church Council 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
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning 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'; 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:

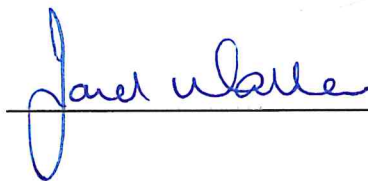
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- 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.

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU



31 March 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023	Additional information
A Incoming Resources							
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds							
	2a	140940	9843	25000	175783	174699	
	2b	7098	8663		15761	15480	
	2c	211	4962		5173	3274	
	2d	10023	31784		41807	47421	
	2e	17214	8892		26106	23692	
		0					
		175486	64144	25000	264630	264566	
B Resources Expended							
B1 Costs of generating funds							
	3a	81	0		81	81	
	3b	912	0		912	1125	
	3c	0	0		0	0	
	3d	133831	124814		258645	249093	
	3e	0	0		0	0	
	3f	13498	0		13498	12127	Thornleigh weekend etc
		148322	124814		273136	262426	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		27164	-60670	25000	-8506	2140	
C Transfers							
	19				0	0	
		-29338	29338		0	0	
D Other recognised gains/losses							
D1 Gains on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use							
		0	0	0	0	0	
	15	0	488	-346	142	1838	
		0	0		0	0	
		0	488	-346	142	1838	
		-2174	-30844	24654	-8364	3978	
E Reconciliation of Funds							
	19	158678	916735	0	1075413		
	19	156504	885891	24654	1067049		

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
A Fixed assets						
A2 Tangible assets	13		819341		819341	848491
A4 Investments	15		21840	24654	46494	21351
Total fixed assets			841181	24654	865835	869842
B Current assets						
B2 Debtors	14	2401	2455		4856	57029
B4 Cash at bank	16	157845	67010		224855	186071
Total current assets		160246	69465		229711	243100
C Liabilities						
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	3742	1405		5147	9179
Net current assets		156504	68060		224564	233921
Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years	18		23350		23350	28350
Total Net Assets		156504	885891	24654	1067049	1075413
Represented by:						
PCC Funds						
Endowment	19			24654	24654	0
Unrestricted	19	156504			156504	158678
Restricted	19		885891		885891	916735
Total PCC Funds		156504	885891	24654	1067049	1075413

Approval of the Balance Sheet

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on Wednesday 12 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by Ian Millington (Vice-Chair of the Parochial Church Council):

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which 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 financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Endowment Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC does not benefit from any endowment funds and so there is no reference to such funds in these accounts.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds comprise revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds that are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC has no funds which are designated and thus no such information will be found in these accounts.

1.3 Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. User contributions to the running of the Community Centre are recognised as they become due. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are readily quantifiable. Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable; interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.4 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 expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a Faculty for disposal are inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings	50 years
Buildings (wooden)	8 years
Office, kitchen equipment etc	4 years
Garden equipment	2 years

1.6 Investments and short-term deposits

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange, or whose value derives from them, are valued at market value at the year-end.

Short term deposits are held as cash with the CCLA or at the bank.

Notes to the Accounts

2 Incoming Resources

Account Code	Note	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2024 Endowment	2024 Total	2023 Total	Additional Information	
a) Voluntary Income								
<i>Christ Church Congregation Giving</i>								
0101				20000	20000	0		
0102					91184	81029		
0111		91184			1184	1824		
0501			7795		7795	1645		
			Total planned giving before Gift Aid claim		100163	84498		
0601		22953		5000	27953	20322		
			Total planned giving		123116	104820		
0301			8439		8439	9219		
			Total voluntary giving	25000	156555	114039		
<i>Christ Church - miscellaneous donations and other voluntary income</i>								
0550		8569			8569	6263		
0103		816			816	934	On-line donations	
0555			5277		5277	155		
0602			82		82	94		
			Total miscellaneous donations		14744	7446		
<i>Christ Church Community Centre Project</i>								
1237			1772		1772	3051		
0603			212		212	163		
			Community Centre excluding grants		1984	3214		
<i>Legacies</i>								
0701			2500		2500	50000		
			Total Voluntary Income	140940	9843	25000	175783	174699
b) Activities for generating funds								
0561		3413	1061		4474	4339		
0563		3685			3685	728		
0901			3801		3801	5112		
0560	12		3801		3801	5301		
			Total from activities for generating funds		15761	15480		
c) Investment income								
1001			593		593	584		
1020			4369		4369	2690		
1010		211			211	0		
			Total Investment income		5173	3274		
d) Incoming resources from charitable activities to further the PCC's objectives								
1101		7468			7468	10207		
1112		1015			1015	905		
1110		1316			1316	1360		
1111		224			224	260		
			Community Centre - User Contributions	8a	31784	34689		
			Total income from charitable activities		10023	47421		
e) Other incoming resources								
0802	11		5000		5000	7954		
0803			840		840	0		
0804			3052		3052	0		
1150	4	2044			2044	3369		
1305		15170			15170	12369	Thornleigh weekend etc	
			Total Other incoming resources		26106	23692		
Total Incoming Resources		175486	64144	25000	264630	264566		
Total Gift Aid reclaim		22953	294	5000	28247	21481	HMRC	
Total grants from LPOW scheme to offset VAT			3052		3052	1633	Listed Places of Worship Scheme	

LPOW = Listed Places of Worship

Notes to the Accounts

3 Resources Expended

Account Code	Note	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total	Additional Information
a) Costs of generating voluntary income			81	81	81	Pledge Envelopes
1720						
b) Fundraising costs: cost of goods sold, prizes etc			912	912	1125	
1730						
c) Investment management costs			0	0	0	
d) Charitable activities						
<i>i) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church</i>						
Church - running expenses	5	19247		19247	20643	
Churchyard and church grounds	7		5540	5540	4744	
Community Centre running costs	8b		66765	66765	77163	
2701 Church - repairs, maintenance and improvements	6		16920	16920	0	
Ministry: clergy costs	4	22141		22141	23041	Includes secretarial support
1901 Ministry: Parish Share - Chester Diocese		75344		75344	71757	Paid to Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
2321 Organist		5572		5572	5569	
2201 Outreach/Young people		2181	840	3021	2065	
	<i>sub-total (i)</i>	124485	90065	214550	204982	
<i>ii) Church management & administration supporting the above</i>						
Office costs and miscellaneous expenses	9	9321	0	9321	7176	
Capital expenditure and depreciation						
2930/31 Capital expenditure/Depreciation	13	0	29150	29150	29150	
	<i>sub-total (ii)</i>	9321	29150	38471	36326	
<i>iii) Grants to charitable organisations</i>	10	25	5599	5624	7785	
	Total Charitable activities	133831	124814	258645	249093	
e) Governance costs (Audit charges)				0	0	
f) Other resources expended						
2650 Outings			13498	13498	12127	Thornleigh weekend etc
	Total Other Resources Expended		13498	13498	12127	
	Total Resources Expended	148322	124814	273136	262426	

Transactions with related parties that require disclosure
 During 2024, the wife of a member of the PCC (Mark Gleave) was employed as a part-time Parish Secretary on a job-share basis. The contract of employment has been in place for some years and allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Victoria L Gleave during 2024 was: £11014. Employee benefits: nil.

Also during 2024, the wife of the chairman of the PCC (Revd Michael G Loach) was employed as the Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Sarah L Loach during 2024 was: £7516. Employee benefits: nil.

During 2024, the secretary of the Parochial Church Council (also an elected member of the PCC and thus a trustee) was employed as the part-time Community Centre Administrator job-sharing with the Parish Secretary. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Jane E Dalziel during 2024 was: £4409. Employee benefits: nil.

Declaration as to employees earning above certain figures
 The number of employees of the PCC with total emoluments (excluding employer pension costs) above £60,000 per year: Nil (2023 Nil)

Notes to the Accounts (4 - 7)

Account Code	2024	2023
4 Clergy Costs		
2101 Clergy working expenses	1664	1581
2050 Secretarial and administrative support*	11056	9671
2370 Visiting clergy	99	784
<i>Vicarage expenses:</i>		
2120 Council Tax	3233	3078
2141 Electricity & gas	3991	6094
2150 Telephone and Broadband	1491	1285
2140 Water (United Utilities)	607	548
Total Expenditure	22141	23041

*During the year, to support the clergy, the PCC employed one person in the role of Parish Secretary on a part-time basis

5 Church Running Expenses		
2301 Insurance	6044	5670
2410 Heating (gas)	5774	7463
2401 Lighting (electricity)	2183	2813
2320/30 Maintenance and Minor Repairs	2571	2198
2340 Upkeep of services	2416	2284
2420 Water	259	215
Total Expenditure	19247	20643

6 Church Repairs and Improvements (Fabric Fund)		
2701 Structural repairs	16920	0
Total Expenditure	16920	0

7 Upkeep of Churchyard and Grounds			
2350 Maintenance charges	4740	4320	Impact of increase to Minimum Wage
2351 Materials, servicing, petrol, oil etc	800	424	
Total Operating Expenditure	5540	4744	
Depreciation (see Note 13)	3334	3334	

Notes to the Accounts

8 Community Centre Report (includes Men in Sheds)

Account Code		2024	2023
8a Community Centre Income			
User contributions			
1230	Adult Groups; Professional Groups	20968	21136
1234	Men in Sheds	900	855
1232	Voluntary Groups (Under 18s)	1695	1614
1231	Income from Social initiatives	5040	6955
1233	One-off bookings	3181	4129
	User Contributions	31784	34689
	Donations and Gift Aid for Centre Operation	1772	3214
Grant Income for operations			
0802	Boulton Trusts	5000	0
0802	One Wirral CiC	0	3000
0802	BigGive Trust	0	4954
	Grant Income for Operations	5000	7954
	Total Community Centre Income	38556	45857
8b Operating Expenditure			
Usual Operating Expenditure			
2564	Activity Leader (Gemma Weldon - Line Dancing)	1280	0
2562	Cleaning materials & consumables	845	1119
2561	Cleaning	13838	11633
2530	Electricity	15972	19920
2550	Insurance	2057	2069
2552	Licences	759	1331
2001/2/2010	Management**	13673	13282
2565	Milk etc	910	1018
2560	Servicing of plant & equipment	3276	1458
2563	Stewarding	84	267
2570	Waste removal	2349	2214
2580	Water	782	1152
	Usual Operating Expenditure	55825	55463
Exceptional Operating Expenditure			
2590	Repairs, refurbishments and improvements	7900	9055
	Overall Operating Expenditure	63725	64518
Projects and services covered by particular grants			
2055	Community Engagement Worker	0	5747
2540	Community Engagement Projects	0	4058
2545	Working Conversations (Church chats)	3040	2840
	Expenditure on grant funded projects	3040	12645
	Total Expenditure: operations and projects	66765	77163
	Depreciation (see Note 13)	25816	25816
	Total Community Centre Outgoings	92581	102979

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Administrator on a part-time basis
This person also deputised for the Parish Secretary during holidays

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis

Notes to the Accounts

9 Church Management & Administration

Account Code	2024	2023
2310, 2360 Office costs	4282	4151
2361, 2531 Miscellaneous	5039	3025
Total	9321	7176

10 Grants Paid

Account Code	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
a) Home Mission				
Charles Thompson's Mission	0	0	0	1570
Church of England Children's Society (CECS)		400	400	225
The Mothers' Union		372	372	181
Friends of Chester Cathedral	25		25	25
1850 sub-total	25	772	797	2001
b) Secular Charities				
5th Bebington Brownies			0	200
Cystic Fibrosis Trust		0	0	10
RQ Charity	1950		1950	0
Ferry Families	200		200	0
Forum Housing Association	0	0	0	1570
INCUBABIES	0	0	0	15
Macmillan Cancer Support	0	0	0	360
Co-op Academy	34		34	0
Wirral Foodbank		0	0	120
1870 sub-total	0	2184	2184	2275
c) Relief & Development Agencies				
Christian Aid		2643	2643	2479
British Red Cross		0	0	1000
1830 sub-total		2643	2643	3479
d) Overseas Mission				
1801 Barnabas Fund		0	0	30
Total grants paid				
	25	5599	5624	7785

11 Grants Information

Grant Information	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2023 Restricted
0802 Grant for Church Chats from Boulton Trust		5000	0
0802 One Wirral CiC			3000
0802 BigGive Trust			4954
Grants Misc Centre Income		5000	7954

12 Special Efforts Income

	2024 Restricted	2023 Restricted
Barnabas Fund	0	30
Christian Aid	2643	2447
Christingle (CECS)	360	221
Cystic Fibrosis Trust	0	10
Ferry Families	178	0
INCUBABIES	0	15
Macmillan Cancer Support	0	360
The Mothers' Union	433	289
RISCA Choir Concert	0	860
British Red Cross - Ukraine Appeal	0	949
Wirral Waters	187	0
Wirral Foodbank	0	120
Total Special Efforts	3801	5301

Notes to the Accounts

13 Tangible assets: Capital Spending and Depreciation

		Community Centre					Community Centre Total	Churchyard and grounds			Overall Total
		Community Centre Building	Community Centre Equipment	Men in Sheds	Craft Shed	Storage Shed		Garden Machinery Store	External Stage	Churchyard & grounds Total	
Actual/Deemed Cost	At 1 January 2024	1109962	7831	3210	7230	1420	1129653	10653	8010	18663	1148316
	New capital spending At 31 December 2024	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		1109962	7831	3210	7230	1420	1128233	10653	8010	18663	1146896
Depreciation	At 1 January 2024	282103	3914	2406	2712	690	291825	3996	4004	8000	299825
	Charge for the year	22199	1957	401	904	355	25816	1332	2002	3334	29150
	At 31 December 2024	304302	5871	2807	3616	1045	317641	5328	6006	11334	328975
Net book value	At 31 December 2024	805660	1960	403	3614	375	812012	5325	2004	7329	819341
	At 31 December 2023	827859	3917	804	4518	730	837828	6657	4006	10663	848491

The Community Centre was opened in April 2011.

Men in Sheds and the Craft Shed are part of the Community Centre's social engagement activities. Accordingly, for capital accounting purposes, these headings are included under the Community Centre heading on the Balance Sheet.

14 Debtors

An analysis of the debtors at 31 December 2024 is given below:

Account Code		2024		2023	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
a) Voluntary Giving					
0601	Gift Aid reclaim - General Account	1611		1611	1613
0701	Legacies		0	0	50000
	<i>sub-total</i>	1611	0	1611	51613
d) PCC Activities					
1150	Vicarage Electricity & Gas	790	0	790	1476
1230	Community Centre - Adult Groups		2403	2403	3512
1232	Community Centre - Under 18s		0	0	228
1233	Community Centre - "one-offs"		52	52	0
1234	Community Centre - Men in Sheds		0	0	200
	<i>sub-total</i>	790	2455	3245	5416
Total debtors		2401	2455	4856	57029

Notes to the Accounts

15 Investments

Movements in the year:	Restricted	Endowment	Total
Market value at 1 January 2024	21352	0	
Add: Additions to investments at cost	0	25000	
Less: Disposals at carrying value	0	0	
Add: gains on revaluation	488	-346	
Market value at 31 December 2024	21840	24654	46494

Details of holdings

	Holding 31 Dec 2024	Price per Share 31 Dec 2024	Value 31 Dec 2024	Value at 31 Dec 2023	Gain on Revaluation
CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Income Shares					
Fabric Fund					
Ref 609146 001S	844.52	23.1227	19528	19091	437
General Fund					
Ref 609146 002S	100.00	23.1227	2312	2261	51
sub-total			21840		488
CBF Church of England UK Equity Fund - Income Shares					
Endowment Fund					
Account: CB1007744-001	12342.02	1.9976	24654	0	-346
Total			46494	21352	142

16 Cash at Bank

	Account Number	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2023
Current Accounts - HSBC			
PCC General Account	01466909	28887	36598
Community Centre Operations Account	01466917	7522	22827
Planned Giving Account	61043358	774	50
100 Club Account	61043374	3184	2123
Cash in safe		1100	1100
sub-total		41467	62698
Capital Accounts			
Fabric Reserve Account - HSBC			
Fabric Reserve Account	51070916	29714	62032
Fabric Reserve CBF	CB 3023015-001	142876	49703
sub-total: Fabric Fund		172590	111735
Community Centre Capital Account - HSBC			
Community Centre Capital Account	71059998	2630	3882
Community Centre CBF	CB 3023017-001	8168	7756
sub-total: Community Centre		10798	11638
Total		224855	186071

CBF = Church of England Central Board of Finance

Total cash investments with CBF	151044	57459
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Notes to the Accounts						
Note 17 - Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year						
Account Code	2024	2024	2024	2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total		
d) Charitable activities						
i) Work of the PCC						
2321	Organist fees	1391		1391	426	
2002	Salaries	42	349	391	290	
2010	HMRC		79	79	73	
2101	Working expenses of incumbent				377	
2201	Outreach & Young People	64		64	871	
2330	Church - Routine Maintenance				651	
2340	Upkeep of Services				84	
2361	Miscellaneous expenditure				34	
2360	Church Management & Administration				130	
2370	Visiting Clergy				189	
	Centre Consumables		97	97	0	
	Centre Activity Leader		120	120	0	
2545	Working Conversations (Church Chats)		160	160	480	
2565	Community Centre - Food and Drink				282	
	sub-total - Work of the PCC	1497	805	2302	3887	
iii) Grants						
1801	Missionary Societies		0	0	30	
1830	Relief & Development Agencies		0	0	1200	
1850	Home Mission		400	400	406	
1870	Secular Charities		200	200	505	
	sub-total - Grants		600	600	2141	
	sub-total: Charitable activities	1497	1405	2902	6028	
g) Other Creditors *						
		2245	0	2245	3151	Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
	sub-total: Other Creditors	2245	0	2245	3151	
	Total Creditors	3742	1405	5147	9179	
<p>* For weddings and funerals, the PCC acts as agent for the fees due to the Diocesan Board of Finance, clergy travel to Landican Crematorium, organist, vergers and sexton. Hence this income and expenditure is not shown on the Statement of Financial Activities. However, the outstanding amounts due to be paid need to be shown here to ensure that the Net Current Assets figure shown on the Balance Sheet presents a true picture.</p>						
Note 18 - Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years						
Loans from members of Christ Church Higher Bebington (Interest-free)						
	Community Centre	Organ Project	Total			
	Opening balance at 1 January 2024	7850	20500	28350		
	New loans during 2024	0	0	0		
	Loans repaid during 2024	0	5000	5000		
	Closing balance at 31 December 2024	7850	15500	23350		

Notes to the Accounts

19 Movements in restricted funds during 2024

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Revaluation of Assets	Transfers	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
Fabric Fund	71739	19463	17760	437	0	73879
Churchyard and Church Grounds	0	0	5540	51	5489	0
Community Centre	844996	40669	95915		22262	812012
Endowment Fund	0	25211		-346	-211	24654
Special charitable efforts	0	3801	5599		1798	0
Total Restricted Funds	916735	89144	124814	142	29338	910545
Unrestricted Funds	158678	175486	148322	0	-29338	156504
Total PCC Funds	1075413	264630	273136	142	0	1067049

Note 20

This page does not form part of the Annual Accounts but demonstrates that day-to-day income during 2024 usefully exceeded the corresponding outgoings.

The figures exclude the Community Centre which is covered in detail in Note 8.

Also excluded is legacy income and capital expenditure.

GENERAL ACCOUNT		Actual	Actual
		2024	2023
Income			
a)	Voluntary Giving		
	Bank Direct (Standing Orders)	91184	81029
	Envelopes	1184	1824
	Miscellaneous lump-sums	7795	1645
	Total Planned Giving before Gift Aid claim	100163	84498
	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	22953	20322
	Total Planned Giving	123116	104820
	Loose Cash	8439	9219
	Total Voluntary Giving	131555	114039
	Donations	8569	6263
	Donations via SUM-UP on-line	816	934
	Total miscellaneous donations	9385	7197
	Total Voluntary Income	140940	121236
d)	Charitable Activities to further PCC's objectives		
	PCC fees, church heating etc	10023	12732
e)	Other incoming resources		
	Contributions to cost of Vicarage gas and electricity	2044	3369
	Total Other Incoming Resources	2044	3369
	Total Operating Income	153007	137337
Expenditure			
	a) Costs of generating voluntary income	81	81
	b) Fundraising costs	912	1125
	d) Charitable activities		
	Church Running Expenses	19247	20643
	Churchyard and church grounds upkeep	5540	4744
	Clergy Costs	22141	23041
	Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	75344	71757
	Organist	5572	5569
	Outreach; Young People	3021	2065
	Office Costs & Miscellaneous Expenditure	9321	7176
	Total Operating Expenditure	141179	136201
	Operating surplus	11828	1136

Commentary

Forward guidance

The figures illustrate that as a result of our Q4 2023 Thanksgiving Campaign, our regular income in 2024 to cover our day to day operating expenditure increased significantly.

Given the level of the PCC's *Cash at Bank* (Note 16) and level of *Net current assets* (Balance Sheet), the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations and can thus be reasonably described as a "going concern".

Appendix II

Administrative information

Christ Church Higher Bebington is situated in Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Parish Office, Christ Church Community Centre,
Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (ref: 1132356).

Connected Charity information

The Vicar and Churchwardens are the trustees of the Thomas Robinson Charity; Charity Commission ref 233412.

Membership of the PCC:

Up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 19th May 2024:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
June Bickford – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2023 – 2026)

Helen Byrne
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Fiona Murphy
Diane Shaw

Sub-total: 9

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – re-appointed as PCC Secretary on 10 May 2023
Sandra Evans
Tracy Evans
Kate Lewis
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – co-opted and re-elected as Lay Vice-Chairman on 10 May 2023
Paul Price – co-opted on 10 May 2023
Charles Van Ingen – co-opted and re-appointed as PCC Treasurer on 10 May 2023

Sub-total: 9

Grand total: 18

From the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 19th May 2024:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
June Bickford – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2023 – 2026)

Helen Byrne
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Fiona Murphy
Diane Shaw

Sub-total: 9

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham – co-opted on 22 May 2024
Jane Dalziel – re-appointed as PCC Secretary on 22 May 2024
Sandra Evans
Tracy Evans
Lynn Ion – co-opted on 22 May 2024
Victoria Midgley – co-opted on 22 May 2024
Ian Millington – re-elected as Lay Vice-Chairman on 22 May 2024
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – re-appointed as PCC Treasurer on 22 May 2024

Sub-total: 9

Grand total: 18

Deputy Churchwardens

At the meeting of the PCC held on 22 May 2024, the following people were appointed Deputy Churchwardens:

Rose Rogers
Diane Shaw
Rhona Snelson

Sidespeople for 2024 – 2025; appointed at the PCC meeting held on 22 May 2024

Terry Cunningham
Rob Evans
Tracy Evans
David Gibson
Ny Gibson
Graham Loach
Jill Loach
Barbara Mayers
Roy Mayers
Fiona Murphy
Beverley Price
Diane Shaw
Gary Shaw
Rhona Snelson
Mike Thorne
Janet Wallace
Jim Wallace
Helen Young

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace (Re-appointed at the APCM held on 19th May 2024)

On 22 May 2024, the new PCC following the 2024 APCM confirmed the following:

100Club Organiser	Beverley Price
Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer	Diane Shaw
Church Website co-ordinator	<i>To be arranged</i>
Eco Church Development	Pam Hollinshead
Electoral Roll Officer	Sharon Philpotts
Flag Captain	Sarah L Loach
GDPR Co-ordinator	Ian D Millington
Parish Legacy Officer	Ian D Millington
Recorder – Community Centre Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Organ Project Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Envelopes	Michael Blackburn
Recorder – Standing Orders	Barbara Thomas
Relief Count Supervisor	Jim Wallace
Safety & Security Officer	<i>To be arranged</i>
Social Media Co-ordinator (except CCHB website)	Revd Michael Loach

and

Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with HMRC regarding PAYE (and RTI) and on-line Gift Aid reclaims	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Pensions Regulator	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Charity Commission for England & Wales	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with SUMUP and Give A Little (online giving)	PCC Treasurer
Authorised to negotiate energy contracts <i>(through Parish Buying)</i>	Terry Cunningham

The new PCC following the APCM also confirmed the composition of the following bodies all of which report to the PCC:

Buildings & Finance Committee

Ian Murray (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham (Secretary)
Ian Carr
Revd Michael G Loach
Alan Jackson
Gary Shaw
Charles Van Ingen

Community Centre Management Team

Charles Van Ingen (Chairman)
Sheila Clarke MBE
Jane Dalziel (Centre Administrator)
Revd Michael Loach
Sarah Loach (Centre Supervisor)
Ian Murray
Diane Shaw

Men in Sheds Team

Stephen Ion (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham
Alan Jackson

The PCC authorised the following pastoral/social initiatives:

<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Leader/s</u>
Bereavement Support Group	Vera Jackson
Boulders Group	Libby Potter + volunteers
Bumps & Babies	Victoria Gleave and Becky Jones
Carers' Group	Rhona Snelson and Graham Loach
Connect Coffee	Rhona Snelson and Libby Potter
Indoor Bowls	Brenda White
Knit & Natter	Heather Whitehead and Joan Rippon
Sewing Group	Sarah Loach
Lunch Club	Ann Bell
Oasis Mental Health Support Group	Jill Wright and Steve Flatt
Singing Café	Rev'd Eunice Blackmore
Sunday Club	Janet Wallace
Supper Club	Terry Cunningham
Afternoon Tea	Sarah Loach
Thirsty Wednesday	Terry Cunningham
Toddler Group (Mondays)	Sarah Loach, Diane Shaw, Margaret Theobald and Ruth Greenall
Walking Group	Lizzie Roach
Welsh Cafe	Sarah Loach

Accounts

Diocese of Chester

Christ Church Higher Bebington

Parochial Church Council

Annual Report 2023

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral
CH63 8LX



























Christ Church Higher Bebington

1 Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Higher Bebington's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and the Community Centre.

2 Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to know the love of God through worship at our church and engagement with our members in and around the parish. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we properly maintain the fabric of Christ Church, which is a Grade II listed building dating back to 1859, and the Community Centre which opened in April 2011.

The PCC's policy is to deliver Christmas and Easter cards to every home in the Parish giving details of the church services and outreach activities planned for these festivals.

3 Achievements and Performance

3.1 Incumbent's Report (by Revd Mike Loach)

2023 brought the inevitable mix of challenges and blessings. We were able to grow in many areas, but sometimes struggled to respond to increased pressure on our resources and to shifting cultural patterns. As our national health and social services have continued to bend and break under the weight of impossible demands, the faith sector has often found itself as the next line of support and this has resulted in more and more people approaching us for help. Coupled with a national picture of decline in church attendance, our ability to respond to all has been severely tested.

On a personal level, the extra responsibility of being Priest-in-Charge at St Paul's Tranmere and the Chair of the Diocesan Environment Form has sometimes made my role impossible to manage. That we have continued to be able to offer such wonderful service to our community is owed in no small part to our amazing team of volunteers and the ongoing love and support given by our church family.

Worship

Our worshipping life has always been a source of joy and comfort to me. I love the fact that we embrace the questions of faith and are willing to listen to the many different answers offered by various traditions. Each member of our Ministry Team leads services and preaches with a different theological and pastoral emphasis and this is a strength. Recognising that as Christians we are all on a journey is so important if we are to embrace the prophet Micah's instruction to "...walk humbly with your God." We must always acknowledge our limitations and resist any urge to close down those views that do not chime with our own.

We continue to offer regular Sunday services at 8.30am and 10am and have increased our Sunday evening provision to 6.30pm on most weeks, with our 4pm Praise & Play service for young children and their families being offered on the first Sunday of the month. Attendance has stabilised after the fluctuations of the post-pandemic period, with numbers across the three services averaging at around 130. Seasonal services obviously can provide a boost in our numbers, and we continue to attract around 500 attendees at the Nativity service and on Remembrance Sunday, which is quite remarkable! It was also encouraging to see that our electoral roll grew once again. We sadly lost seven faithful members over the course of the year and continue to give thanks for their service. Ten new members joined us and it has been a blessing to incorporate them into the worshipping life of Christ Church.

Our Ministry Team of Rev Eunice, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Ian Millington, Colette Millington, Lynn Ion and Jackie Jones work incredibly hard to ensure that our services are inclusive, creative and pertinent to the ecclesiastical seasons and I am thankful for their willingness to serve. In August, we were very sad to say goodbye to our Curate, George Roach. George first came to us as an Ordinand in 2018 and then served his title between Christ Church and St Paul's. During this time, it was a pleasure to see him grow into his ministry and become the fine priest that he is today. George, Jeanette and their family have now moved to the Parish of St Michael & All Angels in Runcorn, and we continue to pray for God's blessing on them all.

Online, our worshipping community continues to provide an essential service for those who cannot attend in person, with our weekly YouTube broadcasts typically exceeding over 100 views and many of our members tuning in for Zoom Morning Prayer, Lectio Divina and House Group meetings. This is an important resource and our thanks must go to Ian Carr for his tireless efforts in managing the technology, along with Rev Eunice, who provides so much of our PowerPoint material, and Sam Loach, who continues to help out when he can.

Our pastoral services continue to provide hope, comfort and considerable blessing to the parish. We regularly receive extremely positive feedback on the quality of our services and the care that is received in times of sorrow and of joy. Over the course of the year, we recorded 21 baptisms, 7 weddings and 32 funerals (18 in church and 14 at the crematorium), plus six burials into existing plots and 21 interments of ashes. The number of baptisms was the same as in 2022, but weddings, funerals and interments were significantly up.

Our ministry to young people has continued to struggle since lockdown, with noticeably fewer children regularly attending our Sunday Club and attendance at the Boulders group also dropping off. Numbers have been encouraging at special events such as rehearsals for the nativity play and we continue to hope that our many social and seasonal events will draw others in. The "Experience Christmas" and "Experience Easter" sessions offered to local schools brought real encouragement to all those who volunteered to help. Hundreds of children from six schools have been blessed by these fantastic events and I'm very grateful to Libby Potter and her fantastic team for all the work that they have put into this. In addition, our monthly Lego Church and Crafty Church sessions have also been a great blessing, and I'm extremely thankful for the leadership of Jackie Jones and Janet Wallace. In the coming

months, we hope to begin the process of searching for a Children and Families Worker to help steer and coordinate this vital ministry.

Clearly, music plays a key role in our worshipping life and we are very fortunate to be able to draw on the talent and enthusiasm of some wonderful musicians! Leading our worship through much of the year has been our fabulously talented organist and band leader, Wendy Tucker. We allowed her some time off in the Autumn and Winter to have a baby(!) and it has been a great delight to have Arthur and Jordan join us in church since her return. Our choir continue to enthusiastically lead us in our singing, and I am very grateful to them and those who have led our rehearsals over the past year. June Fogg, Angela Hamilton, Pam Hollinshead and Tim Asbridge have all made significant contributions and are deserving of our thanks. Pam has also helped to lead the band whilst Wendy has been away and their contributions, especially at All Age worship, have enabled us to explore different worship styles.

Pastoral care

Ministering between Christ Church and St Paul's has, at times, stretched our capacity for pastoral visiting, but our dedicated team continue to work with genuine compassion and an unrelenting desire to help anyone who is in need. Being between two sites has sometimes also made it difficult for the Ministry Team to be alert to the absence of our members and that is why we always appreciate people letting us know when someone is struggling. We are always willing to provide support to anyone in our local hospitals, hospices, care homes, and to those who are housebound.

We continue to be blessed by the care given by our Pastoral Worker, Lynn Ions, our Pastoral Worker Emeritus, June Fogg, our Pastoral Worker-in-training, Jackie Jones, and by Rev Eunice, who has coordinated our care home team across two parishes. Rev Eunice also continues to run the Bereavement Journey course, with four courses being offered over the past year. These have been greatly appreciated and have clearly provided a much-needed resource. Alongside this, the Befrienders Group, run by Vera Jackson, continues to be very well attended and offers a welcoming space for anyone wishing to meet with others who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

Of course, there are many other outlets for pastoral care at Christ Church, not least the manifold groups and organisations who meet in and around our Church and Community Centre. Recent headlines have once again highlighted the devastating effects of loneliness and anxiety in our society, and we try to offer as many opportunities as possible to bring our local community together. The Oasis group, run by Jill Wright and Steve Flatt, provide vital support to anyone struggling with their mental health and this year we have also been able to launch "Church Chats", a one-to-one therapy service funded by Working Conversations, The Big Give and The Thomas Robinson Charity. We are so fortunate to have the support and expertise of Steve Flatt, Laura Gregory and Kate Crane in running this service and dozens of parishioners have already benefitted from it.

Our Carers Group has continued to flourish under the leadership of Graham Loach & Rhona Snelson, offering essential fellowship and solidarity for anyone who has acted as a carer. "Men in Sheds", with Terry Cunningham and the team carried on thriving across two sheds, attracting new members and connecting with the local community in new and important ways. Knit & Natter and the Sewing Group offered still further ways for our community to get together, whilst producing some wonderful items for sale at our Fairs and for the Ministry Team to use in schools. And then Penny Golby's Happy Reading Group, the Indoor Bowls group and the Lunch Club offered further opportunities to be alongside others in different ways. The "Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone" group, organised by Rev Eunice, has settled at Broadway Steak & Wine and is very much appreciated by members. The "Thirsty Thursday" monthly gathering at the Traveller's Rest, organised by Terry Cunningham, changed into

"Wet Wednesday", and, alongside the Men's Supper Club, offered a great opportunity for men to come together in fellowship. I'm very grateful to all who have given their time and effort to keep these many groups going.

Throughout the year, we have used seasonal celebrations as an opportunity to show our care for others. Easter cards and Christmas cards were again delivered to every home and business in the parish and were well received. Our Christmas Day Lunch continued to attract large numbers with almost 100 guests and volunteers sitting down together to enjoy a wonderful meal, sing carols and spread some Christmas cheer. I was very grateful to all those who were able to volunteer their time and resources to make these initiatives possible, not least, Sarah Loach, who quietly organised so much of this important work.

Underpinning so much of our pastoral work and our mission to the wider community is our safeguarding team, led by Diane Shaw. It is vital that we ensure that all our workers are protected and suited to their roles, and that we do as much as is possible to keep safe all who access our facilities, groups and events. Diane has worked incredibly hard to ensure that all relevant checks are in order and we are very fortunate to be able to draw on her expertise.

Mission, Outreach & Discipleship

Our philosophy of mission (or missiology) has been one of demonstrating in clear and obvious ways what we understand as being the Good News in Jesus. We are not committed to chalking off converts, but rather to loving people, whatever their identity or background, recognising that when we do this, we allow God to work in us and the image of Christ to be revealed. Love for God and love for our neighbour must be at the heart of all we do, and we seek to make this evident in our Church, our Community Centre and our outreach in the wider community. People may no longer know much about the Bible, but it is clear that we all have a spiritual need, or, as the Mathematician & Philosopher, Blaise Pascal observed, a "God-shaped hole" that needs to be filled.

Our witness to the love of God has continued to extend to our local schools, with assemblies regularly being taken by our members in seven schools, with a further two connecting with us for other support. We have close relationships with our local shopkeepers, publicans, politicians, volunteer groups such as Brighter Bebington and Love Bebington, and faith groups such as the Wirral Deen Centre, and have found many opportunities to collaborate. Our witness to the parish, especially on Good Friday, Remembrance Sunday and for carol singing during Advent, has always been well received and we're particularly blessed to have such a supportive Royal British Legion Club to work alongside. Other highlights over the past year included the wonderful "Carols in the Travs" and several opportunities to pray alongside other faith leaders at local peace vigils.

We try to plan several "all age" events around our church and grounds to be spread throughout the year and with the aim of keeping people connected. Through various concerts, the Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Fair, Christmas Fair, Bonfire Night, and many charity fundraising events, we grow our fringe and increase the likelihood of parishioners wanting to connect in deeper and more sustained ways. All these events take a lot of planning and organisation and I'm very grateful to Vicki Roberts, Jackie Jones, Tracy Evans, and all members of the Social Committee for the many hours that they have given.

Another way in which we connect to the parish is through events held at the Community Centre. We were sad that our Community Engagement Worker, Vicki Roberts, had to leave her role, but pleased that her new position as a "Community Connector" has kept her in close contact and still able to bless the work of Christ Church. Victoria Gleave, Jane Dalziel, Sarah Loach and John Potter are always on hand to set out tables and chairs, clear up and deal with the many requests and enquiries that present on a daily basis. Regular events such as Connect Café, The Singing Café, Welsh Café and the Lunch Club continue to

provide safe, warm and welcoming spaces for people to come together and we always seek to be on hand to meet the needs of anyone who seeks our help. Thank you to all who so willingly give their time and resources to maintain the wonderful levels of care and service that our Centre provides.

Though our Sunday mission to young people has struggled, our weekday baby and toddler groups have fared much better. Sarah Loach, Ruth Greenall, Beckie Jones, Margaret Theobald, Diane Shaw and Jean Hughes continue to attract a Hall-full of pre-school children and their carers every Monday morning, and Victoria Gleave and Beckie Jones have worked hard to maintain a really thriving Bumps & Babies group. In addition, our monthly Boulders social get-together, for children of secondary school age, continues to offer an exciting range of activities and events and our thanks must go to Libby Potter, Linda Wilkinson & Joanne Turner for arranging such a fun and thoughtful programme.

Our environmental work has built on the Gold Award that we received last year with a new "Garden Gang" being formed to manage our land and increase biodiversity. Pam Hollinshead has led the group with real enthusiasm and I'm very grateful to all the members who have worked hard to create a beautiful space that seems to be encouraging our local wildlife. Pam has also organised our participation in a local composting scheme and many neighbours are now making use of the facility. In addition, we continue to collaborate with other Wirral based groups and have hosted events aimed at promoting more sustainable living.

Charity fundraising is another key component in our outreach, and we have managed to support a number of fundraising initiatives in 2023. Our Rose Queen is integral to our charity work and, once again, we have been blessed by two excellent ambassadors over the past year, in Elizabeth Dulhanty and Eva Wilkinson. Both Elizabeth, Eva, their families, and retinues have worked extremely hard to raise funds for the church and their chosen charities, whilst also connecting the community with some fantastic social events. Fundraising for Christian Aid has also been a key focus, with Diane Shaw and Jill Loach doing a marvellous job of coordinating our Christian Aid Week activities, including local collections, a coffee morning, and even online contributions (with QR codes!). Collections for many other groups have also taken place throughout the year, including The Children's Society, The Red Cross and The Red Crescent. And we continue to be able to make awards of our own to the local community through the Thomas Robinson Charity, ably managed by our Treasurer and Wardens.

An important part of our being a church is growing in faith together and we have been able to offer various courses and reading groups during 2023. The Men's Group, generously hosted and skilfully led by Ian Murray comprises a dedicated band of thinkers and drinkers, with more of the latter also attending the monthly "Wet Wednesdays" at the Traveller's Rest! Our Mothers' Union group, under the guidance of Liz Bird and Helen Young, regularly brings opportunity for spiritual development as well as essential practical support. And, although our "ladies' nights" perhaps have a slightly different flavour, they too bring people together around a shared set of values.

This year also saw the return of our House Groups with three being set up to offer our members a variety of opportunities to deepen their faith. An evening group hosted by Tracy and Rob, an afternoon group led by Pam in the Centre and an evening Zoom group facilitated by Ian & Colette have been well supported and are open to all.

Our Ministry Team members have continued to represent Christ Church in a number of voluntary roles. Once again, Helen Byrne has been actively involved in supporting Reader training within the Diocese, Pam Hollinshead concluded her second term as president of the regional Soroptimist branch and Revd Eunice maintained close links with the Arrowe Park

Chaplaincy Team. Fr George provided vital support to the North West Ambulance service in his role as Chaplain and I have continued as chair of the Unilever Ethics Committee, chaplain at Claire House and chair of the Diocesan Environment Forum.

St Paul's

Our partnership with St Paul's, Tranmere, enjoyed a fruitful year with members of our Ministry Team continuing to provide support for Sunday and midweek services, along with visits to local schools and care homes. It was good to see many of our congregation supporting community events and fundraisers and genuine friendships between the churches have been formed through such collaboration. A significant achievement during 2023 was the completion of the new Community Hall which has proved to be a real blessing to the parish, attracting new groups and facilitating outreach activities. The Open Day event was a particular success with hundreds of people attending.

Attendance at Sunday services has increased, and it is hoped that support from the Diocese may lead to the appointment of a full-time priest for the parish. The church is in a much better place than it was when we first started working together around four years ago, with improved facilities, ordered accounts, strong community links and an effective PCC. However, it will only achieve the growth it needs with a full-time incumbent in post, who is able to give their complete attention to expanding the mission of St Paul's deep into the parish.

Infrastructure

Our church building continues to be open to the public every day from 9am until 7pm and is a regular stopping point for many people who would never usually access a place of worship. Many will just take the opportunity to find some time away from the busyness of life, some will leave a prayer or light a candle or seek out a member of the clergy to pray alongside. This is an important ministry, and I am very grateful to our wonderful Vestry Team led by Diane Shaw and Helen Byrne, who, continue to offer creative displays and weekly support for our worshipping life. I am also thankful to our flower team and our "Classy Cleaners" who ensure that our church looks stunning whenever people attend. And a special "thank you" must go to Ian Carr who has given so generously of his time and resources, noticing problems and snags that need attending to and then just rectifying them without any fuss. We are so very fortunate to be able to draw from his skill and expertise.

The churchyard continues to provide various challenges ranging from the relentless expansion of weeds around the cremated remains plots through to foxes and other animals disturbing the land. Working alongside Wirral Borough Council is not always easy, and I continue to be thankful for our band of volunteers who have worked so hard to keep the space accessible and welcoming for those visiting loved ones. We will certainly need more volunteers in the weeks to come, so please do speak with me or Pam Hollinshead if you're able to help in any way.

The church gardens continue to attract many visitors and are a fantastic resource for our children's groups and local schools. We're very fortunate to have our dedicated and hard-working gardener, Jim Birkett, and head groundsman(!), Graham Money, and the "Garden Gang" along with our landscape gardener friend, Duncan Allender, have provided excellent support. It was a particular joy to see several schools visit during the summer months and I am grateful to Libby Potter and her volunteers for organising this.

The collection bins outside the Centre have again been well used with thousands of blister packs being collected for recycling and many tonnes of food items gathered for the Food Bank. Sadly, we had to stop the blister pack collection due to Superdrug being inundated(!) but hope to find a new partner soon. I am extremely grateful for the continued efforts of Ann

Preston, Jill Loach, Helen Byrne and Gary Shaw who ensure that the various collections get to the right places.

The addition of a Community Fridge in the reception area has been a great success and I am grateful to Vicki Roberts for her hard work in setting up arrangements with the Co-op and sourcing a suitable fridge. This resource helps the Co-op to reduce their waste whilst providing a regular source of free food for anyone in need. Thank you to all who collect from the Co-op and other local supermarkets on a daily basis. Thanks should also go to Muzzy's Breakfast House who regularly give us their "Pay it forward" vouchers to distribute among any parishioners who might be experiencing hardship.

Publicising our activities is clearly a key element of our outreach – if people don't know what we're offering, then we cannot reach them! All our events and services are posted on our noticeboards, as well as around the parish in shop windows, on community noticeboards, on our website, our livestream and on social media. This involves a considerable amount of work from our office as well as from volunteers changing our posts on a weekly basis. Thank you to all who are involved and especially to Pete Roach, George Nelson, Becky Haslam and Linda, Dave & Martha Wilkinson who have updated our noticeboards in all weathers.

The significant increases in our utility bills have, at times, stretched the funding that we have available for new projects and community work. Consequently, grant funding continues to be an important source of income and I am grateful for the efforts of Kate Lewis, Vicki Roberts and Charles Van Ingen for their ongoing help in formulating and submitting bids. And we must also thank Bev Price for the time that she gives to keep the 100 Club going – now in its 12th year!

We are very lucky to have such a talented and experienced team available to us on the Buildings and Finance Committee and the Centre Management Committee and I continue to be particularly grateful to Terry Cunningham and Charles Van Ingen for chairing the groups. I must also register special thanks to members of the PCC, to Jane Dalziel for all her work as Secretary, to our Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen, for his unwavering support and the miracles he so often performs in keeping us afloat(!), and to our fantastic Wardens, Gary Shaw, Ian Murray and June Bickford. Sadly, Gary stepped down from his role in May after completing a 6-year term of exceptional service to Christ Church and the wider community. However, we have been greatly blessed by the addition of June Bickford, who has already formed a brilliant partnership with Ian. I'm extremely grateful for the countless hours and resources that all our Wardens so freely give.

Our Parish Office is open every weekday morning (and often well into the afternoon!) and we are very fortunate to have such a capable and welcoming team working there. I have been very grateful to Jane Dalziel, Sarah Loach, John Potter and our omniscient Parish Secretary, Victoria Gleave, who are always on hand to bail me out when something goes awry! We have also been blessed by a very able group of volunteers who each bring a different skillset to the team. They all give so much to our local community and to the church family. Finally, I'm sure that we all recognise how greatly blessed we have been by our Associate Minister, Revd Eunice, and by our former Curate, Fr George. Both are outstanding priests who have done so much to serve our parish and I am very thankful for their support and friendship.

Thank you...

There are so many people who have regularly helped me in my ministry over the past year. Again, I won't attempt to name you all for fear of missing someone out, but I would like to register particular thanks to our Readers & Readers Emeritus, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne & Jill Wright; the Church Wardens, Gary Shaw, Ian Murray & June Bickford; Deputy Church Wardens, Rhona Snelson, Alan Jackson, Gary & Diane Shaw; Pastoral Worker &

Emeritus, Lynn Ion & June Fogg; Lay readers, Ian Millington, Colette Millington, Lynn Ion & Jackie Jones; Bereavement support, Vera Jackson; Electoral Roll, Tracy Evans; our office staff, Victoria Gleave, Jane Dalziel & John Potter; Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen; members of the PCC; Organists, Wendy Tucker & Tim Asbridge; Choir leaders, June Fogg & Angela Hamilton; Band members; AV technician and general "fixer", Ian Carr; our Curate, George Roach, Associate Minister, Eunice Blackmore, and to Sarah (Centre Supervisor & wife!), Sam (occasional AV technician) and Harry (part-time puppeteer) & Jumble (the bark behind the door!), for their help to me on a daily basis.

3.2 Churchwardens' Report (by June Bickford and Ian Murray)

We have an average of 100 people taking part in our Sunday Service. Grateful thanks to Ian Carr who manages our live streaming for those members of the congregation who are unable to attend.

We are delighted that Wendy Tucker our organist returned in February after the birth of her son Arthur. Grateful thanks to Tim Ashbridge who stood in during Wendy's maternity leave. Our choir is now led by Pam & Tim. Thank you to Angela Hamilton who stepped in to help when June Fogg retired.

We are very grateful in having a team who lead and support our worship. Thanks to Revd Mike, Revd Eunice, Colette & Ian Millington, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Lynn Ion and Jackie Jones. The team is much appreciated by us all for their spiritual guidance at Christ Church. We also send good wishes to Revd George Roach and family. George is now the Vicar of Saint Michael's and All Angels Church in Runcorn.

Special thanks to Sarah Loach, Sam & Harry for all that they do for us and for supporting Mike.

Our thanks go to Victoria Gleave and Jane Dalziel who ensure that the Parish office runs smoothly, and our thanks also go to the 'office volunteers' who help out it is much appreciated.

As well as our Sunday services throughout the year we have managed to have our special traditional services, Easter, Remembrance, Blue Christmas, Carol Service, Christingle, and Midnight Mass. Many thanks to all who helped with these much-loved services. Our thanks also go to Libby Potter who has made 'The Christmas' and 'Easter Experiences' enjoyable for 400 local primary school children at each of these two special events.

Many thanks to 'Classy Cleaners' and 'Flower' teams who work behind the scenes throughout the year to make our church so welcoming. These unseen helpers do so much to support Ian and I and we very much appreciate it.

Thank you to our Sidespeople who supported us throughout the year.

As Church Wardens and Deputy Wardens, we thank all our loyal congregation, together with all those 'unseen' others who regularly help behind the scenes, to ensure the smooth running of Christ Church. This means so much to us – grateful thanks to you all.

3.3 Deanery Synod Report (by Helen Byrne)

The parish has several Deanery Synod Reps who attend the quarterly meetings; Diane Shaw, Ny Gibson, Lynn Ion and Helen Byrne. Meetings continue to be hosted by parishes across the deanery and are chaired by the Lay Chair, David Halliday together with the Rural

Dean, Rev David Vestergaard. Total numbers in attendance vary and not all parishes are represented at every meeting.

The small budget (parishes contribute £30 annually) is managed by Alan McGraa and there was a small closing balance of £254 at the end of 2023.

Meetings

June 9th 2023: St John the Baptist Church, Meols. Rev Jonny Masters spoke about 'Growing Faith Adventures'.

The Growing Faith Adventure is a call for a shift in attitude and culture so that it becomes second nature for every member of the church to include and value children, young people and households in every aspect of church life for the lifelong formation of faith in the whole of life. 16th October 2023: St John the Divine, Frankby and the Guest Speaker was Wendy Robertson who spoke about 'Transforming Lives Together'.

3.4 Buildings Report (by Terry Cunningham)

- The vicarage cellar damp issue remains of concern, despite works on the local drainage arrangements and sealing of the access door. The long-term viability of the vicarage is now under consideration.
- Roof repairs & guttering replacements scope of works were issued to an abseiling contractor. They have completed some of the stonework repairs but the guttering is in too poor a condition to be addressed in a piecemeal fashion. Expect there to be further work associated with this.
- Improvements to the centre AV system completed.
- Lighting upgrades to the Kings Hall are due to commence soon (may be completed by issue of this report).
- All of the Community Centre emergency lights were tested and repairs carried out as required. In addition, several corridor lights needed to be replaced but this included upgrading them, due to obsolescence.
- A Fire Risk Assessment for the church was completed, as required by our insurers.
- External CCTV will be installed on the Community Centre, to address personal safety risks.
- A Quinquennial inspection survey is to be completed this year.

3.5 Pastoral Care (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Pastoral care includes home visits often with communion, hospital visits – including end of life, phone calls and just being there to listen and pray. Some visits are requested, others we recognise – but inevitably there are people who slip through the net – so please don't hesitate to inform us of any needs you are aware of. Our pastoral team has expanded and we aim to meet regularly to ensure needs are identified and everyone feels valued. June Fogg retired from taking an active lead during the year but it's great that Lynn Ion having retired from paid employment is now able to be more involved.

Residential Care home visits

During the year we were welcomed at several residential care homes and now have a regular, enthusiastic team – Sandra Jones, Jackie Jones, Lizzie Roach and Chris Edwards. Whenever possible we take time to talk with the residents and staff. The visits include:

- Elderholme – first Monday in the month – along with Rev Vicky Barrett (Thornton Hough)

- Bebington Care Home typically 3rd Thursday of the month for one to one communions and additional visits for themed events (e.g. King's Coronation, Advent, Christmas ...)
- Salisbury House – themed services – King's Coronation, Harvest, Christmas all of which were very well attended.

We also sang carols at each one and included Lezayre and Daleside. A trial of using PowerPoint presentations with YouTube videos for the hymns has proven very effective as every home has their own large screen smart TV.

3.6 Communication

Our weekly parish newsletter is available both on-line and as hard copy. The website continues to provide a vital link for many members of our community who cannot reach church regularly and we try to keep it updated with news and links to resources used in our services. Our Facebook page has grown considerably over the past couple of years and, in connecting with other community groups, can now attract thousands of views for a single post.

The new YouTube channel has added another way for people to join in with our services and now has almost 300 subscribers. This online presence has enabled us to communicate in a different way and with people who would not usually have access to our newsletters.

3.7 Pastoral and Social Initiatives run by Christ Church:

3.7.1 Men in Sheds (by Terry Cunningham)

The shed continues to be a very successful community initiative, providing a safe, welcoming place for people to gather to chat and get involved in construction or repair activities, should they so wish. Being sited close to the church makes us an obvious choice to look at any equipment breakdown activities required in the centre and/or church, which has certainly resulted in significant cost-savings, on occasions. We have recently completed an accessible potting table for use by the gardening group and Co-op academy students. Our active member numbers continue to be about 10-12 on day, though reduces a little during the winter, when opportunities to work outside are reduced somewhat. Sadly, we lost one of our founder members recently, Walter Penketh, an ambitious man who had many ideas to expand the offerings of the shed and its outcomes. A plaque in his honour has been fitted to each of our memorial benches.

A couple of presentations have been made to the Women's Institute and Mother's Union, explaining how the Men in Sheds organisation came about, its aims and how it functions nationally in the UK, as well as locally, which appear to have been well received.

Although our "normal" products are bird boxes, bird tables and planters, we are happy to consider bespoke items – so if you want something that we might be able to help with, please pop in and see us, anytime that we are open.

3.7.2 Singing Café (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Singing Café has continued to be a thoroughly enjoyed bi-monthly activity – meeting at 10.30 am on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays – bringing joy, laughter and of course music. Numbers fluctuate but a good time is had by all. On 6th June we had a great concert given

by all the musicians from the various Wirral Singing Café teams and our Christmas Special on 19th December was thoroughly enjoyable.

Our thanks goes to Chris Youngman who heads up the Singing Café groups and to June Fogg who has now handed over her kitchen responsibilities to Heather Whitehead and all who assist in setting up the room etc.

3.7.3 Caffi Cymraeg (by Sarah Loach)

Ar ail ddydd Mawrth y mis bydd siaradwyr Cymraeg a darpar Gymry Cymraeg yn cael lluniaeth boreol yn Neuadd y Brenin. Mae sgwrs ddifyr dros de, coffi (wedi'i weini yn y tsieni gorau), barabrith, pice ar y maen a llawer mwy ynghyd ag amrywiaeth o lyfrau a thafienni Cymraeg. Mae'r digwyddiad hefyd yn cynnwys addurniadau Cymreig gan gynnwys cennin pedr yn eu tymor. Ac mae'r Ddraig Goch yn cael ei chwifio o bolyn fflag yr Eglwys ar Ddydd Gŵyl Dewi. Mae croeso bob amser i wynebaw newydd – yn rhugl yn y Gymraeg neu beidio.

Welsh Café

The second Tuesday of the month sees both Welsh speakers and would-be Welsh speakers taking morning refreshments in the Kings Hall. On offer is convivial conversation over tea, coffee (served in the finest china), barabrith, Welsh cakes and much more plus an assortment of Welsh language books and leaflets. The event also features Welsh decorations including daffodils in season. And the Welsh Dragon is flown from the Church's flagpole on St David's Day. New faces – fluent in Welsh or not – are always welcome.

3.7.4 The Sewing Group (by Sarah Loach)

We meet on the 1st and 4th Tuesday morning of the month at 10.30am. All abilities and ages are welcome! We are an informal group, we enjoy coming together to sew for charity, Church events and do minor alterations and small projects for people. We always have refreshments and swap sewing ideas and projects. My thanks to Rhona Snelson for all her help and support in running the sessions.

3.7.5 Connect Coffee (by Rhona Snelson)

Connect Coffee runs every Wednesday throughout the year, providing a meeting place in the Community Centre from 10am to 12 noon, where a warm welcome is always readily given to all who visit. Manned by a faithful, friendly group of helpers, who offer tea, coffee and toast with a happy smile, here members of the community and church have the opportunity to meet with others in friendly conversations or just to give a "listening ear" when required. During the colder months, Connect Coffee provided a "warm space" when the cost of domestic heating rose dramatically.

In a relaxed atmosphere, visitors were able to seek advice from visiting Community Connectors, who offer considerable knowledge of help available in the local area. Also, a member of Age Concern technical help came to offer advice with using mobile phones and I-pads etc. Always a welcome and open to all.

3.7.6 Knit & Natter Group (by Joan Rippon)

Knit and Natter's membership has grown from strength to strength. Ladies enjoy meeting twice monthly. Donations of knitted goods have been made to Claire House, Tams 4 U Shoe Box Appeal and a homeless charity. Goods are also made for sale on our stall at the summer fair and Christmas coffee morning.

Donations as follows-

7/2/23 £100 to Rose Queen Fund

3/4/23 £50 to Air Ambulance

3/5/23 £22 to Claire House (result of raffle)

9/5/23 £50 to St John's Hospice

24/6/23 £120 to Rose Queen Fund (Summer Fair)

15/11/23 £70 to Royal British Legion

19/11/23 £50 to The Mothers' Union in respect of local Women's Refuge

2/12/23 £153 to Rose Queen Fund (Christmas Coffee Morning)

3.7.7 Oasis Group (by Jill Wright)

The Oasis support group continues to be successful, including members both longstanding and new. Regular meetings took place each month in 2023, excluding August and December. The plan to introduce topic led discussions has been well received by members and have been led by Steve Flatt, psychotherapist, assisted by members of his team, Laura Gregory and Kate Crane. They also offer one to one therapy sessions under the heading 'Church Chats' which have been proving very popular. Jill Wright continues to carry out the administration of the Oasis group. Oasis has continued to offer much needed support to group members.

3.7.8 Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

We have now adopted a regular pattern – the first Sunday of each month 12.30 pm at Broadway Steak & Wine. Between 10 and 20 ladies and gentlemen who would normally be spending this time alone meet up and enjoy company and a good lunch. We are served well by the staff who give us the enclosed outer area to ourselves and are very accommodating with varying numbers, diets and occasionally a guide dog too!

3.7.9 Church Walking Group (by Lizzie Roach)

Following on from Jill Wright's invaluable example, the walking group continues to organise walks on the first Friday of each month, the leadership being shared between Chris Edwards, Ann Bell and Lizzie Roach. The aim is to attract walkers of all ages who enjoy getting out in the fresh air in our beautiful Wirral coast and countryside with friendly and lively company, and we have been delighted to welcome newcomers outside the church membership from a local aerobics class. We offer one walk each month, between 3-5 miles, with a turnout of anything between 8 to 13 people depending on weather and availability. A

refreshment stop is always included, one of the most memorable being lunch for 16 of us at the Travellers Rest in December with Christmas decorations on display and much hilarity!

3.7.10 Befrienders (Bereavement Support) (by Vera Jackson)

The Befrienders lunch time meeting continues to be much appreciated on the first Thursday of every month. Generally, there are between 16 and 22 but we have some more people attending following Rev Eunice running the Bereavement Journey course over the last few months. We shall continue providing this service as long as the demand is there.

3.7.11 Bereavement Journey (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

This continues to be a real source of mutual support and encouragement for those who have been bereaved. During 2023 we ran two afternoon courses commencing in February and September and an evening course in June for a total of nearly 30 people. We were one of the first groups nationally to run the revised course (from Ataloss) from June – which now comprises 7 sessions with more interactive and inclusive films. With written feedback which says "Words will never be enough to explain how grateful we are for you running this course" we are thankful to God that we are able offer this hugely significant course.

I very much appreciate the support and wisdom of Mai Hattersley. Fiona Murphy also assisted with the evening course and now Sharon Philpotts (a previous participant) is a great help.

Remembrance Book

This book which is kept in church is made available for families that wish to have their relatives name added to it.

Time to Remember (29 Oct)/Blue Christmas Services (17 Dec)

Once again these very poignant services were well attended and much appreciated and proved to be valuable links with the people we had supported in the Bereavement Journeys and through funeral ministry throughout the year. We all need ways to express our grief and find empathy from others and as a church we're uniquely placed to do so.

3.7.12 Carers' Group (by Rhona Snelson & Graham Loach)

The 4Cs continues to provide opportunities for carers, and those who have previously been carers, to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship together.

During 2023 we had a full programme and were very grateful for the time given by our excellent guest speakers. We have been informed, educated, and entertained throughout the year.

In January we were delighted to have Fiona Murphy talk to us about the wonderful work she and her colleagues do in supporting cancer patients. The progress made over recent years is truly remarkable.

Terry Gurr from the Owl Sanctuary gave an entertaining talk in February, ably assisted by owls!

In March we welcomed our very own Alan Jackson who showed us some wonderful slides of India. Alan is not only an excellent speaker but a truly talented photographer.

In April we had a return visit from Katie Paloma who updated us on the 'Energy Plus' project.

In May we were able to have a nostalgic reflection on life in the 60s courtesy of local historian David Hearn.

Our now annual trip to Llandudno took place in June. One of our members, who shall remain anonymous, gave us a bit of scare but it all turned out okay and we enjoyed a lovely day out.

July was our afternoon tea meeting. Although the weather could have been kinder, we did enjoy the splendid sandwiches, cakes and the odd glass of wine!

After our August break we returned in September and were entertained by Rob Jones telling us about the Wirral Tram Museum.

More local history followed in October with Tony Hughes giving an excellent and informative talk about Birkenhead Priory.

The final meeting of the year was our Christmas Social where we sang a few carols and enjoyed each other's company.

Tremendous thanks are due to Lorna Cullen who makes sure that we have wonderful sandwiches each month. Thanks also to Rhona Snelson, Jill Loach and other members who bake cake and help in the kitchen etc.

New members are always welcome and we look forward to seeing friends old and new at our lunchtime meetings, which are usually on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except in August, at 12.30pm in the Community Centre.

3.7.13 Indoor Bowls (by Sarah Loach)

We hold our Indoor Bowls sessions over the autumn and winter on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 10am.

It has been really well attended and can be quite competitive! All abilities are very welcome and people have a lot of fun while they bowl.

Refreshments are provided.

Thanks to Rhona Snelson, Jill Loach and Brenda White for running the sessions and providing refreshments. Also, thanks to Dave for getting the mat out and putting it away every session.

3.7.14 Christmas Day Lunch

We had approximately 80 people here enjoying a delicious Christmas lunch together this year. We also packed up some deliveries for people who couldn't attend. We had very generous donations from individuals and also businesses making it all possible, including our local butcher and two local supermarkets. There are too many volunteers to mention by name who gave up their time and worked so hard, thank you all. Special thanks to the kitchen team on the day Victoria and Mark Gleave, Kate Crane and Ian Millington who made sure everyone was catered for, very well fed and had a great time together.

3.7.15 Eco Church/Garden Gang (by Pam Hollinshead)

The small yet dedicated Garden Gang continues to battle though the undergrowth, unearthing unknown walls and plants not seen for decades; cutting back brambles and overgrown bushes thus opening up new areas for wildlife and humans to enjoy.

Ongoing work in the woodland area includes removing the Arboreal form of Ivy from the trees and stripping as much Ground Ivy and Ground Elder out of the ground as possible leaving a controllable amount for biodiversity to work.

We have been joined by Graham Money and his colleagues who have built a very sturdy woodstore in the Fallen Orchard to accommodate the substantial amount of wood cut down throughout the winter season. Thank you, gentlemen!

The Stumpery area is developing we have completed all the ground works and are now ready to bring in soil and plant up ferns and shade loving plants to this area.

The front of church was brightened up ready for Easter Sunday with plants kindly donated by Thingwall Nurseries!

Soon we will be hosting Garden Experience events for local schools, the bluebell walks have been made safe for small children by cutting back overhanging foliage. There is a mass of frog spawn in both ponds! So, we are hoping for tadpoles soon, the children love to see them up close.

Men in Sheds have kindly built a potting bench at wheelchair height so that all our youngsters from The Co-op Academy can join in with planting seeds and potting on. Thank you, Men in Sheds!

Earlier in the year we had the roots of the old oak tree near the Vicarage scanned to determine its health and age. It's been confirmed that it is 200 years old, when it was planted the area of the pathway was at least 6 ft lower as it is in fact a single stem tree not as we see today bifurcated (two trunks!). Huge thanks to George Nelson for enabling this project and for the considerable work put in by various people to clear the area of rubble, rubbish etc. ready for GPR root scan done by Peter Barton Associates. It is very important that we manage and look after our Oaks of which there are many in the garden as they provide much needed environs for hundreds of insects, birds, pollinators etc.

It's that time of year again when the weeds are growing apace, particularly in the Cremation memorial area!!! We are looking for a dedicated team to work in this area on a regular basis - volunteers please find Pam !!

We have had three working party days this year on the 3rd Saturday of the month, it's amazing what can be accomplished by a determined bunch of folk especially when there is the promise of bacon butties, egg butties, tea and coffee made by our very own Mrs Vicarage aka Sarah!! Thank you to all who turn up.

We are hoping to hire the of assistance someone with a digger who will take back the top layer of weeds in certain areas so that we can generate more wildflower plantings. Massive thanks to Duncan Allender for such a wonderful area he has designed and built behind the stage!

As always, we are looking for more folk to regularly volunteer in the garden, perhaps weekly on a Wednesday 1.30-3.00pm; the third Saturday of each month 10am-12 noon; or at another previously agreed time. Gardening expertise is not required, rather a passion for working with nature and each other.

Thank you to all who currently a valued part of The Garden Gang!

3.7.16 Boulders (by Joanne Turner & Linda Wilkinson)

Our Boulders invites young people between the ages of 11 – 18 years. Our current age group that attends is between 11 and 13 years of age.

We meet twice a month. On the first Sunday of the month at church, they are joined by the Ministry Team to think through faith. Our youngsters attend our Sunday Services regularly.

Our Boulders read in church and sing. On the third Friday of every month, we meet in the evening for a couple of hours in the Community Centre for social activities.

Boulders is open to all youngsters in the area. Currently all children that attend are part of the church family, all of them originally started attending from Sunday club at a young age moving though. Since Covid we haven't had as many young children attend Sunday Club, which has affected the numbers moving through to the Youth Group Boulders. I know we are actively trying to attract new children into our Sunday Club. Our Boulders have also invited friends to join them and at times our group has expanded with friend group who have attended especially when we meet on Friday evenings.

Our Boulders have grown up together in the church family and our group have a great supportive friendship with each other. We are a diverse group and do plan our events to be inclusive. We consider access when planning events and mobility in our games as one of our youths is currently in a wheelchair. We consider written and reading activities to support one another as one of our youths needs extra support. All the youths support each other too and work together thoughtfully, kindly and instinctively. We had an activity recently which involved maths, weighing mixture, combining it and baking. They all worked extremely well together supporting each other.

Our Boulders make things throughout the year for the congregation to enjoy. At Easter we made an indoor garden table which was displayed at the entrance of the community centre. In preparation for Mothering Sunday, our Youth Group joined Sunday Club to write cards for the Mothering Sunday flowers and cut ribbon and helped with all the preparation. We support with the preparation for Christingle. Our Youth Group supports the Rose Queen with events that happen several times in the year.

3.7.17 Sunday Club (by Janet Wallace)

We have a small but regular group of children who come to Sunday Club every week, along with the occasional visitors. We have been exploring new ways of connecting with families in the parish to encourage them to bring their children along, but have not had a great deal of success.

There are a number of families who support Church family events but due to other commitments cannot make Sunday mornings and we are looking at other ways to engage with them. We have been running midweek Lego and Craft activities after school on alternate Wednesdays. These have been well received but are at the same time as after school clubs and so not everyone can come.

The most successful events have been the Easter and Christmas coffee mornings and Summer Barbeque which were all very well attended. The Nativity was also well supported with over 15 children taking part.

We are continuing to look at different ways to engage with the families in our Parish and think about what times will be a better fit with modern family life.

Activities

Sunday Club meets on a Sunday morning in term time and is aimed at children aged between 5 and 11. We watch videos, play games and use a range of crafts to explore some of the exciting stories the Bible contains.

We love to see new families and as each week is standalone it doesn't matter if you can't come every time.

Lego Club meets on the first Wednesday in the month at 3:30pm and is an opportunity for Children to build Lego creations based on a bible theme or just build from their own imagination.

Crafty Church meets every third Wednesday and the children get to have a go at a range of craft activities, be creative and have fun.

3.7.18 Praise & Play (by Jackie Jones)

Over the past year we have had positive feedback from the parents of the children who attend.

We have songs, a story, a prayer, an activity, craft, and we always finish with cake for the children and the adults.

Some of the themes we have covered:

- Noah's Ark
- The Lost sheep
- Jonah and The Whale
- Fishers of Men
- Jesus Calms the Storm
- Nativity
- Palm Sunday
- Easter

We have a good team that work well together, and have good bakers, which keep us going with cake, which we appreciate.

We pray that God will keep us inspired, with being able to keep the children focused, and to continue to enjoy the sessions. That we can keep emphasising to them that they are Loved by God.

3.7.19 Experience Easter & Experience Christmas 2023 (by Libby Potter)

Following our first Experience Christmas in 2022 we decided to offer both Experience Easter and Experience Christmas in 2023. We welcomed Town Lane Infants School, Higher Bebington Junior School, Brackenwood Infants, Brackenwood Juniors and Bedford Drive Primary School to both events. A total of over 700 children and 200 accompanying adults. Each Experience was run over 4 days with a team of 25+ volunteers telling the story using pictures, drama, song and storytelling in sessions of 1.5hrs per school. We started to offer the Experience to the uniformed groups and church led children's groups with Scouts attending at Easter then Rainbows, Brownies, Mums and Tots and baby group attending at Christmas. Schools were sent colouring activities for the children to complete and bring with them. The displays of artwork decorated the church for the season and we encouraged families to come and see their child's artwork at the Easter Egg Hunt and Christmas coffee morning which followed the Experiences.

At Experience Easter 2023, for the first time, we welcomed students from Co-op Academy Bebington SEN Base to work alongside us as volunteers. We offered them the opportunity to

help on the stations in a variety of ways, create displays of artwork, welcome and direct children and take on acting roles. They did this with great enthusiasm and have brought a real sense of joy and fun to our Experience. They shared their singing and BSL signing skills with us leading to the "Experience Song" now being a regular feature of every Experience. We are very grateful for the contribution the Coop Academy students and their staff make to each Experience. The staff tell us that the opportunity to work in their local community provides many benefits for these students.

The number of members of our congregation who wish to help at the Experiences has increased with volunteers saying they enjoy the company of the school children and Co-op students and the fellowship created through working together. We are thrilled that so many people from church volunteer and we all have a great time.

3.7.20 Thornleigh Friendship weekend 19-22 May 2023

41 of us headed to the Thornleigh Christian Hotel in Grange-over-Sands for a weekend of friendship, fun and fellowship. We were spoilt with beautiful weather and most enjoyed a scenic tour of the South Lakes on the Saturday which was a real bonus after the months of restricted travel following Covid. We ended each day with a thought based on the Novena Thy Kingdom Come booklets and enjoyed watching the film 'The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse'. It was lovely to share communion together in the hotel on the Sunday and many participated in the Songs of Praise in the evening.

Here's some of the feedback – "I just enjoyed being in company." "I now feel I know people I had only nodded to in Church which is a positive." "A brilliant weekend." "I found it very moving and found God whilst I was there."

3.7.21 Toddler Group (by Sarah Loach)

Our Toddler group has continued to grow, with regulars attending and a good new intake in September. We meet every Monday morning in term time between 9.30am and 11.15am. We offer toddlers space to play with toys, do small crafts, play in the dressing up boxes and have snacks. We have parents, grandparents and carers coming, giving them chance to socialise and enjoy a coffee together.

Thank you very much to Diane Shaw and Margaret Theobald for providing such a warm welcome and support to the carers and children.

Thank you to Ruth Greenall, Beckie Jones and Jackie Jones for all their help.

3.7.22 Baby Group (by Victoria Gleave)

2023 was a year of two halves at Baby Group. Numbers attending for the first half of the year continued to be strong, with friendships formed amongst the mums and their children a key driver for this. As the children celebrated their first birthdays and became more mobile, many of the regular attendees moved on. In some cases, this was because mums were returning to work as their maternity leave came to an end. For others, they 'graduated' to Toddler Group on a Monday and I am delighted that at least 10 from Baby Group now regularly attend this group. The friendships forged at Baby Group continue to be strengthened and will no doubt last until they start school.....and beyond!

Unfortunately, there was a lull in numbers attending for the second half of the year but it has been a delight to connect those who have come along regularly.

Baby Group tends to be cyclical as it is really only a short time before either mums return to work or the children 'out-grow' the group and as a result numbers will always fluctuate. It is a privilege to be able to make connections on behalf of Christ Church, Higher Bebington and always a pleasure to meet past members of the group when out and about.

My thanks go to Beckie Jones for supporting the running of the group and to all the Connect Café teams who so kindly wash up the cups. Also, to any of you who pop into the group and always make the mums feel so welcome.

3.8 Choir (by Pam Hollinshead)

Despite being a difficult year for some members CCHB choir has continued to enjoy being involved in the formal worship each Sunday and at occasional services such as funerals. We welcome Timothy Asbridge as choirmaster, who has quietly challenged and encouraged us to be adventurous in our singing.

3.9 Organ Report (by Wendy Tucker)

It's been another busy year at the organ. Along with the honour of accompanying the 10am Sunday services and our choir, the organ is in frequent use at weddings and funerals throughout the year where I occasionally get to extend the organ repertoire: this year has featured musical theatre medleys, folk music and New Orleans style swing!

Tuning is a constant need for the organ as we only really get about 2 months before the mixtures on the swell need a bit of a tweak (this is very common for most organs). But the instrument is in a good condition and always a joy to play.

This year has also involved a period of maternity leave for me so it's been a delight to welcome Tim Asbridge, Graham Ellis, James Luxton, Rose McPherson and Stewart Smith and others who played during that period. My thanks to everyone!

Please do come and find me if you have any organ questions or requests! Be delighted to have a chat.

3.10 Music Group (by Pam Hollinshead)

We continue to play together and enjoy supporting various church services when asked to do so.

We are looking forward to being more involved in the music at the AAW services this coming year.

Thanks for the encouragement and support from everyone.

3.11 Mothers' Union (by Helen Young)

In 2023 our MU branch continued to meet every month in the Community Centre.

As of September 2023, our branch meetings were held in the mornings as it was difficult for some members to make the previously scheduled evening meetings.

As a result, we have had an encouraging increase in attendance at meetings.

Our branch sadly lost a couple of members during the year.

Marjorie Hughes's funeral was held in January 2023; Elaine Newall's, late in November. It is always sad to lose members (and friends) who have become a part of our social and spiritual community. We will miss them.

Our programme of monthly fellowship meetings centred round a mix of devotional, informative and social events.

A big 'thank you' to our speakers in 2023, who gave their valuable time, skills and life experience to support our meetings.

- Feb Vera Jackson: On her life growing up in Ireland.
- April Alan Jackson: Old films reels from the Port of Liverpool as well as his Vietnam Holiday
- May Janet Wallace: Memories of Queen Elizabeth's Coronation in 1953
- June Graham Loach on the Royal Variety Performance
- Sept Fiona Murphy: On her Pilgrimage and retreat to the Iona Community
- Dec Helen Byrne: A Christmas Meditation. A moving and reflective meeting prior to the Christmas season.

Other notable events for 2023 were as follows:-

March

For Mothering Sunday the Mothers' Union 'Make a Mother's Day' fundraising campaign received generous support from our congregation and went towards making a real difference to women and their families both locally and worldwide.

MU brings hope and practical support to millions of people every year through parenting, literacy and community development programmes.

May

Our branch participated in the Diocesan MU Wave of Prayer in May.

The MU Wave for prayer is a special way of connecting MU members with each other around the world through the ministry of prayer.

Our branch is proud that it participates in this 'wave' each year.

July

Our branch celebrated its 70th Anniversary. What an achievement! The branch was started in 1953.

To mark the occasion members enjoyed a delicious Afternoon Tea at the Red Fox and enjoyed reminiscing about our branch, its members, past and present and how times have changed over the years.

October

Shoebox Gifts - Our branch members, (with the help of donations from our congregation) collected items to enable us to send shoebox gifts to children in Eastern Europe via the charity Teams4u.

These would be used as Christmas gifts for children aged from babies to teens.

They are always gratefully received.

November

Our Annual AGM was held.

December

Support for the local Women's Refuge.

After an appeal at church, very generous funds were raised by our congregation and branch to provide our local Wirral Women's Refuge with special gift tote toiletry bags for its women residents at Christmas.

This practical support was truly appreciated and the staff at the Refuge was very touched and grateful for these gifts. Our branch continues to strive to support the Refuge each year. Ongoing Baptism Preparation support though out the year.

Two of our branch members supported families during the year as they prepared for their children's baptism. Our branch members pray for these families prior to their baptism dates.

In December 2023, Liz Bird stepped down as our Branch 'Nominated Contact'. (She was more like our leader really). The Branch formally thanked her for all her hard work at our December meeting.

We do not currently have a formal leader but Helen Young agreed to take on the role of nominated contact to ensure communications with the Diocese and other MU news. She will be well supported by our Branch Committee who as a whole will continue to look to the continued running and healthy future of our branch whilst upholding our Mothers' Union values and mission.

3.12 Zoom courses (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Our Zoom activities have continued throughout 2023.

- Start the week – morning prayer Mondays at 9 am – has even grown in numbers and is a great way to start the week!
- "nearly" Alternate Thursdays Lectio Divina – when we read, mediate and share Scripture together continues to be a great link with Audrey in residential care. We often look at the next Sunday's gospel reading.

3.13 Illuminations Report (by Sarah Loach and Charles Van Ingen)

The cool blue and ice-white lights on the Community Centre Roof are now a permanent fixture along with the penguins and the polar bear. We put up and take down the coloured lights on along the front of the car park to avoid them being damaged by high winds when the leaves are out putting stress on the cables. However, choosing the day with care – dry and not windy - with ladders, cable-ties and some elementary gymnastics, the job is done. The general plan is to have the illuminations operational from just before the Rose Queen Christmas Coffee Morning until the clocks go forward. We receive much positive feedback from local people saying that the lights (1300 of them!) cheer them up on dark winter days.

3.14 Christ Church Community Centre (by Sarah Loach, Centre Supervisor)

It has been great to see the Community Centre so busy and well used.

Commercially we have Bebington Bridge Club, Tai Chi, Sit Fit, WI, Vibe Dance Group, Community Choir and Weightwatchers on a weekly basis.

Prenton High School have continued to hire rooms here for training purposes.

A baby massage group was held here for 6 weeks, and we also have regular Baby First Aid courses run by Wirral Mini First Aid. Friends of Storeton Woods hire one of our small meeting rooms twice monthly on a Monday evening.

The main hall continues to be a popular venue for parties.

We also have Uniform groups meeting here three evenings a week - one Rainbow group and two Brownie groups.

We have held various events including a Christian Aid Coffee morning, Christian Aid afternoon tea, Rose Queen events and our Summer and Christmas Fairs.

Connect Cafe has been popular with people dropping in and also people coming in to receive advice about their digital devices from Ant Richardson.

The Digital Inclusion class has proved very popular as well run by Wirral 3L's.

Our church run groups are very varied and include:

Toddler Group
Baby Group
Indoor Bowls
Singing Café
Happy Reading Group
Knit and Natter
Sewing group
Oasis
Befrienders
Carers group
Mothers' Union
Bereavement Journey
Boulders
Sunday Club
Lego Church
Walking Group

Thank you to everyone who volunteers here in the kitchen, running groups and in the office. Also, to Victoria Gleave and Jane Dalziel for their hard work and dedication in the office.

Special thanks to John Potter for all his hard work and support to us all at the Community Centre. Also, to Gavin and Peter from Clean and Green and Carol Hughes and Barbara Thomas for washing so many tea towels!

Community Centre Party bookings:

The Centre continues to be a popular venue for Children's parties and 12 parties were held here during 2023. Families put a lot of effort into their children's parties, sometimes hiring the Kings Suite so their buffets are in a separate area. The entertainment varies with discos, soft play or they hire entertainers, mascots or have themes such as circus skills and fencing skills.

We have had lots of compliments about our Hall, especially how bright and clean it is.

We have also held several baptism and funeral receptions at the Centre following services here and caterers are often brought in to provide Afternoon teas etc.

3.15 Projects with Co-op Academy Bebington (by Libby Potter)

In 2023 students and staff from Coop Academy SEN Base started visiting us regularly and have worked on several projects. First was their involvement as volunteers at Experience Easter. Followed by 4 afternoons of work by years 7,8 and 9 to clear the Scout fire pit area and to build another bug hotel in the garden. The bug hotel project became a collaboration with Men in Sheds who helped construct the hotel using materials made by the students. The students came up with a name for the hotel and Men in Sheds made a sign. In the Autumn term Coop Academy students started running charity cake sales at Connect Coffee providing the students with further opportunity to work in their local community. They have started at 1 cake sale per term and so far have raised money for Wirral Hospice St Johns.

School visits to the gardens

In the Summer term we welcomed the nursery children of Town Lane Infant School for 2 sessions of exploring the woodland, looking for tadpoles and bug hunting. We hope to offer more similar visits in the future.

4 Rose Queen (by Elizabeth Dulhanty & Eva Wilkinson)

Hello everyone, it's me – Elizabeth - to tell you about my second six months as Christ Church Higher Bebington's Rose Queen 2022-2023. Here is a quick summary of the wonderful events that took place in 2023...

January began with a Quiz Night - I was so grateful to John Potter for being our wonderful Quizmaster, to Andrew Potter his able assistant, and to so many friends for donating prizes and delicious desserts! This evening was a lot of fun and very well attended. We had teams of many different families and ages playing, and of course, finished the evening with a game of heads and tails.

In February we held a Fashion Show - over a hundred guests came to see the fashions modelled on the catwalk, enjoy a glass or two of fizz, and grab a bargain. This event was quite different to some of the others I'd organised and attracted lots of new faces. It was particularly refreshing and enjoyable - everyone had a lovely time.

In March we welcomed lots of local families for Easter Bingo and filled the hall! Everyone had so much fun at another great family event, rounded off with more heads and tails.

I would like to take the time to sincerely thank the Potter family who provided so much help in many of my events. Andrew generously donated all of the profits from his yard sale to my total, John wrote and presented the Quiz and was a great Bingo Caller, and Libby who made some lovely cakes and puddings - like her amazing apple crumble which my friends are still raving about! Thank you all very much!

For our last event we transformed the Centre into a scene from the Wild West for a fantastic Wild West Shindig, complete with line dancing, jacket potatoes in the cantina and a tin can alley shooting range. There were some really fantastic costumes like our Vicar-turned-Sheriff for the night and the Millington's cowboy outfits! This was possibly my favourite event, celebrating an amazing time as the Rose Queen having a lot of fun, a bit of a dance, and lots of laughs with so many new friends!

I had the most wonderful time over the year organising and hosting 6 really well attended community events supported by my retinue Amy Midgley, Eva Wilkinson, Shenara and Jennilee Alahakoon, Mason Lewis and Patrick Sanderson and their families. Together we raised a tremendous £4,710 for my three chosen charities!

For me, the biggest success of my events was being able to welcome new faces into the Community Centre as well as seeing some of our old friends too. Members of the community and Church family often remarked that it was so lovely to see so many different age groups together having fun at these events and I couldn't agree more! I would say that this community atmosphere (as well as a lot of organising behind the scenes!) is what made my time as Rose Queen so enjoyable and, of course, successful too!

Raising £4,710 was absolutely immense and I was so grateful for your generosity in donating raffle prizes, baking lovely desserts, and also in the time that people gave to attend these events. This money was divided equally between my chosen charities, donating £1570 each to Forum Housing Association, Charles Thompson Mission and Christ Church Community Centre. Charles Thompson Mission provides immediate food, clothing, and care to homeless people every day. Forum Housing provides quality support and housing for vulnerable people facing homelessness, within an accepting, caring, homely and safe environment. The final charity I supported was the CCHB Community Centre to help our Church which works tirelessly to bring people within the Parish and community together.

The money that we raised has hugely contributed to the missions of each of the charities supported and it was so humbling to see your kindness in supporting our events.

My final act as Rose Queen was to crown my friend Eva Wilkinson at the Summer Fair. It was very special to share that moment together, especially remembering how proud I had been to be crowned by Grace Gleave the year before. I know that Eva will be an absolutely wonderful Rose Queen, and I hope that she loves every moment as much as I did.

Finally... Thank YOU so much for supporting me and my events I have been really inspired by your love and kindness throughout this year. Thank you for inviting your lovely friends, family, and even colleagues to my events. I am excited to see what exciting events Eva will organise and to hear about her success in 2024!

All my love, and God bless,
Elizabeth

Elizabeth Dulhanty Rose Queen (2022-2023)

Eva Wilkinson (Rose Queen 2023-24)

I was very pleased to be asked to be Rose Queen for 2023/24. I was crowned at the summer fair in June 2023. It was very busy and while I was nervous, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Many of you know that my sister, Martha, has additional needs so I decided to choose her school, Hayfield Special Needs School, as my charity in appreciation of the fantastic support they have been. This is alongside the Community Centre to support the great work that it does in providing community outreach that many local people depend on.

My first event was in September which was a bingo night. I enjoyed hosting the evening and calling the numbers. My retinue were a great support for the event as well. Through the bingo and raffle run at the same time we raised a fantastic £550 and lots of people attended.

The next event was the Christmas Coffee Morning. Lots of different groups were involved including the Sewing Group and Knit & Natter. We also had great support from local businesses supporting the raffle with prizes. Men in Sheds were also generous in their support.

Lots of different people were involved to help make this a successful event. Everyone who attended said they had a fantastic time and there were lots of new faces from the local community. We raised £1,930 which I am very proud of.

5 Electoral Roll (by Tracy Evans)

At last year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting members were advised that the number on Roll in 2023 was 271 names.

We currently have 273 members on the Electoral roll.

Since the last APCM, unfortunately, 7 members have passed away and one moved out of the area.

We therefore have 10 new members.

To ensure the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, can I remind all members of the need to notify the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their name or contact details (address, home telephone number, mobile number & email address). This can be done in a number of ways: by completing another application form or detailing the changes in an email which can be sent via the Parish Office (parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk)

6 Safeguarding Report (by Diane Shaw)

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), along with Rev. Mike Loach and Mrs Victoria Gleave held a number of meetings throughout the previous year to update the Safeguarding file and to complete DBS documentation.

The PSO has also attended a Deanery safeguarding meeting which, it is hoped, will be the first of many, in order to share good practice and offer advice and support to all PSOs. There are now four Safeguarding Officers working for the Diocese which is a vast improvement. The annual safeguarding audit has been completed, and verbal reports presented to the PCC at appropriate meetings.

There were five reported Safeguarding incidents during this last year. All have been thoroughly investigated, recorded appropriately and if necessary, monitored carefully and confidentially.

Several personnel including all PCC members and any Church activity leaders have been advised to attend Basic Safeguarding Training which at the moment can only be achieved online. It is essential that anyone completing any training, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer who continues to keep a record of all Safeguarding Training.

7 Community Engagement Officer (until April 2023) (by Vicki Midgley)

As community engagement worker for Christ Church Community centre the start of 2023 saw the continuation of a number of projects. The Friday lunch club continued to run fortnightly with an average attendance of around 30/35 people enjoying a hot meal and pudding. It created a sense of community and everyone enjoyed the puddings!

The Digital Engagement provided by Wirral Council continued with the introduction of an improvers class for those who were beginning to grow in confidence.

Lego church held monthly on a Wednesday helped attract families from the parish in to enjoy building and plenty of biscuits.

2023 saw the running of the Beginners DIY course, run by Men in Sheds offering total novices some basic tips, skills and knowledge about household DIY. The final event run before the completion of the community engagement project was the Easter coffee morning and sheep hunt. Cakes, crafts and find all the run away sheep, the event was well attended and the weather made for a beautiful morning.

8 Financial Review (by Charles Van Ingen, PCC Treasurer)

8.1 Introduction

The overall financial situation is presented in the Financial Statements which appear as Appendix I to this report. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission which has created the Charities SORP (Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice). This gives charities clear guidelines on what information to keep and what reports to produce to meet their legal obligations.

The Church of England has adopted the SORP as its standard basis for annual reporting by parishes so that a single set of information and reports meets the requirements of both the Charity Commission (accessible by the general public) and the wider Church.

The accounts presented here have been prepared on an Accruals basis.

The negative effect of the coronavirus pandemic largely dissipated during 2022 such that the financial situation now presents an encouraging picture apart from the substantial negative impact of very high costs for electricity and gas.

As shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (commonly known as the SOFA), the total incoming resources were £264,566 (of which legacies contributed £50,000 - see 5.7 below) against total expenditure of £262,426 including depreciation of £29,150 principally relating to the Community Centre and its contents. The total funds carried forward increased slightly from £1,071,435 to £1,075,413 the bulk of which reflects the capitalisation of the Community Centre.

8.2 Day-to-day operations

Christ Church

A strong Q4 2023 resulted in our Operating Income for the year usefully exceeding our Operating Expenditure despite the substantial increase in the cost of gas and electricity compared to 2022; see Note 20.

Community Centre

The Centre's operating income was slightly down at £34,489 compared to 2022's record £37,175. This reflects problems with bookings on a Thursday morning but we are organising a weekly Line Dancing event to fill the vacant slot. We also received £7,954 in grants to directly support operating costs, events and activities; see Note 8a.

With the building now being 12 years old, we were again faced with costs of repairs, refurbishments and improvements totalling £9,055; see Note 8b. This covered an upgrade to the access control system, various repairs to the lighting and a new water boiler in the kitchen. However, the most striking figure in the whole of the 2023 accounts is the cost of electricity for the Community Centre at £19,900. This is triple what it was a few years ago. Electricity is used to drive the air source heat pumps which heat the building. Although we have increased the level of User Contributions, this will not cover the high cost of electricity. We do not expect to see this fall until later in 2024.

Through Kate Lewis and Vicki Midgley, we secured a substantial Community Engagement Grant in 2022 which supported specific events and activities run in the Centre through to 31 March 2023.

8.3 Fabric Fund for Church Repairs & Improvements; See Note 6 in the Annual Accounts

Whilst we expected to spend some money on repairs and realignment of the church gutters plus some masonry repairs and repointing during 2023, in the event, for various operational reasons, no such work took place. This work is now scheduled for early 2024. So the Fabric Fund expenditure in 2023 was zero (2022 = £6,194).

8.4 Men in Sheds

For accounting convenience, Men in Sheds is incorporated under the Community Centre heading. However, the group endeavours (and is succeeding) to be self-sufficient covering its costs through donations and grants.

Overall, the Group contributed £655 to Community Centre income as shown in Note 8a.

8.5 Investments; See Note 15 in the Annual Accounts

The value of the PCC's investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares for the Fabric Fund increased by 9% to £19,091. The investment to support work in

the churchyard and church grounds increased similarly to £2,261. However, the dividend income from the two holdings totalled £583.

8.6 Legacies

Mary Garland, who died on 11 July 2023, left Christ Church Higher Bebington the sum of £50,000 "for the general purposes of the church". We expect to receive the money during Q2 2024. On the Balance Sheet, it is shown as a debtor. In recent years, legacies have enabled us to complete many worthwhile but expensive projects.

8.7 Reserves Policy

Given that our Grade II listed church building is over 160 years old, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance in the Fabric Reserve accounts of at least £10,000 in cash to cover emergency situations coupled with the circa £20,000 holding in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares which are easily realisable if required.

8.8 Forward Guidance

It is anticipated that, given the positive outcome of our Autumn 2023 Thanksgiving Campaign and increases to User Contributions for the Community Centre, the overall operating income in 2024 will match or exceed that of 2023. However, we are faced with exceptional energy costs for the church heating (gas) and electricity in the Community Centre. However, whilst energy costs are expected to abate during 2024 it is clear that the PCC will need to draw on its reserves to maintain its facilities to a high standard and to continue to deliver the wide range of services, activities and events as described elsewhere in this report. Whilst the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations in 2024, it will need to carefully monitor income and expenditure during the year and be ready to take any necessary steps to avoid excessive reliance on existing reserves and legacies.

The Church of England is developing its ideas to deliver Net Zero by 2030 and we are beginning to consider how best we can contribute to this goal in Higher Bebington.

8.9 Acknowledgements and thanks

My thanks are due to Barbara Thomas for monitoring the standing orders (and watching over the interest-free loan portfolio), Michael Blackburn for recording the envelope giving, the many sidespeople who assist with counting the cash on Sunday mornings, all those who count the cash arising from our many social initiatives during the week in the Centre, Jim Wallace for standing in during my holidays, Bev Price for running the 100Club, the Churchwardens for maintaining a general oversight and to Janet Wallace for once again being our Independent Examiner to ensure that we meet all the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Church of England.

And finally to Terry Cunningham who handles the challenging task of purchasing and managing the supplies of electricity and gas through the Church of England Parish Buying Scheme; also for keeping the Treasurer informed so that the direct debits from Total Energies appearing on the bank statements don't come as too much of a shock.

8.10 Changes to Processes

Accounting software

During 2023 we continued to use MyFundAccounting, a charity specific software package from the well-established Wolverhampton-based company, Data Developments. This software runs "on the Cloud" and so is available on any suitable internet enabled computer. The data is professionally backed up and aspects of the system can be made accessible to a range of people. The software is recognised by Chester Diocese who have a deal with Data Developments with the result that we enjoy a special low monthly usage charge.

Banking

We still bank with HSBC. However, our local branch in Town Lane, Higher Bebington, closed a few years ago and in July 2023 the Bromborough branch also closed. The nearest HSBC branches are in Birkenhead and Chester; there are no other HSBC branches on Wirral. We now deposit cash and cheques through local Post Offices. This is not as convenient as using an HSBC branch as the Post Office will only accept coin in full bags and, on occasion, have been reluctant to accept large volumes of coins. Also, using Post Offices in the run-up to Christmas is not ideal.

The reducing acceptability of cheques and the associated bank charges mean that we will be looking further at moving to online banking during 2024. Proposals will be brought forward to the PCC for discussion and approval.

Longer term cash deposits are held through CCLA Investment Management's Church of England Deposit Fund. However, CCLA's processes (interminable forms) – designed they say to prevent money laundering – militate against swift movements of balances away from HSBC but we will make greater efforts in 2024 to take advantage of higher rates of interest now available.

The "cashless society"

As well as being able to accept on-line donations via SUM-UP, we can now accept in person donations by card or smartphone using a SUM-UP card reader. Many people now no longer carry cash and so this is an important development to secure income for events at the Centre, PCC fees etc. Also, during December, we installed a PAYAZ machine at the church entrance to take electronic payments. This is principally of advantage at special services such as baptisms, weddings and funerals when people from outside the usual congregation attend. Overall, income through on-line routes totalled £5,400 during 2023.

9 Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and to consider standing for the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

10 Risk Management

The PCC continues to identify and manage the risks which arise from the day-to-day activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC categorises the risks that face Christ Church Higher Bebington under the following headings:

Financial - Risks relating to the fiscal activities of the PCC and the management of the financial affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington. These risks include those applicable to the best use of the PCC's financial resources, the availability of funds and risk of fraud. All cheques (and all new direct debit mandates) require two signatures. Authorised by the PCC, there are four signatories: Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer. Any move towards online banking will need to be carefully considered to ensure that proper controls are in place.

HMRC has rigorous administrative processes surrounding Gift Aid tax reclaims. To ensure that we only claim the Gift Aid to which we are entitled, our Pledge Forms include the Gift Aid declaration. We claim Gift Aid on a monthly basis using HMRC's online reclaim system. We provide HMRC with monthly information about salaries paid to our part-time staff through their on-line Real Time Information system – known as RTI.

Strategic and Operational - Risks relating to the way in which the PCC undertakes the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC has developed policies for: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Environmental, Equal Opportunities and Lone Workers. These are kept under regular review so that they can be amended in the light of changing needs, emerging best practice guidelines and statutory regulations.

Governance & Regulation - Risks relating to external factors which affect the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington and the regulatory environment in which we operate.

Reputational - Risks relating to the image and perception of Christ Church Higher Bebington in the wider community. The PCC maintains careful oversight of the groups, activities and events that operate under its aegis and authorises appropriate leaders. The PCC is particularly conscious of the inherent reputational risks of websites and social media generally and takes steps to ensure that proper control is exercised.

Appendix I

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC

Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2023

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Christ Church Higher Bebington

General Information

Status

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission reference is: 1132356. The parish is within the Diocese of Chester's Wirral North Deanery; the parish reference is 0806.

Incumbent

The Reverend Michael G Loach

Associate Minister

The Reverend Eunice Blackmore

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Details of the membership of the Parochial Church Council during 2023 are set out in Appendix II of the Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral CH63 8LX

Honorary Treasurer

Charles Van Ingen
1 Blakeley Brow
Raby Mere
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 0PS

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

Bankers

HSBC plc
47 Eastgate Street
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 1XW

Accounts

01466909 PCC General Account
01466917 Community Centre Operating Account
61043358 Planned Giving Account
61043374 100 Club Account
71059998 Community Centre Capital Account
51070916 Fabric Reserve Account

Investment Managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
The CBF Church of England Funds
One Angel Lane
London EC4R 3AB

Deposit Fund Accounts

CB3023015-001 Fabric Reserve
CB3023017-001 Community Centre

[All cheques require two signatures. The authorised signatories as approved by the PCC are: the Vicar, the two Churchwardens and the Treasurer]

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Church Customer Services
Beaufort House
Brunswick Road
Gloucester
GL1 1JZ

Insurance Policy

04/XPG/0256401 ParishPlus (covering the Church and the Community Centre).

Statement of the PCC's Responsibilities for the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require the members of the PCC to prepare financial statement for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC and of the incoming resources and the application of resources in the year ended.

In preparing these financial statements, the members of the PCC are required to:

- a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- b) Make adjustments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The members of the PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

PCC members are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These accounts were prepared by the Hon Treasurer to the Parochial Church Council:



Charles Van Ingen 25 February 2024

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on Wednesday 6 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Reverend Michael G Loach 6 March 2024 (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Higher Bebington

I report on the accounts of the Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2022 on pages iv to xv which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out herein.

Respective Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and the Independent Examiner

The members of the Parochial Church Council (who are the trustees of the Charity) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Parochial Church Council 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
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning 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'; 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 gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- 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.

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

 - 31 March 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022	Additional information
A Incoming Resources						
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds						
	A1a	171236	3463	174699	145387	
	A1b	10179	5301	15480	16842	
	A1c	0	3274	3274	1375	
	A2	12732	34689	47421	48674	
	A3	15738	7954	23692	64505	
		209885	54681	264566	274763	
B Resources Expended						
B1 Costs of generating funds						
	B1a	81	0	81	77	
	B1b	1125	0	1125	453	
	B1c	0	0	0	0	
	B2	138551	110542	249093	243844	
	B3	0	0	0	0	
	B4	12127		12127	2149	Thornleigh weekend
		151884	110542	262426	246914	
		58001	-55861	2140	26269	
C Transfers						
				0	0	
		0	0	0	0	
D Other recognised gains/losses						
		0	0	0	0	
	D2	0	1838	1838	-2575	
	D3	0	0	0	0	
		0	1838	1838	-2575	
		58001	-54023	3978	-2575	
E Reconciliation of Funds						
		150677	920758	1071435		
		208678	866735	1075413		

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
A Fixed assets					
A1 Intangible assets				0	0
A2 Tangible assets	13	0	848491	848491	877621
A3 Heritage assets		0	0	0	0
A4 Investments	15	0	21351	21351	19514
Total fixed assets		0	869842	869842	897135
B Current assets					
B1 Stocks and work-in-progress		0	0	0	0
B2 Debtors	14	53089	3940	57029	26048
B3 Investments			0	0	0
B4 Cash at bank	16	161502	24569	186071	192837
Total current assets		214591	28509	243100	218885
C Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	5913	3266	9179	16235
Net current assets		208678	25243	233921	202650
Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years	18		28350	28350	28350
Total Net Assets		208678	866735	1075413	1071435
Represented by:					
PCC Funds					
Unrestricted	19	208678		208678	150677
Restricted	19		866735	866735	920758
Total PCC Funds		208678	866735	1075413	1071435

Estate of the late Mary Garland (date of death: 11 July 2023)

In her Will, Mary Garland (of 30 Woodburn Boulevard, Bebington, Wirral CH63 8NJ) left a legacy to Christ Church Higher Bebington of £50,000. Her Executors have obtained Grant of Probate and expect to be able start distributing assets during Q2 2024. The legacy appears in these accounts as a Debtor.

At the date of her death, Mary Garland had in place an interest-free loan of £5,000 supporting Christ Church Higher Bebington's Organ Restoration project. In the absence of any instructions from Mary about this loan, the Executors have decided to view it as an asset of the Estate. Therefore, we will need to pay £5,000 to the Executors. This loan appears in these Accounts as a Creditor.

Approval of the Balance Sheet

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on Wednesday 6 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by Reverend Michael G Loach (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council):



Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which 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 financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Endowment Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC does not benefit from any endowment funds and so there is no reference to such funds in these accounts.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds comprise revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds that are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC has no funds which are designated and thus no such information will be found in these accounts.

1.3 Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. User contributions to the running of the Community Centre are recognised as they become due. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are readily quantifiable. Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable; interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.4 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 expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a Faculty for disposal are inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings	50 years
Buildings (wooden)	8 years
Office, kitchen equipment etc	4 years
Garden equipment	2 years

1.6 Investments and short-term deposits

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange, or whose value derives from them, are valued at market value at the year-end.

Short term deposits are held as cash with the CCLA or at the bank.

Notes to the Accounts

2 Incoming Resources

Account Code	Note	2023	2023	2023	2022	Additional Information
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
a) Voluntary Income						
0102	Christ Church Congregation Giving			81029	79978	
	Direct to bank: Standing orders and GAYE					
0111	Envelopes			1824	1824	
0501	Miscellaneous lumpsums			1645	814	
	Total planned giving before Gift Aid claim			84498	82499	
0601	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - General			20322	20322	
	Total planned giving			104820	102799	
0301	Loose cash collections			9219	7089	
	Total voluntary giving			114039	109789	
Christ Church - miscellaneous donations and other voluntary income						
0550	Donations - General			6263	9703	
0103	Donations - General via SUM-UP			934	1919	On-line donations
1237	Donations - Community Centre operations		0	0	780	
0555	Donations - Fabric Fund		155	155	663	
0602	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Fabric Fund		94	94	2905	
	Total miscellaneous donations		249	7448	15570	
Christ Church Community Centre Project						
1237	Donations - Centre			3051	3000	
0603	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Community Centre			163	598	
	Community Centre excluding grants			3214	3598	
0701	Legacies			50000	17430	Estate of late Mary Garland
	Legacy income					
	Total Voluntary Income		3463	174699	145387	
b) Activities for generating funds						
0561	Summer Fair; 100 Club			4339	3799	100 Club: £828
0901	Rose Queen events	11		5112	5809	
1240	Miscellaneous Church Events	11		728	938	
0560	Special charitable efforts (general)	12		5301	6297	
	Total from activities for generating funds			10179	16842	
c) Investment Income						
1001	Dividends			584	580	
1002	Bank interest			2090	795	
	Total investment income			3274	1375	
d) Incoming resources from charitable activities to further the PCC's objectives						
1101	Church Services and administrative activities (PCC fees)			10207	7196	
1112	Use of organ for weddings and funerals			905	1005	
1110	Church heating			1360	1058	
1111	Music licence			260	240	
	Community Centre - User Contributions	8a		34689	37179	
	Total income from charitable activities			12732	47421	
e) Other incoming resources						
0802	Grants Mac Centre Income	11		7954	5803	
0803	Grant: Chester Diocesan Board of Finance			0	985	
0804	Grants: LPOW - Church fabric (VAT)			0	1633	
0805	Grant for Community Engagement: Wirral Borough Council			0	3600	
1150	Contributions to the cost of Vicarage gas & electricity	4		3369	2804	
2180	Insurance claims			0	2180	
0562	Miscellaneous			0	559	
1305	Outings Income			12369	2388	Thornleigh weekend
	Total Other incoming resources			15738	64505	
Total Incoming Resources			209885	54681	264566	274783
Total Gift Aid reclaim			20022	249	20571	21481 HMRC
Total grants from LPOW scheme to offset VAT				0	1633	Listed Places of Worship Scheme

LPOW = Listed Places of Worship

Notes to the Accounts

3 Resources Expended

Account Code	Note	2023 Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total	Additional Information
a) Costs of generating voluntary income 1720		81		81	77	Pledge Envelopes
b) Fundraising costs: cost of goods sold, prizes etc 1730		1125		1125	453	
c) Investment management costs		0		0	0	
d) Charitable activities						
i) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church						
Church - running expenses	5	20643		20643	13769	
Churchyard and church grounds	7	2482	2262	4744	4501	
Community Centre running costs	8b		77163	77163	64974	
Church - repairs, maintenance and improvements	6			0	6194	
Ministry: clergy costs	4	23041		23041	20294	Includes secretarial support
1901 Ministry: Parish Share - Chester Diocese		71757		71757	69668	Paid to Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
2321 Organist		5569		5569	4716	
2201 Outreach/Young people		2065		2065	2213	
	sub-total (i)	125557	79425	204982	186627	
ii) Church management & administration supporting the above						
Office costs and miscellaneous expenses	9	7176	0	7176	5522	
Capital expenditure and depreciation						
295031 Capital expenditure/Depreciation	13	3334	25816	29150	29150	
	sub-total (ii)	10510	25816	36326	34672	
iii) Grants to charitable organisations	10	2484	5301	7785	32545	
	Total Charitable activities	138651	110542	249093	243944	
e) Governance costs (Audit charges)				0	0	
f) Other resources expended						
2650 Outings		12127		12127	2140	Thornleigh weekend
	Total Other Resources Expended	12127	0	12127	2140	
	Total Resources Expended	151884	110542	262426	246514	

Transactions with related parties that require disclosure

During 2023, the wife of a member of the PCC (Mark Gleave) was employed as a part-time Parish Secretary on a job-share basis. The contract of employment has been in place for some years and allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Victoria L Gleave during 2023 was: £3671. Employee benefits: nil.

Also during 2023, the wife of the chairman of the PCC (Revd Michael G Loach) was employed as the Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Sarah L Loach during 2023 was: £7162. Employee benefits: nil.

During 2023, the secretary of the Parochial Church Council (also an elected member of the PCC and thus a trustee) was employed as the part-time Community Centre Administrator job-sharing with the Parish Secretary. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Jane E Dalziel during 2023 was: £5757. Employee benefits: nil.

Declaration as to employees earning above certain figures

The number of employees of the PCC with total emoluments (excluding employer pension costs) above £60,000 per year: Nil (2023 nil)

Notes to the Accounts (4 - 7)

Account Code		2023	2022
4 Clergy Costs			
2101	Clergy working expenses	1581	2225
2050	Secretarial and administrative support*	9571	9590
2370	Visiting clergy	784	259
Wearage expenses:			
2120	Council Tax	3078	2944
2141	Electricity & gas	6094	4511
2150	Telephone and Broadband	1285	1042
2140	Water (United Utilities)	548	513
Total Expenditure		23041	20594
*During the year, to support the clergy, the PCC employed one person in the role of Parish Secretary on a part-time basis			
5 Church Running Expenses			
2301	Insurance	5570	5250
2410	Heating (gas)	7463	3504
2401	Lighting (electricity)	2813	1562
2320/30	Maintenance and Minor Repairs	2108	1893
2340	Upkeep of services	2284	1366
2420	Water	215	84
Total Expenditure		20643	13769
6 Church Repairs and Improvements (Fabric Fund)			
2701	Structural repairs	0	3216
2710	Upgrades to electrical installation	0	2978
Total Expenditure		0	6194
7 Upkeep of Churchyard and Grounds			
2350	Maintenance charges	4320	3990
2351	Materials, servicing, petrol, oil etc	424	511
Total Operating Expenditure		4744	4501
Depreciation (see Note 13)		3334	3324

Notes to the Accounts

8 Community Centre Report (includes Men in Sheds)

Account Code	2023	2022	
8a Community Centre Income			
User contributions			
1233 Adult Groups, Professional Groups	21136	23730	
1234 Men in Sheds	855	1220	
1232 Voluntary Groups (Under 18s)	1614	1869	
1231 Income from Social initiatives (except Lunch Club)	5373	4287	Tuesday activities, Connect Coffee, Toddlers, Welsh Cafe etc
1235 Income from Lunch Club	1582	1312	
1233 One-off bookings	4129	8857	
User Contributions	34689	37173	
Donations and Gift Aid for Centre Operation	3214	780	
Grant income for operations			
0801 Raby Church of England School Trust	0	688	
0802 Wimal Borough Council - Wimal Together Fund	0	1000	
0802 Wimal Borough Council - Miscellaneous	0	2291	
0802 ASDA Foundation	0	1000	
0802 Foodbank	0	100	
0802 Toy Appeal	0	100	
0802 One Wimal CIC	3000	0	
0802 BigGive Trust	4954	0	To finance "Church Chats"
Grant Income for Operations	7954	5087	
Total Community Centre Income	45657	43042	
8b Operating Expenditure			
Usual Operating Expenditure			
2562 Cleaning materials & consumables	1110	779	
2561 Cleaning	11633	10060	
2530 Electricity	18820	8915	
2550 Insurance	2069	1802	
2552 Licences	1331	1198	
2001/2/2010 Management**	13282	12241	
2565 Men in Sheds	0	44	
2565 Milk etc	1018	622	
2560 Servicing of plant & equipment	1458	2928	
2563 Stewarding	267	275	
2570 Waste removal	2214	1832	
2580 Water	1152	1172	
Usual Operating Expenditure	55463	42978	
Exceptional Operating Costs			
2590 Repairs, refurbishments and improvements	9055	3905	Upgrade to Centre access control system, lighting repairs, new water boiler etc
Overall Operating Expenditure	64518	46881	
Projects and services covered by particular grants			
2555 Community Engagement Worker	5747	10444	
2540 Community Engagement Projects	4058	7649	
2545 Working Conversations (Church chats)	2840	0	
Expenditure on grant funded projects	12645	18093	
Total Expenditure: operations and projects	77163	64974	
Depreciation (see Note 13)	25816	25816	
Total Community Centre Outgoings	102979	90790	

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Administrator on a part-time basis
This person also deputised for the Parish Secretary during holidays

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis

During 2022, we received a grant from Wimal Borough Council through the CVF (Community, Voluntary & Faith) Renewal Grant Fund.

Notes to the Accounts

9 Church Management & Administration

Account Code	2023	2022
2310, 2360 Office costs	4151	4923
2361, 2031 Miscellaneous	3025	1499
Total	7176	6422

10 Grants Paid

Account Code	2023 Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
a) Home Mission				
Charles Thompson's Mission	1130	440	1570	0
Church of England Children's Society (CECS)		225	225	330
The Mothers' Union		181	181	300
Friends of Chester Cathedral	25		25	25
St Paul's Church, Tranmere		0	0	12500
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington		0	0	427
1800 sub-total	1155	846	2001	15604
b) Secular Charities				
5th Bebington Brownies	200		200	0
Cystic Fibrosis Trust		10	10	0
Dementia UK		0	0	3680
Forum Housing Association	1129	441	1570	0
INCUBABIES		15	15	0
Macmillan Cancer Support		380	380	347
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington		0	0	350
Stroke Association		0	0	48
Winal Foodbank		120	120	0
1870 sub-total	1329	946	2275	4417
c) Relief & Development Agencies				
Christian Aid		2470	2470	3036
Mary's Meals		0	0	260
British Red Cross		1000	1000	1250
1830 sub-total		3470	3470	4546
d) Overseas Mission				
1801 Bamabas Fund		30	30	0
Total grants paid	2484	5301	7785	24587

11 Grants Information

Grant Information	2023 Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	2022 Restricted
0802 Raby Church of England School Trust		0	686
0802 Winal Council - Winal Together Fund		0	1000
0802 Grant - Winal Borough Council - Misc		0	2201
0802 Winal Council - Winter Small Grant Scheme		0	12968
0802 ASDA Foundation		0	1000
0802 Foodbank		0	100
0802 Toy Appeal		0	100
0802 One Winal CIC		3000	0
0802 BigGive Trust		4954	0
Grants Misc Centre Income		7954	18038

12 Special Efforts Income

	2023 Restricted	2022 Restricted
Bamabas Fund	30	0
Christian Aid	2447	3036
Christingle (CECS)	221	300
Cystic Fibrosis Trust	10	0
INCUBABIES	15	0
Macmillan Cancer Support	350	347
Mary's Meals	0	260
Miscellaneous	0	317
The Mothers' Union	289	300
RISCA Choir Concert	860	0
Stroke Association	0	38
Thomas Robinson Charity	0	427
British Red Cross - Ukraine Appeal	949	1247
Winal Foodbank	120	0
Total Special Efforts	5301	6297

Notes to the Accounts

13 Tangible assets: Capital Spending and Depreciation

		Community Centre					Community Centre Total	Churchyard and grounds			Overall Total
		Community Centre Building	Community Centre Equipment	Men In Sheds	Craft Shed	Storage Shed		Garden Machinery Store	External Steps	Churchyard & grounds Total	
Actual/Cleared Cost	At 1 January 2023	1109962	7931	3210	7230	1420	1129653	10653	8010	18663	1148316
	New capital spending At 31 December 2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	10653	8010	18663	1148316
Depreciation	At 1 January 2023	298804	1857	2009	1808	335	298009	2884	2002	4886	210675
	Change for the year	22188	1857	401	804	355	25418	1352	2002	3354	29190
	At 31 December 2023	320992	3814	2410	2712	690	291425	4236	4004	8240	239865
Net book value	At 31 December 2023	827859	3917	804	4518	730	837828	6417	4006	10423	848451
	At 31 December 2022	850168	5874	1209	5422	1065	853034	7769	6008	13857	877621

The Community Centre was opened in April 2011.

Men in Sheds and the Craft Shed are part of the Community Centre's social engagement activities. Accordingly, for capital accounting purposes, these headings are included under the Community Centre heading on the Balance Sheet.

14 Debtors

An analysis of the debtors at 31 December 2023 is given below:

Account Code		2023		2022	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
4) Voluntary Giving 2601 2701	Gift Aid reclaim - General Account	1813		1813	2120
	Leopold	50000		50000	17430
	sub-total	51813	0	51813	38650
6) PCC Activities 1150 1230 1232 1233 1234 1235	Wicage Electric & Gas	1478	0	1478	874
	Community Centre - Adult Groups		3512	3512	2998
	Community Centre - Under 18s		228	228	583
	Community Centre - "one-offs"		0	0	319
	Community Centre - Men in Sheds		200	200	0
	Community Centre - Lunch Club		0	0	418
sub-total	1478	3940	5418	3682	
6) Grants Received 1150	Chester DBF (Diage Housing Committee)			0	388
					Wicage dehumidifier operation
Total debtors		53089	3940	57029	26147

Notes to the Accounts

15 Investments

Movements in the year:

Market value at 1 January 2023	19513
Add: Additions to investments at cost	0
Less: Disposals at carrying value	0
Add: gains on revaluation	1838

Market value at 31 December 2023	21351
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Details of holdings

	Holding 31 Dec 2022	Price per Share 31 Dec 2023	Value 31 Dec 2023	Value at 31 Dec 2022	Gain on Revaluation
CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Income Shares					
Fabric Fund					
Ref 609146 001S	844.52	22.6053	19091	17449	1642
General Fund					
Ref 609146 002S	100.00	22.6053	2261	2065	196
Total			21351	19514	1838

16 Cash at Bank

	Account Number	31 Dec 2023	31 Dec 2022
Current Accounts - HSBC			
PCC General Account	01466909	36598	44958
Community Centre Operations Account	01466917	22827	43925
Planned Giving Account	61043358	50	60
100 Club Account	61043374	2123	1295
Cash in safe		1100	1100
	<i>sub-total</i>	62698	91338
Capital Accounts			
Fabric Reserve Account - HSBC	51070916	62032	43284
Fabric Reserve CBF	CB 3023015-001	49703	47648
	<i>sub-total: Fabric Fund</i>	111735	90932
Community Centre Capital Account - HSBC	71059998	3882	3052
Community Centre CBF	CB 3023017-001	7756	7515
	<i>sub-total: Community Centre</i>	11638	10567
Total		186071	192837

CBF = Church of England Central Board of Finance

Total cash investments with CBF	57459	55163
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Notes to the Accounts

Note 17 - Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

Account Code	2023	2023	2023	2022	
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
d) Charitable activities					
i) Work of the PCC					
2401 Church Running Expenses			0	251	
2330 Church - Routine maintenance	651		651		
2340 Upkeep of Services	84		84		
2370 Visiting clergy	189		189	45	
2530 Community Centre - electricity			0	1837	
2540 Community Centre - Community Engagement Projects			0	604	
2565 Community Centre - Food & drink		282	282	50	
2590 Community Centre - Repairs			0	78	
2321 Organist fees	428		428	1679	
2002 Salaries		290	290	302	
2010 HMRC		73	73	78	
2101 Working expenses of incumbent	377		377	264	
2201 Outreach & Young People	871		871	67	
2361 Miscellaneous expenditure	34		34	30	
2360 Church Management & Administration	130		130	63	
2545 Working Conversations (Church Chats)		480	480		
sub-total - Work of the PCC	2762	1125	3887	5346	
ii) Grants					
1801 Missionary Societies		30	30	0	
1830 Relief & Development Agencies		1200	1200	1410	
1850 Home Mission		406	406	757	
1870 Secular Charities		505	505	4220	
sub-total - Grants		2141	2141	6387	
sub-total: Charitable activities	2762	3266	6028	11733	
g) Other Creditors *					
	3151	0	3151	4502	Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
sub-total: Other Creditors	3151	0	3151	4502	
Total Creditors	5913	3266	9179	16235	

* For weddings and funerals, the PCC acts as agent for the fees due to the Diocesan Board of Finance, clergy travel to Landican Crematorium, organist, vergers and sexton. Hence this income and expenditure is not shown on the Statement of Financial Activities. However, the outstanding amounts due to be paid need to be shown here to ensure that the Net Current Assets figure shown on the Balance Sheet presents a true picture.

Note 18 - Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years

Loans from members of Christ Church Higher Bebington (Interest-free)

	Community Centre	Organ Project	Total
Opening balance at 1 January 2023	7850	20500	28350
New loans during 2023	0	0	0
Loans repaid during 2023	0	0	0
Closing balance at 31 December 2023	7850	20500	28350

Notes to the Accounts

19 Movements in restricted funds during 2023

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Revaluation of Assets	Transfers	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2023
Fabric Fund	19548	249	0	1542	0	21739
Churchyard and Church Grounds	2066	0	2262	196	0	0
Community Centre	898844	49131	102979		0	844996
Special charitable efforts	0	5301	5301		0	0
Total Restricted Funds	920758	54881	110542	1838	0	866735
Unrestricted Funds	150677	209885	151884	0	0	208678
Total PCC Funds	1071435	264566	262426	1838	0	1075413

Note 20

This page does not form part of the Annual Accounts but demonstrates that day-to-day income during 2023 usefully exceeded the corresponding outgoings.

The figures exclude the Community Centre which is covered in detail in Note 8.

Also excluded is legacy income and capital expenditure.

GENERAL ACCOUNT

	Actual 2023	Actual 2022
Income		
a) Voluntary Giving		
Bank Direct (Standing Orders)	81029	79978
Envelopes	1824	1697
Gift Aid Lump-sums	1645	814
Total Planned Giving before Gift Aid claim	84498	82489
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	20322	20220
Total Planned Giving	104820	102709
Loose Cash	9219	7080
Total Voluntary Giving	114039	109789
Donations	6263	9703
Donations via SUM-UP on-line	934	1519
Total miscellaneous donations	7197	11222
Total Voluntary Income	121236	121011
d) Charitable Activities to further PCC's objectives PCC fees, church heating etc	12732	9499
e) Other incoming resources		
Contributions to cost of Vicarage gas and electricity	3369	2804
Total Other Incoming Resources	3369	2804
Total Operating Income	137337	133314
Expenditure		
a) Costs of generating voluntary income	81	74
b) Fundraising costs	1125	453
d) Charitable activities		
Church Running Expenses	20643	13769 Gas and electricity prices
Churchyard and church grounds upkeep	4744	4501
Church repairs and improvements	0	6194
Clergy Costs	23041	20594
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	71757	69666
Organist	5569	4716
Outreach; Young People	2065	2213
Office Costs & Miscellaneous Expenditure	7176	5522
Total Operating Expenditure	136201	127702
Operating surplus	1136	5612

Forward Guidance

It is anticipated that, given the positive outcome of our Autumn 2023 Thanksgiving Campaign and increases to User Contributions for the Community Centre, the overall operating income in 2024 will match or exceed that of 2023. However, we are faced with exceptional energy costs for the church heating (gas) and electricity in the Community Centre. However, whilst energy costs are expected to abate during 2024 it is clear that the PCC will need to draw on its reserves to maintain its facilities to a high standard and to continue to deliver the wide range of services, activities and events as described elsewhere in this report. Whilst the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations in 2024, it will need to carefully monitor income and expenditure during the year and be ready to take any necessary steps to avoid excessive reliance on existing reserves and legacies.

Appendix II

Administrative information

Christ Church Higher Bebington is situated in Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Parish Office, Christ Church Community Centre,
Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (ref: 1132356).

Connected Charity information

The Vicar and Churchwardens are the trustees of the Thomas Robinson Charity; Charity Commission ref 233412.

Membership of the PCC:

Up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 7th May 2023:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Helen Byrne
Rhona Snelson
Nydia Gibson

Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – re-appointed as PCC Secretary (8th June 2022)
Sandra Evans
Tracy Evans
Mark Gleave
Kate Lewis
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – re-elected as Lay Vice-Chairman (8th June 2022)
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – re-appointed as PCC Treasurer (8th June 2022)

Sub-total: 10

Grand total: 18

From the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 7th May 2023:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach – Curate
(resigned 5 September 2023 on move to St Mary and All Angels, Runcom)
June Bickford – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2023 – 2026)

Helen Byrne
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Fiona Murphy
Diane Shaw

Sub-total: 10 (9 from 5 September 2023)

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – re-appointed as PCC Secretary on 10 May 2023
Sandra Evans
Tracy Evans
Kate Lewis (*resigned on 27 September 2023*)
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – co-opted and re-elected as Lay Vice-Chairman on 10 May 2023
Paul Price – co-opted on 10 May 2023
Charles Van Ingen – co-opted and re-appointed as PCC Treasurer on 10 May 2023

Sub-total: 9 (8 from 27 September 2023)

Grand total: 19

18 from 5 September 2023

17 from 27 September 2023

Deputy Churchwardens

At the meeting of the PCC held on 10 May 2023, the following people were appointed Deputy Churchwardens:

Rose Rogers
Diane Shaw
Gary Shaw

Sidespeople for 2023 – 2024; appointed at the PCC meeting held on 10 May 2023

John Boisson
Terry Cunningham
Rob Evans
Tracy Evans
Amanda Fair
David Gibson
Ny Gibson
Graham Loach
Jill Loach
Barbara Mayers
Fiona Murphy
Beverley Price
Judith Renton
Diane Shaw
Rhona Snelson
Mike Thorne
Janet Wallace
Jim Wallace
Linda White
Helen Young

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace (Re-appointed at the APCM held on 7th May 2023)

On 10th May 2023, the new PCC following the 2023 APCM confirmed the following:

100Club Organiser	Beverley Price
Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer	Diane Shaw
Church Website co-ordinator	Julie Scarsbrook
Eco Church Development	Alan Hollinshead
Electoral Roll Officer	Tracy Evans
Flag Captain	Sarah L Loach
GDPR Co-ordinator	Ian D Millington
Parish Legacy Officer	Ian D Millington
Recorder – Community Centre Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Organ Project Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Envelopes	Michael Blackburn
Recorder – Standing Orders	Barbara Thomas
Relief Count Supervisor	Jim Wallace
Safety & Security Officer	<i>To be arranged</i>
Social Media Co-ordinator (except CCHB website)	Revd Michael Loach
Vestry Team Leader	Diane Shaw

and

Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with HMRC regarding PAYE (and RTI) and on-line Gift Aid reclaims	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Pensions Regulator	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Charity Commission for England & Wales	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with SUMUP and Give A Little (online giving)	PCC Treasurer
Authorised to negotiate energy contracts <i>(through Parish Buying)</i>	Terry Cunningham

The new PCC following the APCM also confirmed the composition of the following bodies all of which report to the PCC:

Buildings & Finance Committee

Ian Murray (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham (Secretary)
Ian Carr
Rob Evans
Revd Michael G Loach
Alan Jackson
Charles Van Ingen

Community Centre Management Team

Charles Van Ingen (Chairman)
Sheila Clarke MBE
Jane Dalziel (Centre Administrator)
Revd Michael Loach
Sarah Loach (Centre Supervisor)
Ian Murray
Diane Shaw

Social Committee

Vicki Midgley (Chairman)
Helen Byrne
Sarah Loach
Colette Millington
Ian Millington
Libby Potter

Men in Sheds Team

Stephen Ion (Chairman)

Terry Cunningham

Alan Jackson

Charity & Fundraising Committee

Roy Mayers (Chairman)

Mark Gleave (Secretary)

Revd Eunice Blackmore

Jane Dalziel

Gary Shaw

Paul Price

The PCC authorised the following pastoral/social initiatives:

Initiative

Bereavement Support Group
Boulders Group
Bumps & Babies
Carers' Group
Christmas Lunch
Church Walking Group
Connect Café
Happy Reading Group
Indoor Bowls
Knit & Natter
Just Sew
Lunch Club
Oasis Mental Health Support Group
Singing Café
Sunday Club
Supper Club
Tea Dance
Thirsty Wednesday
Toddler Group (Mondays)
Welsh Café

Leader/s

Revd Eunice Blackmore & Vera Jackson
Joanne Turner
Victoria Gleave & Becky Jones
Rhona Snelson, Graham Loach
Sarah Loach
Ann Bell
Rhona Snelson & Libby Potter
Penny Golby
Vicki Midgley
Heather Whitehead & Joan Rippon
Sarah Loach & Rhona Snelson
To be arranged
Jill Wright & Steve Flatt
Revd Eunice Blackmore & Lynn Ion
Janet Wallace
Terry Cunningham
Sarah Loach
Terry Cunningham
Sarah Loach & Diane Shaw
Sarah Loach

Accounts

Diocese of Chester

Christ Church Higher Bebington

Parochial Church Council

Annual Report 2022

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral
CH63 8LX

Christ Church Higher Bebington - Annual Report 2022













Christ Church Higher Bebington

1 Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Higher Bebington's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and the Community Centre.

2 Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to know the love of God through worship at our church and engagement with our members in and around the parish. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we properly maintain the fabric of Christ Church, which is a Grade II listed building dating back to 1859, and the Community Centre which opened in April 2011.

The PCC's policy is to deliver Christmas and Easter cards to every home in the Parish giving details of the church services and outreach activities planned for these festivals.

3 Achievements and Performance

3.1 Incumbent's Report (by Revd Mike Loach)

The past year has been a challenging one, as we continued to address the after-effects of the pandemic and stretch our resources across two parishes. Undoubtedly, attendance patterns at churches and other institutions have changed, with seemingly fewer people willing to make a regular commitment of their time and we have not been immune to this at Christ Church. However, given this context, the church has fared remarkably well and this is due in no small part to the dedication and generosity of our members.

Worship

We have continued to offer regular Sunday services at 8.30am and 10am and reintroduced evening services, shared with St Paul's, after a period of suspension following the pandemic. Average attendance has picked up after an understandable drop over the past two years, with our main 10am service now regularly attracting over 100 adults and children. Our midweek communion service has around 15-20 regulars. Though numbers attending our standard services have not quite returned to pre-covid levels, numbers attending key seasonal services have sometimes far exceeded them. We had record attendances for our Remembrance Sunday service and our Nativity service, with around 500 joining for each. These special services, combined with our work in the community and pastoral care have

seen our electoral roll grow by 17 to 271 members. This is a fantastic achievement against a backdrop of national church decline.

A particular joy has been to see more and more people get involved in the worshipping life of our church, whether that be preaching, leading intercessions, reading from the Bible, playing and singing with the band or praying with members of the congregation. Ian and Colette Millington have taken a creative lead in many of our All Age Services and have also covered much of the teaching to our teenagers. It is always good to have different voices and different ways of communicating our faith and I've often encouraged us to recognise that none of us can claim to have a monopoly on "God's truth". We are human, we are limited, and we will always have a better grasp of God's intentions for us when we are truly in communion.

Our pastoral services continue to provide hope, comfort and considerable blessing to the parish. We regularly receive extremely positive feedback on the quality of our services and the care that is received in times of sorrow and of joy. Over the course of the year, we recorded 21 baptisms, 4 weddings and 24 funerals (17 in church and 7 at the crematorium), plus one burial into an existing plot and 12 interments of ashes. Baptisms and weddings were up on the previous year, though not quite reaching pre-covid numbers, but the number of funerals dropped, partly due to the high figures recorded during lockdown.

Our ministry to young people has struggled since lockdown, with noticeably fewer children regularly attending our Sunday Club and attendance at the Boulders group also dropping off. Numbers have been encouraging at special events such as rehearsals for the nativity play and we continue to hope that our many social and seasonal events will draw others in. The "Experience Christmas" sessions offered to local schools brought real encouragement to all those who volunteered to help. Hundreds of children from five schools were blessed by a fantastic event and I'm very grateful to Libby and her team for all the work that they put into this. In addition, the start of our monthly Lego Church has also been very encouraging, with Vicki Roberts doing a great job of reaching out to young families, and we look forward to the creation of a new monthly toddler church under Jackie Jones's leadership.

Online, our worshipping community continues to thrive with our weekly YouTube broadcasts typically exceeding over 100 views and many of our members tuning in for Zoom Morning Prayer, Celtic Evening Prayer and Lectio Divina. This is a vital resource for many and our thanks must go to Ian Carr, Rev Eunice, Helen Byrne and Sam Loach for all they do in managing the technology and presenting the services.

And clearly, there could be no summary of our worshipping life without giving thanks for those who stir our souls with their playing – our wonderful musicians! Our choir continue to lead us in our singing, and I am very grateful to them and especially to June Fogg, our choir mistress, chief recruiter and conductor! It has also been fantastic to have our band back together and leading us in key services, as well as special community events. And intertwined throughout all the above is our amazing organist, band leader and impresario, Wendy Tucker! We are very lucky to have her at Christ Church and she deserves our gratitude.

Pastoral care

It is probably fair to say that our pastoral team has been considerably stretched in 2022. With some of our members also committed at St Paul's and the challenge of monitoring the needs of parishioners being hindered by changes to people's patterns of attendance, it has been difficult to know both where help is required and how to respond. However, our committed group of visitors and our Ministry Team continue to give all that they can to support those in our hospitals, hospices, care homes, as well as those who are housebound and anyone who asks for help.

A highlight of our year was undoubtedly the joyful celebration at Chester Cathedral to mark Lynn Ion's licensing as a Pastoral Worker for our parish. This was the culmination of a lot of hard work over four years and we look forward to seeing how God will use Lynn's many gifts to bless our parishioners. We continue to be blessed by the care given by our Pastoral Worker Emeritus, June Fogg, and by Rev Eunice, who has coordinated our care home visits across two parishes. Rev Eunice also continues to run the Bereavement Journey course, with four courses being offered over the past year. These have been greatly appreciated and have clearly provided a much-needed resource. Alongside this, the Befrienders Group, run by Vera Jackson, has seen some significant growth over the past year and continues to offer a welcoming space for anyone wishing to meet with others who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

Of course, there are many other outlets for pastoral care at Christ Church, not least the manifold groups and organisations who meet in and around our Church and Community Centre. Recent reports have once again highlighted the devastating effects of loneliness in our society and we try to offer as many opportunities as possible to bring our local community together. The Oasis group continue to provide vital support to anyone struggling with their mental health and we are so fortunate to have Steve Flatt, Laura Gregory and Jill Wright willingly leading sessions for anyone in need. Our Carers Group continued to recruit some fantastic speakers and benefitted from essential fellowship under the leadership of Graham Loach & Rhona Snelson. "Men in Sheds", with Terry Cunningham and Alan Jackson has continued to thrive, attracting new members, growing another shed(!) and connecting with the local community in important ways. Knit & Natter and Sewing Group offered still further ways for our community to get together, whilst producing some wonderful items for sale at our Fairs and for the Ministry Team to use in schools. Jill Wright's Walking Group has been a great success, encouraging exercise, an opportunity to connect and share with others, as well as supporting our local cafés! And then Penny Golby's Happy Reading Group, Sarah Loach & Kate Lewis' indoor bowls, Vicki Midgley's lunches and various courses (also organised by Vicki), offered opportunities to be alongside others in different ways. A fantastic addition to our pastoral programme has been the DESLA (Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone) group, set up and organised by Rev Eunice, which has proved to be extremely popular. And the Men's Supper Club, organised by Terry Cunningham, continues to be very well supported. I'm very grateful to all who have given their time and effort to keep these groups going.

Throughout the year, we have also used seasonal celebrations as an opportunity to show our care for others. Easter cards and Christmas cards were again delivered to every home and business in the parish and were well received. On several occasions, we worked alongside charitable organisations and the Council to collect donations for international emergencies, as well as delivering hampers and essential supplies to those who were particularly struggling. And it was a great joy to be able to restart our Christmas Day Lunch, after two years of home deliveries due to Covid restriction. Almost 100 guests and volunteers sat down together to enjoy a wonderful feast, sing carols and spread some Christmas cheer. I was very grateful to all those who were able to volunteer their time and resources to make these initiatives possible, not least, Sarah Loach, who quietly organised so much of this important work.

Mission, Outreach & Discipleship

Our philosophy of mission (or missiology) has been one of demonstrating in clear and obvious ways what we understand as being the Good News in Jesus. We are not committed to chalking off converts, but rather to loving people, whatever their identity or background, recognising that when we do this, we allow God to work in us and the image of Christ to be revealed. Love for God and love for our neighbour must be at the heart of all we do and we seek to make this evident in our Church, our Community Centre and our outreach in the

wider community. People may no longer know much about the Bible, but I've little doubt that they still recognise what is good and wholesome and life giving...I've little doubt that we all can recognise God.

Our witness to this love of God has continued to extend to our local schools, with assemblies regularly being taken by our members in eight schools, with a further two connecting with us for other support. We have close relationships with our local shopkeepers, publicans, politicians, volunteer groups such as Brighter Bebington and Love Bebington, and faith groups such as the Wirral Deen Centre, and have found many opportunities to collaborate. Our witness to the parish on Good Friday, Remembrance Sunday and for carol singing during Advent has always been well received and we're particularly blessed to have such a supportive Royal British Legion Club to work alongside.

We try to plan several "all age" events around our church and grounds to be spread throughout the year and with the aim of keeping people connected. Through various concerts, the Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Fair, Christmas Fair, Bonfire Night, and many charity fundraising events, we grow our fringe and increase the likelihood of parishioners wanting to connect in deeper and more sustained ways. A particular highlight this year was the Jubilee Concert, held on our new outdoor stage and supported by hundreds of people. All these events take a lot of planning and organisation and I'm very grateful to Tracy Evans, Vicki Roberts and all members of the Social Committee for the many hours that they have given.

Another way in which we connect to the parish is through our regular events held at the Community Centre and we have been greatly blessed in this endeavour through the work of our Community Engagement Worker, Vicki Midgley. Vicki has worked tirelessly to set up new initiatives, such as the community lunch & community fridge, and support and enrich existing ones. This has really helped to reignite our sense of mission and was much needed following the pandemic. Thank you to all who so willingly give their time and resources to maintain the many weekly events that are run out of the Centre.

Though our Sunday mission to young people has struggled, our weekday baby and toddler groups have thrived. Sarah Loach, Ruth Greenall, Beckie Jones, Margaret Theobald and Diane Shaw continue to attract a Hall-full of pre-school children and their carers every Monday morning, and Victoria Gleave and Beckie Jones have done an amazing job of building up the baby group to the point where it is not uncommon to have up to 20 babies wriggling in harmony on a huge mat! In addition, our monthly Boulders social get-together, for children of secondary school age, continues to attract good numbers and our thanks must go to Libby Potter for arranging such fun and thoughtful activities.

Our environmental work has also given us a platform to connect with a new group of people. In May and June, we worked alongside Mersey Forests to orchestrate an ambitious planting scheme involving local schools and volunteer groups that resulted in over 500 trees being planted in Higher Bebington Park. And closer to home, our Eco group, led by Pam Hollinshead, continued to work hard to improve the biodiversity of our land and to educate us all in how we might live more sustainable lives. The cherry on the dairy free cake(!) was the successful application for our Eco Church Gold Award, an amazing achievement that made us the first Eco Gold Church in the Diocese!

Events of national and international significance often provide us with an opportunity to be a conduit for the mood of our community. Both the war in Ukraine and the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II presented such moments and we sought to offer our Church as a place of hope and comfort. Special services and prayer books were utilised and, once again, Helen Byrne, Diane Shaw and the Vestry Team did a wonderful job of providing suitable displays.

An important part of our being a church is growing in faith together and we have been able to offer various courses and reading groups during 2022. The Men's Group, generously hosted and skillfully led by Ian Murray attracts a dedicated band of thinkers and drinkers, with more of the latter also attending the monthly "Wet Wednesdays" at the Travellers Rest! Our Mothers' Union group, under the guidance of Liz Bird, regularly brings opportunity for spiritual development as well as essential practical support. And, although our "ladies' nights" perhaps have a slightly different flavour, they too bring people together around a shared set of values. Our House Groups haven't yet restarted in full, but we hope to re-establish this important resource for discipleship in the coming months.

Perhaps most notable of the courses we offered was the "Living in Love & Faith" sessions arranged by Helen Byrne, Lynn Ion, Jill Wright, Barbara Mayers and Tracy Evans over 6 weeks in response to the national debate on matters of identity and same sex unions. This was attended by around 60 of our members across three groups and led to a prayerful and fruitful engagement with issues that are central to our society and the future of the church. Our regular online courses also offered opportunity to discuss key aspects of our Christian lives.

Our Ministry Team members have continued to represent Christ Church in a number of voluntary roles. Once again, Helen Byrne has been actively involved in supporting Reader training within the Diocese, Pam Hollinshead has served a second term as president of the regional Soroptimist branch and Revd Eunice has maintained close links with the Arroe Park Chaplaincy Team. Fr George has been providing vital support to the North West Ambulance service in his role as Chaplain and I have continued as chair of the Unilever Ethics Committee, chaplain at Claire House and chair of the Diocesan Environment Forum.

St Paul's

Our relationship with St Paul's continues to bear fruit through our friendship, though the plans to bring the two parishes together as one are unlikely to proceed, at least not in the original format. We have been able to share resources and expertise, and this has had a positive impact on St Paul's capacity to address its Church Hall project. Significant strides towards completion have been made with over £50,000 being raised in grant funding and further funds secured through the sale of the curate's house on Hesketh Avenue. I am especially grateful to Ian Murray and Charles Van Ingen, who have provided much needed support and advice.

It is hoped that the new Hall will be ready for use in April 2023 and will be a key ingredient in St Paul's efforts to extend its mission and secure a sustainable future.

Infrastructure

Our church building continues to be open to the public every day from at least 10am until 7pm and has become a regular stopping point for many people who would never usually access a place of worship. Many will just take the opportunity to find some time away from the busyness of life, some will leave a prayer or light a candle or seek out a member of the clergy to pray alongside. This is an important ministry and I am very grateful to our wonderful Vestry Team led by Diane Shaw and Helen Byrne, who, throughout the past year, continued to offer creative displays and weekly support for our worshipping life. I am also thankful to our flower team and cleaning team who ensure that our church looks stunning whenever people attend. And a special "thank you" must go to Ian Carr who has given generously of his time and resources, noticing problems and snags that need attending to and then just rectifying them without any fuss. We are so very fortunate to be able to draw from his skill and expertise.

The churchyard continues to provide various changes ranging from the relentless expansion of weeds around the cremated remains plots through to foxes and other animals disturbing

the land. Working alongside the council is not always easy and I continue to be thankful for our band of volunteers who have worked so hard to keep the space accessible and welcoming for those visiting loved ones. We will certainly need more volunteers in the weeks to come, so please do speak with me or Pam Hollinshead if you're able to help in any way.

The church gardens continue to attract many visitors and are a fantastic resource for our children's groups. We're very fortunate to have a dedicated and hard-working gardener in Jim Birkett and Pam Hollinshead's "Garden Gang" have provided excellent support. The addition of the staged area (with full electrics!) has provided the possibility of more summer concerts with the beautiful backdrop of the east window. And we were greatly blessed by the amazing generosity of the late Karen Lewis's former work colleagues, family and friends who built a new paved access to the stage in her memory. Given Karen's support for our social events and her love of a good party, this was a wonderfully appropriate gift.

Using our grounds and buildings to communicate our faith was something that we developed in the first year of lockdown and that continued in 2022, with poppy displays for Remembrance, red, white & blue ribbons on the railings to honour the Queen, chiming of bells in support of Ukraine and a selection of colourful flags helping to express a number of emotions and prayerful responses. The collection bins outside the Centre have again been well used with thousands of blister packs being collected for recycling and many tonnes of food items gathered for the Food Bank. I am extremely grateful for the continued efforts of Ann Preston, Jill Loach, Helen Byrne and Gary Shaw to ensure that the various collections get to the right places.

Publicising our activities is clearly a key element of our outreach – if people don't know what we're offering, then we cannot reach them! All our events and services are posted on our noticeboards, as well as around the parish in shop windows, on community noticeboards, on our website, our livestream and on Facebook. This involves a considerable amount of work from our office as well as from volunteers changing our posts on a weekly basis. Thank you to all who are involved and especially to Pete Roach, George Nelson and Becky Haslam who update our noticeboards in all weathers.

Post Covid financial challenges have led to us becoming increasingly dependent on successful grant applications to help fund our work in the community and the running of our buildings. Kate Lewis, Vicki Midgley and Charles Van Ingen have all been an invaluable source of help in formulating and submitting these bids. And we must also thank Bev & John Price for the time that they give in ensuring that the 100 Club continues to raise vital funds. We are very lucky to have such a talented and experienced team available to us on the Buildings and Finance Committee and the Centre Management Committee and I continue to be particularly grateful to Terry Cunningham and Charles Van Ingen for chairing the groups. I must also register special thanks to members of the PCC, to Jane Dalziel for all her work as Secretary, to our Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen, for his unwavering support and the miracles he so often performs in keeping us afloat(!), and to our fantastic Wardens, Gary Shaw and Ian Murray. Very sadly, Gary will be stepping down from his role at our APCM after 6 years of exceptional service to Christ Church and the wider community. I'm extremely grateful for the countless hours and resources that Gary has so freely given and for his unwavering friendship.

Our Parish Office is open every weekday morning (and often well into the afternoon!) and we are very fortunate to have such a capable and welcoming team working there. I have been very grateful to Jane Dalziel, Sarah Loach, Vicki Midgley, Rev Eunice and our omniscient Parish Secretary, Victoria Gleave, who are always on hand to bail me out when something goes awry!

Finally, I'm sure that we all recognise how greatly blessed we are by our Associate Minister, Revd Eunice, and our Curate, Fr George. Both are outstanding priests who do so much to

serve our parish and I am very thankful for their support and friendship – especially during my sabbatical!

Thank you...

There are so many people who have regularly helped me in my ministry over the past year. Again, I won't attempt to name you all for fear of missing someone out, but I would like to register particular thanks to our Readers & Readers Emeritus, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Jill Wright & Ted Jones; the Church Wardens, Gary Shaw & Ian Murray; Deputy Church Wardens, Rhona Snelson, Alan Jackson, Diane Shaw and Rose Rogers; Pastoral Worker, June Fogg; Lay leaders, Ian Millington, Colette Millington & Lynn Ion; Bereavement support, Vera Jackson; Electoral Roll, Tracy Evans; Fundraiser, Kate Lewis; our office staff, Victoria Gleave, Jane Dalziel & John Potter; Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen; members of the PCC; Organist, Wendy Dickinson; Choir leader, June Fogg; AV technician and general "fixer", Ian Carr; our Curate, George Roach, Associate Minister, Eunice Blackmore, and to Sarah (Centre Supervisor & wife!), Sam (occasional AV technician) and Harry (part-time puppeteer) & Jumble (man's best friend!), for their help to me on a daily basis.

3.2 Churchwardens' Report (by Gary Shaw and Ian Murray)

Sunday services have continued throughout the year free from the dreaded Covid restrictions. For those members of the congregation unable to attend we are so grateful to have Ian Carr who has superbly managed the live streaming, ably supported by Grace and Sam.

We are so blessed to have such a talented organist and 'soloist' in Wendy Tucker who together with our choir, most ably led by June Fogg, bring something special to our services as do our new 'band'.

We continue to be blessed in having a very special team who lead and support our worship. Thanks to Revd Mike, Revd Eunice, Fr George, Ian Millington, Jill Wright, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Lynn Ion and Colette Millington. This team is much appreciated by us all for what they bring to the spiritual life at Christ Church. Any 'team' requires leadership and in Mike, superbly supported by Eunice and George, we have someone who does so much to blend together our much appreciated team.

A special thanks must go to the Loach family, including Jumble, for all they do for us and for the support they give to Mike.

Our Parish Office is always a hive of activity and thanks must go to Victoria Gleave and Jane Dalziel who ensure that it runs so smoothly. I must also thank the 'office volunteers' who help out in the office. I know that it is much appreciated.

As well as our Sunday services throughout the year we also managed to have our usual special traditional services – Easter, Remembrance, Blue Christmas, Nativity, Time to Remember, Carol Service, Christingle and Midnight Mass. Thanks to all who helped deliver these much-loved services making them so memorable.

Grateful thanks to all those in the 'Classy Cleaners' and Flower Teams who work tirelessly behind the scenes throughout the year to make our church such a welcoming and attractive place. This army of unseen helpers do so much to support Ian and I and we very much appreciate what they do.

Thanks also to our Sidespeople who have supported us throughout the year. The number of folk on the Sidespeople list has diminished over the past few years and needs replenishing.

If you are able to help out with being a Sidesperson/ Welcomer please pass your name to Alan Jackson who will add your name to the list.

As Church Wardens and Deputy Wardens we have been very busy on your behalf attempting to ensure that all runs smoothly at Christ Church. and we thank everyone for being so supportive and patient. This has meant so much to us. Thank you all.

3.3 Deanery Synod Report (by Helen Byrne)

There have been 2 quarterly Deanery Synod Meetings since our last Annual Meeting. Meetings are hosted by parishes across the deanery and chaired by the Lay Chair, David Halliday with the Rural Dean, Rev. David Vestergaard. Currently our 3 Deanery Synod Reps are Ny Gibson, Rhona Snelson and Helen Byrne. Total numbers in attendance vary but most parishes are represented regularly during the year. A small budget is managed by the treasurer, Alan McGraa and the account had a closing balance of £277.16 in December 2022. Each meeting has a guest speaker or speakers to present a particular topic for discussion and debate.

June 9th 2022: St John the Baptist Church, Meols. Rev Jonny Masters spoke about 'Growing Faith Adventures'.

The Growing Faith Adventure is a call for a shift in attitude and culture so that it becomes second nature for every member of the church to include and value children, young people and households in every aspect of church life for the lifelong formation of faith in the whole of life.

October 12th 2022: The Centre, St Mary's, Saughall Massie. Rev Dr Joe Kennedy (Diocesan Environment Forum) and Zarah Ross (Faiths 4 Change) spoke about 'Net Zero Carbon 2030. Making it a Reality.' They led a lively discussion about God centred environmentalism.

3.4 Buildings Report (by Terry Cunningham)

The committee continued to have another quite busy year with various items being addressed and more appearing that required attention. These included:

- Several sunken graves were refilled by the council.
- Several items of electrical work were completed in the church and community centre, including replacement of the power cable to the organ blower room.
- The vicarage cellar damp issue remains of concern.
- Outdoor stage completed, including some paved walkways.
- Special thanks to Riverside Housing for all the work that they executed for us, in memory of Karen Lewis.
- Roof repairs & guttering replacements scope of works identified.
- New storage shed installed at the East end of the Community Centre.
- Handrailing installed to the roof of the Community Centre.
- Bell tower netting installed to prevent birds roosting there. Unfortunately, this resulted in some stonework damage.
- Improvements to the centre AV system commenced.

3.5 Pastoral Care (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Pastoral care is all about being there for one another, supporting and encouraging each other; praying for each another. It has been great to renew home visits often with communion.

We aim to review regularly the support we provide for all who we are aware of needing it – but inevitably some people will slip through the net – so please don't hesitate to inform us of any needs you are aware of.

We were able to restart prayer ministry after the Sunday morning 10 am service.

Our thanks in particular go to June Fogg for her long term commitment and Lynn Ion who was licensed as a pastoral worker in October which boosts our team.

Residential Care home visits

During the year we were able to recommence services in the residential homes and now have a regular, enthusiastic team – Sandra Jones, Jackie Jones, Lizzie Roach and Chris Edwards. The visits include

- Elderholme – first Monday in the month – along with Rev Vicky Barrett (Thornton Hough)
- Bebington Care Home typically 3rd Thursday of the month for one to one communion and additional visits for themed events (e.g. Memorial for the Queen, Harvest, Advent, Christmas)
- Salisbury House – themed services - Memorial for the Queen, Harvest, Advent, Christmas all of which were very well attended.

We also sang carols at each one and included Lezayre and Daleside.

Thank you for the toiletries that June Fogg regularly distributes to the homes.

3.6 Communication

Our weekly parish newsletter and the magazine are available both on-line and as hard copy. The printed version of the magazine is made available at local libraries and other locations visited by members of the public. The website continues to provide a vital link for many members of our community who cannot reach church regularly and we try to keep it updated with news and links to resources used in our services. Our Facebook page has grown considerably over the past couple of years and, in connecting with other community groups, can now attract thousands of views for a single post.

The new YouTube channel has added another way for people to join in with our services and now has almost 300 subscribers. This online presence has enabled us to communicate in a different way and with people who would not usually have access to our newsletters or magazines.

3.7 Pastoral and Social Initiatives run by Christ Church

3.7.1 Men in Sheds (by Terry Cunningham)

Following the lifting of the final COVID restrictions, the shed has gone from strength to strength and now has more active members than previously. We are usually getting 10+ people attend on any given day, compared with 6-8 in the early days.

We continue to concentrate on woodworking projects, primarily planters, bird boxes and bird tables – in fact we have several bird tables available and going for a song (well, actually £30 each!). We have continued to be the first port of call for any issues around the church and community centre, where we may be able to effect repairs in a very cost effective manner.

The second shed is now well established and gives us a warmer facility to complete some of our projects. It also functions as our tea/coffee room, which of course is another key part of what we provide – an opportunity to chat with others and solve most of the world's important issues!

3.7.2 Singing Café (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Singing Café has continued to be a thoroughly enjoyed bi-monthly activity – meeting on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. Numbers fluctuate but a good time is had by all. The residential care homes haven't been able to join us as much as they would have liked due to Covid and poor weather for transportation. We're really grateful for the music and enthusiasm from the Heswall team led by Chris Youngman and Alan with Brian, Jenny and Jean. Our thanks too goes to June Fogg and helpers in the kitchen and several cake makers (including Chris & Alan Abbott).

3.7.3 The Sewing Group (by Sarah Loach)

We changed the name of the group as we were pleased to welcome a male member to our sewing group. We meet on the 1st and 4th Tuesday morning on the month at 10.30am. All abilities and ages are welcome! An informal group, we enjoy coming together to sew for charity, Church events and do minor alterations and small projects for people. This year as well as sewing for our Summer Fair and Christmas coffee morning we made special cushions for people recovering from operations for Clatterbridge Hospital and Maggie's Centre. We have had an increase in numbers recently which has been lovely. My thanks to Rhona Snelson for all her help and support in running the sessions.

3.7.4 Connect Café (by Vicki Midgley)

Connect Café has continued to play a valuable part in our church outreach mission. We have a good team of volunteers and a regular supply of cake! We have continued to offer refreshments including toast and have introduced along with the warm hub initiative a light lunch of homemade soup made from ingredients from our community fridge. We have also recruited a few more volunteers to help with this.

We have regular attendance from Involve NorthWest and their community connectors who use the coffee morning as a valuable community asset to meet community members in need. We have also introduced our digital drop in morning with Age UK who have been able to help members of the community with all their technology issues. From this we have also gained a regular permanent volunteer Ant Richardson who has also been invaluable in helping to revamp the current website.

During the year we have been visited by the Highcroft Centre and their clients who have enjoyed the company and refreshments. We have also been able to run a successful Macmillan coffee morning, a fundraiser for MIND in conjunction with the CO-OP. We have been visited by Energy Project Plus who ran a drop in advice morning and also gave a more in depth course on energy saving.

We have a steady stream of new people arriving and it is a great way to showcase and talk to people about all of our upcoming ventures and initiatives.

3.7.5 Knit & Natter Group (by Joan Rippon)

Knit and Natter Group meet twice monthly and membership continues to increase. Ladies have enjoyed being involved in projects such as making poppies, baby clothes and blankets. More recently a large number of knitted sheep were provided for Toddler Church. Baby clothes and blankets have been appreciated by Claire House. Ladies also have their own projects although a number just enjoy the company and chat over a cuppa.

Donations have been made as follows-

Feb 22 - Goods donated to Christian Aid coffee morning raised approx. £100

27 Feb 22 - £100 donated to Rose Queen Fund

7 March 22 - £100 donated to Ukranian Fund via Christchurch

5 June 22 - £50 donated to Brighter Bebington

5 June 22 - £50 donated to help fund bench in Village Road

12 Sept 22- £50 to Rose Queen Fund

Dec 22- Approx. £200 raised at Christmas coffee morning for Rose Queen

3.7.6 Oasis Group (by Jill Wright)

Our group meetings continued to meet, as usual, during 2022. Jill Wright was responsible for the administration of the group, while Steve Flatt, Psychotherapist, led the group discussions, aided by members of his team:- Laura and Kate. Numbers attending varied between 6 to 8 members. Discussions were free and wide ranging.

In keeping with previous years, we did not meet in August and December. The meetings in September and November took place on an informal basis, on the Wednesday morning, during Coffee Connect.

Partly due to the success of these latter meetings, it was decided to widen the scope of our remit by promoting Oasis on social media and producing a topic led programme in future. The plan was agreed for Steve and his team to lead each session with a presentation on a particular topic, followed by open discussion.

Overall, it is felt that the Oasis group is well worthwhile and continues to offer valuable support to those who attend.

3.7.7 Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

With Covid restrictions lifted the "Don't Eat Sunday Lunch Alone" resumed on a roughly monthly basis trying various local restaurants and pub but finding the warmest welcome and tastiest food at Broadway Steak & Wine! Some 12-22 enjoy having their Sunday lunch and the company of others; this includes some from the bereavement journeys and other friends of CCHB.

3.7.8 Church Walking Group (by Jill Wright)

This group experienced a second successful year of local walks; venturing out on the first Friday of each month. Usually both a long and short walk was on offer. Grateful thanks to those group members who volunteered to lead walks while Jill Wright was nursing an ankle injury. The numbers on the walks varied from 8 to 14 members depending on weather issues and availability. The group continued to enjoy fresh air and fellowship and incorporated both church members but also friends and members of the local community. The itinerary often included a welcome refreshment stop at either a local café/pub.

3.7.9 Befrienders (Bereavement Support) (by Vera Jackson)

The Befrienders lunch is held the first Thursday of every month. The main aim of the lunch is to provide a forum where the bereaved are given the opportunity to support each other. A listening service is usually available when required. I am always amazed when very frail people come for the first time and within minutes of sitting down with a cup of tea they are welcomed by the others in the group. When it is time to go home, they are assuring everybody they will be back next month.

3.7.10 Bereavement Journey (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Since our first Bereavement Journey at the end of 2021 we have run a further 4 courses in 2022 including an evening group. It continues to prove to be beneficial providing a safe and empathetic environment for people to share honestly their deepest emotions. A further course was held in the beginning of 2023. The course material from Loss and Hope is now being revamped and updated so I look forward to using this too. (<https://thebereavementjourney.org>). My thanks to Helen Byrne, Fiona Murphy and Mal Hattersley who have helped particularly with the discussion groups.

Remembrance Book

This book which is kept in church is made available for families that wish to have their relatives name added to it.

Time to Remember/Blue Christmas Services

Once again these were very poignant services and were well attended and much appreciated. Blue Christmas was held at the 10am slot and overall this worked well. We all need ways to express our grief and find empathy from others and as a church we're uniquely placed to do so.

3.7.11 Carers' Group (by Rhona Snelson & Graham Loach)

4Cs Carers Group – 'Carers, Coffee, Cake (and sandwiches!) and Chat'

The 4Cs provides opportunities for carers, and those who have previously been carers, to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship together.

2022 was a good year and we are very grateful that we were able to meet and enjoy each other's company after the covid hit years of the recent past.

We have, as always, enjoyed visits from a wide range of speakers and services.

Christina Spencer is one of our favourites and she entertained us with stories and anecdotes in January and November. We look forward to seeing her again later this year.

Katie Paloma from Energy Prospects Plus and Julie Cobb from the Falls Prevention Service provided practical help and advice and Lilli Moore helped us to develop our singing!

Our own members Grace Fagan and Heather Whitehead instigated a 'guess the baby' event and Barbara Roberts, Grace Fagan and Geoff led us in our Christmas singing etc.

We are indebted to Alan Jackson who has an amazing collection of presentations and is always willing to step in and help. We look forward to hearing more from him this year. (We have already greatly enjoyed the sights and sounds of India!)

Our day trip to Llandudno was took place in June and has now become an annual event as has our Summer Garden Party in July.

New members are always welcome, and we look forward to seeing friends old and new at our lunchtime meetings. These are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except for August, at 12.15pm in the Community Centre.

3.7.12 Games Cafe (by Sarah Loach)

We started a Games Cafe on the 2nd and 4th Friday morning of the month, incorporating indoor bowls for the winter season towards the end of the year. We had table top board games and refreshments between 10am and 12 noon and opened up the sliding wall to accommodate the large bowling mat, which proved to be quite popular.

Thank you to Brenda White and Vicki Roberts for their assistance and support with this. Also to our Men in Sheds group for the heavy lifting!

3.7.13 Christmas Day Lunch

This year we were pleased to be able to hold our Community Christmas lunch in the Centre after doing deliveries for two years. People were very pleased to be back together again. We had approximately 90 people there enjoying a delicious Christmas lunch together. We had very generous donations from local people including the butcher and local shops and many volunteers making it all possible. There are too many volunteers to mention by name but thank you all for all that you did to make it possible.

3.7.14 Eco Church

Our environmental work has really bloomed over the past year (pardon the pun!). We've worked with schools, local charities, uniformed groups and environmental organisations. We've marched, written letters, preached, led assemblies and planted over 500 trees in Higher Bebington Park! And we've tried to hold our Church and Community Centre to the highest environmental standards.

Our grounds continue to be a blessing to the local community and we're very grateful to Pam Hollinshead and her team for all their efforts to keep the gardens both attractive and a haven for local wildlife. We're also extremely blessed by Graham Money's willingness to give his time and resources to ensure that our lawns are kept tidy and our paths clear, and by Jim Birkett's hard work, especially to make the land in front of the Church & Community Centre such a welcoming space. We hope that all who visit will have a clear sense of our deep desire to honour God's creation and safeguard its beauty for future generations.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of our year was receiving our Eco Church Gold Award. This was an incredible achievement reflecting several years of hard work and we became the very first church in the Diocese to receive this accolade. Our thanks must go to Pam Hollinshead, the Eco Church team, Rev Mike and all those who advised and supported us along the way, not least, the conservation group, A Rocha.

3.7.15 Boulders (by Libby Potter)

Boulders is our Youth Group for young people 11-18yrs.

Our boulders group meets twice a month. First Sunday for Thinking through Faith and 3rd Friday for a social evening. On the Friday evenings we continue to offer a range of activities to enable Boulders to contribute to the life of the church, their community and just to have fun. We welcomed 5 new Boulders from Sunday Club in September 2022. However, attendance at both the social and Sunday events have been falling since February 2020 with numbers of teenagers leaving Boulders exceeding numbers joining.

Boulders remains a way for young people to grow in faith and make friendships which often last beyond their time at Boulders. Boulders are involved in a variety of activities in the church, community centre and their community. They read in church, sing and play with the worship band, help at events ie: bonfire night, cake sales and afternoon teas. Boulders usually make the Mothering Sunday gifts and Christingle oranges. At Thinking through Faith Boulders are encouraged to think about the big issues of the world and this results in some challenging and interesting discussions. Social events in the past year have included making bird boxes with Men in Sheds, pumpkin carving and a Mexican themed Christmas film night.

The Rose Queen is always a Boulder and some of her retinue often are too. So Boulders often attend and help at Rose Queen events which enables them to spend time together whilst supporting their friends and the event.

Recently, it has been really encouraging to see existing Boulders and young people who have left Boulders coming back to join in with social activities such as the Rose Queen quiz. Our young people have brought with them groups of friends from university and/or school who have joined in with the quiz. It has been great to see young people inviting more young people to come and join in with events.

3.7.16 Sunday Club (by Vicki Midgley & Janet Wallace)

We started the year emerging from the pandemic and with the rebuilding of the Sunday morning provision for our children. For the first part of the year we had a rolling rota of helpers heavily supported by Victoria Gleave, Sarah Loach and Catherine Price with a rotation of helpers. The sessions were based around the main service themes and involved stories, crafts etc.

Average numbers were around 5 at most sessions. Over the summer Janet Wallace stepped forward to take a lead role in the planning and organisation of the sessions, which have been exceptional and thoroughly enjoyable. After the summer break we started with very low numbers (1-3) but after half term when we started looking towards our Christmas Nativity numbers shot up with engagement from up to 15 or more each week. This gave us a good chance to meet new families and show what activities we had to offer. We found the craft element a huge hit and the children loved showing off what they had made and learnt to the whole congregation.

With the new structure and planning helpers have felt more confident and we were able to put on the best nativity yet! It was standing room only for the big performance and we even had a Christmas Cheetah!

Sunday Club is a great opportunity for children aged between 5 and 11 to learn something about the Bible in a fun and engaging way. We watch videos, play games and use a range of crafts to explore some of the exciting stories the Bible contains.

We meet on Sundays at 10am during term time (except for family services) and always love to see new families. As each week is standalone it doesn't matter if you can't come every time, so new members should feel free to come along when they can.

3.7.17 Noisy Church (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Sadly Noisy Church did not recommence but in 2022 it is being replaced by Toddler Praise & Play with a dedicated team led by Jackie Jones.

3.7.18 Experience Easter & Experience Christmas 2022 (by Libby Potter)

Our Experience Easter and Experience Christmas welcomed a total of over 600 local children and over 100 teachers and parents to Christ Church to take part in an interactive telling of the Easter and Christmas Stories. We welcomed children from a total of 6 local schools. Both experiences were held in sessions of 75mins per school year group with years groups of up to 90 children split into smaller groups going around the stations to hear and experience the parts of the story.

Teams of 25+ Christ Church volunteers gave many hours of time and much energy to preparing the stations, props for telling the stories and costumes. Some used personal experiences of trips to the Holy Land to really bring the story alive for the children. Many used their skills as teachers and carers to adapt the materials to suit the individual groups of children.

We ran Experience Christmas for the first time in 2022 inspired and enthused by the successful Experience Easter earlier in the year. We invited Bedford Drive PS for their first time at an "Experience". The children and staff loved their afternoon with us, teachers were delighted with how we shared the Christmas Story with the children and we will be inviting Bedford Drive PS to attend our next events. We introduced a craft activity for the children to create a beautiful display of their art in church for all the community to enjoy. More church groups were invited to be part of the event with Men in Sheds making a wooden Christmas Tree on which to display some of the artwork.

Feedback from all the schools involved has been very positive with many asking to come back to the next event.

3.7.19 Toddler Group (by Sarah Loach)

Our Toddler Group has been growing all the time and a couple of times we have reached capacity. We meet every Monday morning in term time between 9.30am and 11.15am. We offer toddlers space to play with toys, do small crafts, play in the dressing up boxes and eat lots of toast! We have parents, grandparents and carers coming, it is lovely to have lots of people there.

Thank you very much to Diane Shaw and Margaret Theobald for providing such a warm welcome and support to the carers and children.

Thank you to Ruth Greenall, Beckie Jones and Jackie Jones for all their help.

3.7.20 Baby Group (by Victoria Gleave)

The Baby Group had been meeting on a Monday lunch time for many years. However, with numbers dwindling, Rev Mike gave the go ahead for the group to relaunch on a Wednesday morning. In March, Beckie Jones and I began offering the session. It started very slowly, initially with only one or two mums and their babies attending and sometimes, none at all! However, we persevered and word began to spread in the wider community. By the Summer, we had a regular group of about 8-10 and continued to offer the group throughout July and August.

By September, the group had grown and over 20 babies were registered, with a regular attendance of about 15.

The group simply offers friendship and support for the mums and a safe place for the babies to play. We serve hot drinks, occasionally cake and share songs and rhymes at the end of every session. We try to connect with the seasons and have marked Baby Loss Awareness week in October with ribbon pins and candles to create a 'Wave of Light'. In December, the children received a tree decoration from Santa in little fabric bags prepared by the Sewing Group.

It has been a joy to be able to welcome the mums and their babies and to make connections on behalf of Christ Church, Higher Bebington. My thanks go to Beckie Jones for supporting the running of the group and to all the Connect Café teams who so kindly wash up the cups. Also, to any of you who pop into the group and always make the mums feel so welcome.

3.8 Choir (by June Fogg)

Before I start, can I please express our thanks to Wendy Tucker, our wonderful director of music.

The numbers in the choir have thankfully increased over the past year enabling us to lead the singing at Sunday services. Male voices are always limited in any choir and of course our numbers have depleted due to Geoff Newns and John Little leaving. However, we are grateful for Richard Woolham and Mike Thorne who make such a contribution.

The rehearsal time on a weekly basis is from 2 p.m. Thursdays. This day and time was agreed by the majority of choir members but unfortunately it is difficult to find a time to suit everyone. I feel that we could benefit from a little more than one hour each week to prepare six hymns for the Sunday service. The choir is more than capable of singing in harmony but sadly the limited rehearsal time does not always allow for this.

Some members of the choir are also members of other choirs and therefore used to choral work – some can read music – some cannot. Overall I think – and hope – that we bond together quite nicely.

Apart from being privileged to assemble for numerous funeral services this year, the choir also sang at the Craft Fair organised by the Harley Davidson Motorcycle group at the British Legion, and Christmas and Easter events.

There is always a lovely welcome given to anyone who comes along to join us, and if anyone is thinking about joining us, please come and give it a try. Extra voices are always welcome.

Finally, I would like to thank Ian Carr, our technical expert, for kindly placing the monitor in the chancel for the choir to view during the services and for his help when events are being streamed.

3.9 Organ Report (by Wendy Tucker)

The organ has been played at least once a week in the past year at the regular 10am services as well as at many funerals, memorials and occasional weddings etc. and of course the extra services including Evensong and during festival times. The organ is regularly tuned (by David Wells Organ Builders who maintain the Liverpool Cathedral organ) and is in good condition despite a few ciphers occurring and very minor issues throughout the year as

to be expected. Some money on new organ music is due to be spent so if any of the congregation have requests, and you've not already let me know, please do get in touch.

3.10 Music Group

The church band has had another exciting year – full of lots of change and resurgence. We have been meeting regularly on Monday evenings from 5.30-6.30pm and have built up to 7-10 regular attendees. The band have contributed approximately once a month to morning worship in the past year and augmented worship at Christmas and Easter times as well.

We enjoyed performing at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Summer Fair as well as a Musical Evening in November.

3.11 Mothers' Union (by Liz Bird)

2022 began with an afternoon meeting, where we had coffee, cake and a catch-up on what we had done over Christmas.

In February, we were delighted with a musical afternoon, when our church organist, Wendy, talked about her training in law as well as music. She played and sang for us and gave us a real eye-opener into a musician's life.

April's meeting date coincided with Maundy Thursday, so our members were asked to attend the Maundy service in the evening instead.

The meetings held in May, June and July continued as planned but September's meeting was cancelled out of respect following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

October's meeting was devoted to organising the gifts for the shoe-boxes to be sent as gifts to needy children in Eastern Europe.

In November we held our AGM and in December we had our Christmas Meditation, a quiet and thoughtful pause in the run-up to the festivities.

We look forward to celebrating the 70th anniversary of our branch.

3.12 Zoom courses (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Surprisingly we've continued with Zoom activities throughout 2022.

- Start the week – morning prayer Mondays at 9 am – has continued with good numbers and is a great way to start the week!
- Celtic prayer – Tuesdays at 9.15 pm is ably and dedicatedly led by Helen Byrne
- Alternate Thursdays Lectio Divina – when we read, mediate and share Scripture together continues to be a great link with Audrey Smith in residential care. We often look at the next Sunday's gospel reading.

3.13 Illuminations Report (by Sarah Loach and Charles Van Ingen)

We often receive positive comments about our illuminations at Christ Church. They really cheer people up, especially in the winter months. As well as the usual multi coloured lights around the Community Centre and along Kings Road, we installed 900 new blue and white LEDs on the Community Centre roof in 2022, which complement the blue penguins and white polar bear very nicely. Our thanks go to Terry Cunningham for helping us with this venture.

3.14 Christ Church Community Centre (by Sarah Loach, Centre Supervisor)

It has been lovely to see the Community Centre so busy. Commercially we have Bebington Bridge Club, Tai Chi, Sit Fit, WI, Vibe Dance group, Baby Sensory, Community Choir and Weightwatchers on a weekly basis.

At the beginning of the year we had Prenton High School in the Centre for 6 weeks on a daily basis. This was a huge blessing as a lot of the pupils helped with events such as Connect cafe. They hope to make more bookings in the future.

We have also had bookings for our smaller room on a weekly basis for 11+ tuition.

We have held various events including a Christian Aid Coffee morning, Rose Queen events and our Summer and Christmas Fairs.

Connect Cafe has been thriving on a Wednesday and our thanks to Vicki Roberts for linking in various groups including the Community Connectors and Age UK who have been assisting people at the drop in sessions.

We have started to host a Digital Inclusion class which has proved very popular and is run by Wirral 3L's.

Our church run groups are very varied and include:

Toddler group

Singing Cafe

Happy Reading group

Knit and Natter

Sewing group

Games cafe

Oasis

Befrienders

Carers group

Mother's Union

Bereavement Journey

Boulders

Sunday club

Vicki Roberts has also introduced Lego Church which is very popular and takes place once a month on a Wednesday afternoon.

Thank you to everyone who volunteers here in the kitchen, running groups and in the office.

Also to Victoria Gleave and Jane Dalziel for their hard work and dedication in the office.

Special thanks to John Potter for all his hard work and support at the Community Centre.

Also to Gavin and Peter from Clean and Green and Carol Hughes and Barbara Thomas for washing so many tea towels.

Parties

The Community Centre is becoming an increasingly popular venue for parties. We had 18 this year, including a very special 100th Birthday party! We have also had many funeral receptions and Baptism receptions. This is providing a valuable income for the Centre.

4 Rose Queen (by Grace Gleave)

Fundraising Events in 2022 began with a Quiz for all ages in January. This was very well attended and everyone who came enjoyed pudding during the interval!

The Beetle Drive was held in March and was enjoyed by those who were able to come.

In April, the Coulter family kindly hosted an Open Farm event. They allowed visitors to roam the farm, view the animals and even offered tractor rides! Refreshments and ice cream were available too. The weather was glorious and everyone who came seemed to have a wonderful time. When all the tidying up had been done and the last of the visitors had left, the only remaining pregnant ewe gave birth to quads! (ably assisted by Megan!) What an exciting ending to a really great day!

Jane Dalziel also kindly helped organise an event in April. This was a Beauty Evening, delivered by her friend, Brenda Robertson who is a trained Beauty Therapist. Brenda shared tips using Clarins products and all who attended enjoyed her advice, delivered in a light-hearted way.

The final event was an Afternoon Tea in May. The pop-up café was busy all afternoon and the team of waiting on staff certainly earned a rest by the end of their shift. I was once again hugely supported by my retinue and their families but also members of the church family who had kindly baked cakes and treats. A special mention to the Millington Family for preparing all of the delicious sandwiches and Barbara Thomas for baking the scones.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Rose Queen but I did not work alone. My wonderfully supportive retinue of Amy, Erin, James, Martha and Charlotte (and of course their families!) have been with me every step of the way. I have also been so appreciative of the help offered by my friends from school and from Boulders, including some past Rose Queens! It has been great to organise events that the church family and wider community have been able to enjoy.

The total amount raised during the year was £5930, of which £3680 was sent to Dementia UK and £2250 to support the many initiatives that run from the Community Centre here at Christ Church.

I wish Elizabeth Dulhanty well for her year as Rose Queen and hope that she enjoys it as much as I have.

Elizabeth Dulhanty (Rose Queen 2022-2023)

Hi everyone, Elizabeth here! I have been asked to report on the first six months of my reign as Rose Queen and I couldn't speak more highly of it! I was delighted to be crowned on the 2nd of July by my friend and outgoing Rose Queen 2021-2022 Grace Gleave in the church gardens. It was a gorgeous Summer day and I felt really blessed to have been given this opportunity, one which I had hoped to be asked to fulfil for many years. My retinue, Mason, Amy, Eva, Shenara, Patrick and Jenilee all looked very smart and have already become a great team helping me to run our events - I can't wait to continue working with them in 2023 as we raise money for my chosen charities which are Forum Housing and Charles Thompson Mission, two Christian charities that are close to my heart, and Christ Church Community Centre. Both Forum and Charles Thompson have been set up to provide those who are homeless with immediate care as well as longer term support and accommodation. I was fortunate enough that a friend of mine, Sue Barker from Forum Housing came to talk to us a little bit about the work they carry out as part of my crowning ceremony.

The first event we held was a Beetle Drive on the 8th October 2022. It was great to see so many of our congregation coming together for this night of fast paced fun as well as new young people from the community getting involved too. I was a little nervous for my first event as I wanted everything to run smoothly but I couldn't have asked for a more perfect evening. It made me particularly excited for my upcoming Christmas Coffee Morning after seeing the amount of support I received from my retinue families and from the attendees who donated cakes and raffle prizes on the night.

My second event was the Christmas Coffee Morning and Fair which was particularly exciting as I met so many new people from the community and the lovely families of the congregation who were visiting around this time. It was so kind of our Church Knit and Natter and Just Sew groups too. I loved the atmosphere in the hall as there was such an immense sense of community spirit which truly reminded me about why I wanted to be the Rose Queen. There were so many smiles around the room all morning and we were even visited by our dear friend Father Christmas! Thank you so much to Gary Shaw for arranging that special visit, and to Tracy and Rob Evans for setting up a fabulous winter wonderland!

I would also like to include a special thank you to my friend Andrew Potter who held a yard sale in September and donated all the proceeds to my Rose Queen fund.

I am so honoured to have the opportunity to represent Christ Church and lead this fundraising and community outreach team. I would like to thank you all very much for supporting my events so far through your attendance, donations of money and cakes and raffle prizes as well as keeping my retinue and I in your thoughts and prayers around the times of my events. I am therefore excited to announce the further events I have planned.

Some dates for your diary;
Quiz night - 12th January 2023
Fashion show - 10th February 2023
Bingo - 18th March 2023
Themed evening with dancing - 10th June 2023

Thank you again for your ongoing support, and I really hope that we will be able to continue to carry out these fundraising events, increasing community involvement and connection, and supporting three worthy causes.

I look forward to seeing you at our 2023 events!
Elizabeth Dulhanty (Rose Queen 2022-23)

5 Electoral Roll (by Tracy Evans)

At last year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting members were advised that the number on Roll in 2022 was 254 names.

We currently have 271 members on the Electoral roll

Unfortunately, 3 members have passed away

We therefore have 20 new members

With regards the geographic make up of Christ Church, there are 55 members living outside the parish, this figure is 20% of the overall total.

To ensure the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, can I remind all members of the need to notify the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their name or contact details (address, home telephone number, mobile number & email address). This can be done in a number of ways: by completing another application form or detailing the changes in an email which can be sent via the Parish Office (parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk)

6 Safeguarding Report (by Diane Shaw)

The Safeguarding Officer, along with Rev. Mike Loach and Mrs Victoria Gleave held a couple of meetings throughout the previous year to update the Safeguarding file and to complete DBS documentation.

The annual audit has been completed, and verbal reports presented to the PCC at appropriate meetings.

There was one reported Safeguarding incidents during this last year. No further action was deemed necessary other than to monitor the situation.

Several personnel have been advised to attend specific Safeguarding Training and a record of this is being held by the safeguarding officer. It is hoped that face to face training can be arranged over the coming months to ensure that our church is following the basic requirements as more people would prefer to attend this type of training than that provided online.

7 Community Engagement Officer (by Vicki Midgley)

The post was created and funded by Wirral Council's Covid Recovery Fund and was awarded to us to set up projects to help alleviate loneliness and isolation within the local community, which had been caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.

The aim was to introduce new activities and enhance and support existing activities in the centre.

New activities: Lego club
Lunch Club
Wednesday Lunches
Jubilee Festival
Volunteer recruitment
Community Fridge
Digital Inclusion Courses
Digital Drop in
Children's Christmas party
Warm Hub
Cost of Living Project
Scarecrow Festival

Along with these new ventures I have been able to organise a number of outside agencies to come along to our Wednesday Connect Coffee and Lunch Club e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, Energy Project Plus, Age UK, Wirral Health Authority, Koala and Talking Together Wirral. These groups have given talks, presentations and free advice to our centre users.

The lunch club now has in excess of 38 people each week and a fantastic team of regular volunteers. I have been able to offer all volunteers training in food hygiene.

Lego church is accessed by 20 different families across the sessions, The fridge has become known within the community and we had some wonderful home grown donations over harvest.

We have grown our relationship with Tee Hey Lane Co-op who stock our fridge most weekdays and also contribute to items that can be used in our Wednesday lunches and Friday lunch clubs.

The Digital course is run in conjunction with Wirral LifeLong Learning and we have had to expand the course to two separate sessions, one for beginners and one for improvers.

I have an ongoing Cost of Living project within the area.

Hopefully in the coming months we will have started a Basic Ladies DIY course run by Terry Cunningham and Mike Voice (Men In Sheds), a Teenage Parent Support group, craft club (after school), Well Being sessions for both men and women.

Over the past year I have been able to establish a number of relationships within the community and local schools, I attend community and volunteer meetings across Wirral to keep abreast of new initiatives and funding opportunities. I am a member of the new Churches Together Wirral forum community group.

8 Financial Review (by Charles Van Ingen, PCC Treasurer)

8.1 Introduction

The overall financial situation is presented in the Financial Statements which appear as Appendix I to this report. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission which has created the Charities SORP (Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice). This gives charities clear guidelines on what information to keep and what reports to produce to meet their legal obligations.

The Church of England has adopted the SORP as its standard basis for annual reporting by parishes so that a single set of information and reports meets the requirements of both the Charity Commission (accessible by the general public) and the wider Church.

The accounts presented here have been prepared on an Accruals basis.

The negative effect of the coronavirus pandemic largely dissipated during 2022 such that the financial situation now presents an encouraging picture.

As shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (commonly known as the SOFA), the total incoming resources were £274,783 (of which legacies contributed £17,430 - see 5.7 below) against total expenditure of £246,514 including depreciation of £29,150 principally relating to the Community Centre and its contents. The total funds carried forward increased from £1,044,935 to £1,070,629 the bulk of which reflects the capitalisation of the Community Centre.

8.2 Day-to-day operations

Christ Church

A strong Q4 2022 resulted in our Operating Income for the year comfortably exceeding our Operating Expenditure including the cost of some repairs and improvement to the church building and, in particular, the electrical installation; see Note 20.

We are grateful to the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance for its £986 grant towards the cost of heating the church.

Community Centre

With thanks to all concerned, the Centre's operating income was a record £37,175. We also received £5,087 in grants to directly support operating costs, events and activities; see Note 8a.

With the building now being 11 years old, we were faced with costs of repairs, refurbishments and improvements totalling £3,905; see Note 8b. This covered replacement of the sliding door between the Kings Hall and the Troughton Room and electrical repairs. We also spent £7,831 (Note 13) on the installation of safety railings to the Centre roof and the purchase of a dishwasher.

Through Kate Lewis and Vicki Midgley, we have secured a substantial Community Engagement Grant and a Winter Small Grant both managed through Wirral Borough Council. Aspects of these grants can be used to defray the Centre's high electricity and other costs for relevant events and activities being run in the Centre.

8.3 Fabric Fund for Church Repairs & Improvements; See Note 6 in the Annual Accounts

Fabric Fund expenditure totalled £6,194 comprising repairs following storm damage, £3,216, and upgrades to the electrical installation relating to the earlier 5 year electrical inspection. This expenditure was offset by £2,180 from our insurers and £1,633 from the Listed Palaces of Worship Scheme to defray VAT.

8.4 Men in Sheds

For accounting convenience, Men in Sheds is incorporated under the Community Centre heading. However, the group endeavours (and is succeeding) to be self-sufficient covering its costs through donations and grants.

Overall, the Group contributed £1,220 to Community Centre income as shown in Note 8a.

8.5 Investments; See Note 15 in the Annual Accounts

The value of the PCC's investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares for the Fabric Fund decreased by 12% to £17,449. The investment to support work in the churchyard and church grounds decreased similarly to £2,065. However, the dividend income from the two holdings totalled £580.

8.6 Legacies

We received a final £17,430 from the estate of Noel Fletcher who died on 17 January 2019. In recent years, legacies have enabled us to complete many worthwhile but expensive projects.

8.7 Reserves Policy

Given that our Grade II listed church building is over 160 years old, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance in the Fabric Reserve accounts of at least £10,000 in cash to cover emergency situations coupled with the circa £17,500 holding in The CBF

Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares which are easily realisable if required.

8.8 Forward Guidance

It is anticipated that the operating income in 2023 will match or exceed that of 2022. However, we are faced with exceptional energy costs for the church heating (gas) and electricity in the Community Centre. However, given the level of the PCC's Cash at Bank (Note 16) and the level of Net Current Assets (see Balance Sheet), the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations and can thus be reasonably described as a "going concern".

That said, we are aware that repairs need to be made to certain areas of the church stonework and repairs and upgrades to the church gutters and downpipes are required. We are working with our church architect (Graham Holland) to construct cost-effective schemes.

The Church of England is developing its ideas to deliver Net Zero by 2030 and we are beginning to consider how best we can contribute to this goal in Higher Bebington.

8.9 Acknowledgements and thanks

My thanks are due to Barbara Thomas for monitoring the standing orders (and watching over the interest-free loan portfolio), Michael Blackburn for recording the envelope giving, the many sidespeople who assist with counting the cash on Sunday mornings, all those who count the cash arising from our many social initiatives during the week in the Centre, Jim Wallace for standing in during my holidays, Bev Price for running the 100Club, the Churchwardens for maintaining a general oversight and to Janet Wallace for once again being our Independent Examiner to ensure that we meet all the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Church of England.

And finally to Terry Cunningham who handles the challenging task of purchasing and managing the supplies of electricity and gas through the Church of England Parish Buying Scheme; also for keeping the Treasurer informed so that the direct debits from Total Energies appearing on the bank statements don't come as too much of a shock.

8.10 Changes to Processes

For many years, the accounts have been run on the Treasurer's standalone Windows XP computer using Quicken software. During 2022 we switched to using MyFundAccounting, a charity specific software package from the well-established Wolverhampton-based company, Data Developments. This software runs "on the Cloud" and so is available on any suitable internet enabled computer. The data is professionally backed up and aspects of the system can be made accessible to a range of people. The software is recognised by Chester Diocese who have a deal with Data Developments with the result that we enjoy a special low monthly usage charge.

We bank with HSBC. Our local branch in Town Lane, Higher Bebington, closed a few years ago and in July 2023 the Bromborough branch which we currently use will

also close. We understand that we will be able to deposit cash and cheques at the Post Office but the practicalities of this approach are not entirely clear.

The reducing acceptability of cheques and the associated bank charges mean that we will be looking to switch to online banking during 2023. Proposals will be brought forward to the PCC for discussion and approval during the year.

As well as being able to accept on-line donations via SUM-UP, we can now accept in person donations by card or smartphone using a SUM-UP card reader. Many people now no longer carry cash and so this is an important development to secure income.

9 Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and to consider standing for the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

10 Risk Management

The PCC continues to identify and manage the risks which arise from the day-to-day activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC categorises the risks that face Christ Church Higher Bebington under the following headings:

Financial - Risks relating to the fiscal activities of the PCC and the management of the financial affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington. These risks include those applicable to the best use of the PCC's financial resources, the availability of funds and risk of fraud.

All cheques (and all new direct debit mandates) require two signatures. Authorised by the PCC, there are four signatories: Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer. Any move towards online banking will need to be carefully considered to ensure that proper controls are in place.

HMRC has rigorous administrative processes surrounding Gift Aid tax reclaims. To ensure that we only claim the Gift Aid to which we are entitled, our Pledge Forms include the Gift Aid declaration. We claim Gift Aid on a monthly basis using HMRC's online reclaim system.

We provide HMRC with monthly information about salaries paid to our part-time staff through their on-line Real Time Information system – known as RTI.

Strategic and Operational - Risks relating to the way in which the PCC undertakes the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC has developed policies for: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Environmental, Equal Opportunities and Lone Workers. These are kept under regular review so that they can be amended in the light of changing needs, emerging best practice guidelines and statutory regulations.

Governance & Regulation - Risks relating to external factors which affect the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington and the regulatory environment in which we operate.

Reputational - Risks relating to the image and perception of Christ Church Higher Bebington in the wider community.

The PCC maintains careful oversight of the groups, activities and events that operate under its aegis and authorises appropriate leaders. The PCC is particularly conscious of the inherent reputational risks of websites and social media generally and takes steps to ensure that proper control is exercised.

Appendix I

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC

Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2022

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Christ Church Higher Bebington

General Information

Status

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission reference is: 1132356. The parish is within the Diocese of Chester's Wirral North Deanery; the parish reference is 0806.

Incumbent

The Reverend Michael G Loach

Associate Minister

The Reverend Eunice Blackmore

Curate

The Reverend George Roach

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Details of the membership of the Parochial Church Council during 2022 are set out in Appendix II of the Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington

Honorary Treasurer

Charles Van Ingen
1 Blakeley Brow
Raby Mere
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 0PS

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

Bankers

HSBC plc
58 Bromborough Village Road
Bromborough
Wirral
Cheshire
CH62 7ET

Accounts

01466909 PCC General Account
01466917 Community Centre Operating Account
61043358 Planned Giving Account
61043374 100 Club Account
71059998 Community Centre Capital Account
51070916 Fabric Reserve Account

Investment Managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
The CBF Church of England Funds
Senator House
85 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4ET

Deposit Fund Accounts

609146001D Fabric Reserve
609146002D New Community Centre

[All cheques require two signatures. The authorised signatories as approved by the PCC are: the Vicar, the two Churchwardens and the Treasurer]

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Church Customer Services
Beaufort House
Brunswick Road
Gloucester
GL1 1JZ

Insurance Policy

04/XPG/0256401 ParishPlus (covering the Church and the Community Centre).

Statement of the PCC's Responsibilities for the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require the members of the PCC to prepare financial statement for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC and of the incoming resources and the application of resources in the year ended.

In preparing these financial statements, the members of the PCC are required to:

- a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- b) Make adjustments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The members of the PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

PCC members are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These accounts were prepared by the Hon Treasurer to the Parochial Church Council:



Charles Van Ingen 25 February 2023

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on Wednesday 1 March 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Reverend Michael G Loach 1 March 2023 (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Higher Bebington

I report on the accounts of the Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2022 on pages iv to xv which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out herein.

Respective Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and the Independent Examiner

The members of the Parochial Church Council (who are the trustees of the Charity) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Parochial Church Council 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
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning 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'; 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:

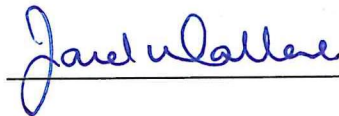
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- 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.

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU



31 March 2023

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021	Additional information
A Incoming Resources						
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds						
A1a Voluntary income	2a	138441	6946	145387	139194	
A1b Activities for generating funds	2b	6747	10095	16842	7163	
A1c Investment income	2c	61	1314	1375	596	
A2 Incoming resources from charitable activities	2d	9499	37175	46674	21128	
A3 Other incoming resources	2e	6637	57868	64505	26697	
Total incoming resources		161385	113398	274783	194778	
B Resources Expended						
B1 Costs of generating funds						
B1a Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	77	0	77	77	
B1b Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs	3b	453	0	453	0	
B1c Investment management costs	3c	0	0	0	0	
B2 Charitable activities	3d	124340	119504	243844	198601	
B3 Governance costs	3e	0	0	0	0	
B4 Other resources expended	3f	2140	0	2140	0	
Total resources expended		127010	119504	246514	198678	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		34375	-6106	28269	-3900	
C Transfers						
Gross transfers between funds	19			0	0	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before other recognised gains and losses		-1905	1905	0	-3900	
D Other recognised gains/losses						
D1 Gains on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use		0		0	0	
D2 Gains/losses on investment assets	15	0	-2575	-2575	2738	
D3 Actuarial gains/losses on defined benefit pension schemes		0	0	0	0	
Total of recognised gains/losses		0	-2575	-2575	2738	
Net movement in funds		32470	-6776	-2575	-1162	
E Reconciliation of Funds						
Total funds brought forward	19	117401	927534	1044935		
Total funds carried forward	19	149871	920758	1070629		

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
A Fixed assets					
A1 Intangible assets				0	0
A2 Tangible assets	13	0	877621	877621	889510
A3 Heritage assets		0	0	0	0
A4 Investments	15	0	19514	19514	22089
Total fixed assets		0	897135	897135	911599
B Current assets					
B1 Stocks and work-in-progress		0	0	0	0
B2 Debtors	14	21924	3318	25242	4662
B3 Investments			0	0	0
B4 Cash at bank	16	137795	55042	192837	168112
Total current assets		159719	58360	218079	172774
C Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	9848	6387	16235	9088
Net current assets		149871	51973	201844	163686
Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years	18		28350	28350	30350
Total Net Assets		149871	920758	1070629	1044935
Represented by:					
PCC Funds					
Unrestricted	19	149871		149871	117401
Restricted	19		920758	920758	927534
Total PCC Funds		149871	920758	1070629	1044935

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on Wednesday 1 March 2023 and signed on its behalf by Reverend Michael G Loach (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council):

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which 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 financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Endowment Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC does not benefit from any endowment funds and so there is no reference to such funds in these accounts.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds comprise revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds that are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC has no funds which are designated and thus no such information will be found in these accounts.

1.3 Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. User contributions to the running of the Community Centre are recognised as they become due. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources; their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are readily quantifiable. Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable; interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.4 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 expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a Faculty for disposal are inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings	50 years
Buildings (wooden)	8 years
Office, kitchen equipment etc	4 years
Garden equipment	2 years

1.6 Investments and short-term deposits

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange, or whose value derives from them, are valued at market value at the year-end.

Short term deposits are held as cash with the CCLA or at the bank.

Notes to the Accounts

2 Incoming Resources

Account Code	Note	2022 Unrestricted	2022 Restricted	2022 Total	2021 Total	Additional Information
a) Voluntary Income						
<i>Christ Church Congregation Giving</i>						
0102		79978		79978	72435	
						Direct to bank: Standing orders and GAYE
0111		1697		1697	1285	Envelopes
0501			814	814	3156	Miscellaneous lumpsums
				82489	76876	Total planned giving before Gift Aid claim
0601		20220		20220	19099	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - General
				102709	95975	Total planned giving
0301		7080		7080	4634	Loose cash collections
				109789	100609	Total voluntary giving
<i>Christ Church - miscellaneous donations and other voluntary income</i>						
0550		9703		9703	7587	Donations - General
0103		1519		1519	2942	Donations - General via SUM-UP
1237			780	780	0	Donations - Community Centre operations
				0	505	Donations - Churchyard
0555			2905	2905	6360	Donations - Fabric Fund
0602			663	663	1398	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Fabric Fund
		11222	4348	15570	18792	Total miscellaneous donations
<i>Christ Church Community Centre Project</i>						
1238			2000	2000	2675	Donations - General
0603			598	598	468	Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Community Centre
			2598	2598	3143	Community Centre excluding grants
<i>Organ Project income</i>						
			0	0	310	Donations
			0	0	310	Organ Project
<i>Legacies</i>						
0701		17430		17430	16340	Legacy income
						Noel Fletcher's estate; final payment
		138441	6946	145387	139194	Total Voluntary Income
b) Activities for generating funds						
0561	11		3798	3798	1238	Fund-raising activities and events (new Community Centre)
0901	11	5809	0	5809	0	Rose Queen events
1240		938	0	938	0	Miscellaneous Church Events
0560	12		6297	6297	5925	Special charitable efforts (general)
		6747	10095	16842	7163	Total from activities for generating funds
c) Investment income						
			1212	1212	533	Bank interest and dividends - Fabric Fund
		61	0	61	44	Bank interest and dividends - General Fund
			102	102	19	Bank interest and dividends - Community Centre
		61	1314	1375	596	Total Investment income
d) Incoming resources from charitable activities to further the PCC's objects						
Services provided by the PCC for which fees are payable:						
1101		7196		7196	6101	- Church Services and administrative activities (PCC fees)
1112		1005		1005	766	- Use of organ for weddings and funerals
1058		1058		1058	756	- Church heating
240		240		240	204	- Music licence
	8a		36075	36075	13301	Community Centre - User Contributions
			1100	1100		Men in Sheds
		9499	37175	46674	21128	Total income from charitable activities
e) Other incoming resources						
0802	11		18055	18055	8059	Grants Misc Centre Income
0803		986	0	986	0	Grant: Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
0804			1633	1633	650	Grants : LPOW - Church fabric (VAT)
0805			36000	36000	0	Grant for Community Engagement: Wirral Borough Council
			0	0	17205	Other Grants
1150	4	2804	0	2804	0	Contributions to the cost of Vicarage gas & electricity
2180			2180	2180	0	Insurance claims
0562		559	0	559	0	Miscellaneous
1305		2288	0	2288	783	Outings income
		6637	57868	64505	26697	Total Other incoming resources
Total Incoming Resources		161385	113398	274783	194778	
Total Gift Aid reclaim				21481	20965	HMRC
Total grants from LPOW scheme to offset VAT				1633	650	Listed Places of Worship Scheme

LPOW = Listed Places of Worship

Notes to the Accounts

3 Resources Expended

Account Code	Note	2022 Unrestricted	2022 Restricted	2022 Total	2021 Total	Additional Information
a) Costs of generating voluntary income			77	77	77	Pledge Envelopes
1720						
b) Fundraising costs: cost of goods sold, prizes etc		453		453	0	
1730						
c) Investment management costs			0	0	0	
d) Charitable activities						
<i>i) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church</i>						
Church - running expenses	5	13769		13769	11765	
Churchyard and church grounds	7	4501	0	4501	11494	
Community Centre running costs	8b		64974	64974	41484	
Church - repairs, maintenance and improvements	6		6194	6194	8549	
Ministry: clergy costs	4	20594		20594	14602	Includes secretarial support
1901 Ministry: Parish Share - Chester Diocese		69666		69666	68132	Paid to Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
2321 Organist		4716		4716	3338	
2201 Outreach/Young people		2213		2213	2950	
	<i>sub-total (i)</i>	115459	71168	186627	162314	
<i>ii) Church management & administration supporting the above</i>						
Office costs and miscellaneous expenses	9	5522	0	5522	5001	
Capital expenditure and depreciation						
2930/31 Capital expenditure/Depreciation	13	3334	25816	29150	24836	
	<i>sub-total (ii)</i>	8856	25816	34672	29837	
<i>iii) Grants to charitable organisations</i>	10	25	22520	22545	6450	
	Total Charitable activities	124340	119504	243844	198601	
e) Governance costs (Audit charges)				0	0	
f) Other resources expended						
2650 Outings		2140	0	2140	0	
	Total Other Resources Expended	2140	0	2140	0	
	Total Resources Expended	127010	119504	246514	198678	

Transactions with related parties that require disclosure

During 2022, the wife of a member of the PCC (Mark Gleave) was employed as a part-time Parish Secretary on a job-share basis. The contract of employment has been in place for some years and allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Victoria L Gleave during 2022 was: £9090. Employee benefits: nil.

Also during 2022, the wife of the chairman of the PCC (Revd Michael G Loach) was employed as the Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Sarah L Loach during 2022 was: £6729. Employee benefits: nil.

During 2022, the secretary of the Parochial Church Council (also an elected member of the PCC and thus a trustee) was employed as the part-time Community Centre Administrator job-sharing with the Parish Secretary. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Jane E Dalziel during 2022 was: £5512. Employee benefits: nil.

Declaration as to employees earning above certain figures

The number of employees of the PCC with total emoluments (excluding employer pension costs) above £60,000 per year: Nil (2021 Nil)

Notes to the Accounts (4 - 7)

Account Code		2022	2021	
4 Clergy Costs				
2101	Clergy working expenses	2225	1472	
2050	Secretarial and administrative support*	9090	8608	
	<i>Vicarage expenses:</i>			
2120	Council Tax	2944	2840	
2141	Electricity & gas	4511	469	
2150	Telephone and Broadband	1042	487	£500 credit note from BT in 2020 reduced the 2021 charges
2140	Water (United Utilities)	513	509	
2370	Visiting clergy	269	216	
	Total	20594	14601	
*During the year, to support the clergy, the PCC employed one person in the role of Parish Secretary on a part-time basis				
5 Church Running Expenses				
2301	Insurance	5250	4642	
2410	Heating (gas)	3604	2631	
2401	Lighting (electricity)	1562	944	
2320/30	Maintenance and Minor Repairs	1893	2162	
2340	Upkeep of services	1366	1386	
2420	Water	94	0	Working through a credit from United Utilities
	Total	13769	11765	
6 Church Repairs and Improvements (Fabric Fund)				
2701	Structural repairs	3216	306	Storm damage; cost largely covered by insurance claim
	Furnishings	0	3278	
2710	Upgrades to electrical installation	2978	2347	Work following on from the 5 year electrical inspection
	Audio-Visual project	0	2617	
	Total Expenditure	6194	8548	
7 Upkeep of Churchyard and Grounds				
2350	Maintenance charges	3990	4261	
2351	Materials, servicing, petrol, oil etc	511	1488	
			5745	New stage facility
	Total Expenditure	4501	11494	

The £4511 is the total amount expended by the PCC for electricity and gas consumed in the Vicarage. This cost is defrayed by £2104 paid by Revd Michael Loach for his family's personal use and £700 contributed by the Chester Diocesan Housing Committee to defray the cost of running dehumidifiers in the basement. These contributions are shown in Note 2e

£500 credit note from BT in 2020 reduced the 2021 charges

Notes to the Accounts

8 Community Centre Report (includes Men in Sheds)

Account Code		2022	2021	
8a Operating Income - User Contributions				
1230	Adult Groups; Professional Groups	22730	9335	
1234	Men in Sheds	1220	105	
1232	Voluntary Groups (Under 18s)	1669	796	
1232	Income from Social initiatives (except Lunch Club)	4287	1677	Tuesday activities, Connect Coffee, Film Club, Tea Dance etc
1235	Income from Lunch Club	1312	0	
1233	One-off bookings	5957	1388	
		37175	13301	
Grant Income for operations				
0802	Raby Church of England School Trust	686	0	
0802	Wirral Borough Council - Wirral Together Fund	1000	2660	
0802	Wirral Borough Council - Miscellaneous	2201	5000	
0802	ASDA Foundation	1000	0	
0802	Foodbank	100	0	
0802	Toy Appeal	100	0	
	Total Grant Income for Operations	5087	7660	
	Total Operating Income	42262	20961	
8b Operating Expenditure				
2562	Cleaning materials & consumables	779	640	
2561	Cleaning	10080	9080	
2530	Electricity	9915	5529	
2550	Insurance	1802	1626	
2552	Licences	1186	228	
2001/2/2010	Management**	12241	10851	
2055	Community Engagement Worker	10444	0	
2540	Community Engagement Projects	7649	0	
2595	Men In Sheds	44	2099	
2565	Milk etc	622	0	
2590	Repairs, refurbishments and improvements	3905	6470	Sliding door, electrical repairs
2560	Servicing of plant & equipment	2928	2671	
2563	Stewarding	275	50	
2570	Waste removal	1932	1940	
2580	Water	1172	300	Credit from 2020 has worked through 2021
	Total Operating Expenditure	64974	41484	

In practice, in the light of COVID, the Centre Supervisor re-allocated cleaning resource from the Community Centre to the church building to help ensure a safe environment for members of the congregation and visitors.

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Administrator on a part-time basis
This person also deputised for the Parish Secretary during holidays
**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis

CVF Renewal Grant Fund

Community Engagement Worker	10444
Cost of one-off Community events	5598
Equipment for Community IT training/support	742
Supplies for ongoing Community activities	1606
Use of rooms for Community activities	6540
Total expenditure to 31 December 2022	24930

We received a grant of £36,000 from Wirral Borough Council through the CVF (Community, Voluntary & Faith) Renewal Grant Fund. The grant is to be fully expended by 31 March 2023.

Notes to the Accounts

9 Church Management & Administration

Account Code	2022	2021
2310, 2360 Office costs	4023	3033
2361, 2531 Miscellaneous	1499	1968
Total	5522	5001

10 Grants Paid

Account Code	2022 Unrestricted	2022 Restricted	2022 Total	2021 Total
a) Home Mission				
Church of England Children's Society (CECS)		330	330	129
The Mothers' Union		300		0
Friends of Chester Cathedral	25	25	25	25
St Paul's Church, Tranmere		12500	12500	0
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington		427	427	211
1850 sub-total	25	13557	13282	365
b) Secular Charities				
Alder Hey Children's Charity			0	2300
Claire House Children's Hospice			0	133
Dementia UK		3680	3680	0
Macmillan Cancer Support		347	347	395
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington		350	350	15
Stroke Association		40	40	0
1870 sub-total		4417	4417	2843
c) Relief & Development Agencies				
Christian Aid		3036	3036	2042
Mary's Meals		260	260	0
Medecins Sans Frontieres		0	0	200
British Red Cross - Yemen Appeal		0	0	1000
British Red Cross - Ukraine Appeal		1250	1250	0
1830 sub-total		4546	4546	3242
Total grants paid	25	22520	22245	6450

During 2020, £5,000 was anonymously given to support the St Paul's Project. On this £1,250 Gift Aid was claimed. A further £5000 plus £1250 Gift Aid was given anonymously during 2021 bringing the total to £12,500. At the time that these donations were made, there was a general expectation that a Pastoral Scheme joining Christ Church Higher Bebington with St Paul's Tranmere would be implemented during 2021. For various reasons, this is not now being taken forward and the donor asked that the funds be transferred to St Paul's Tranmere PCC to support their building project.

11 Grants Information

Grant Information	2022 Unrestricted	2022 Restricted	2021 Restricted
0802 Raby Church of England School Trust		686	0
0802 Wirral Council - Wirral Together Fund		1000	2660
0802 Grant - Wirral Borough Council - Misc		2201	5000
0802 Wirral Council - Winter Small Grant Scheme		12968	0
0802 ASDA Foundation		1000	399
0802 Foodbank		100	0
0802 Toy Appeal		100	0
Grants Misc Centre Income		18055	8059

12 Special Efforts Income

	2022 Restricted	2021 Restricted
Christian Aid	3036	2041
Christingle (CECS)	330	129
Claire House Children's Hospice, Clatterbridge	0	133
Macmillan Cancer Support	347	395
Mary's Meals	260	0
Miscellaneous	317	0
The Mothers' Union	300	0
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington	0	15
Stroke Association	39	0
Thomas Robinson Charity	427	212
British Red Cross - Ukraine Appeal	1241	895
Total Special Efforts	6297	3820

Notes to the Accounts

13 Tangible assets: Capital Spending and Depreciation

		Community Centre						Churchyard and grounds				Overall Total
		Community Centre Building	Community Centre Equipment	Men in Sheds	Craft Shed	Vicarage Basement	Storage Shed	Community Centre Total	Garden Machinery Store	External Stage	Churchyard & grounds Total	
Actual/Deemed Cost	At 1 January 2022	1109962	0	3210	7230	1798	0	1122200	10653	0	10653	1132653
	New capital spending	0	7831	0	0	0	1420	9251	0	8010	8010	17261
	At 31 December 2022	1109962	7831	3210	7230	1798	1420	1130031	10653	8010	18663	1148694
Depreciation	At 1 January 2022	237705	0	1604	904	1798	0	242011	1332	0	1332	243343
	Charge for the year	22199	1957	401	904	0	355	25816	1332	2002	3334	29150
	At 31 December 2022	259904	1957	2005	1808	1798	355	267627	2664	2002	4666	272493
Net book value	At 31 December 2022	850058	5874	1205	5422	0	1065	863624	7989	6008	13997	877621
	At 31 December 2021	872257	0	1606	6326	0	0	880189	9321	0	9321	889510

The Community Centre was opened in April 2011.

Men in Sheds and the Craft Shed are part of the Community Centre's social engagement activities. The Vicarage basement is used to store items for the work and mission of Christ Church in Higher Bebington. Accordingly, for capital accounting purposes, these three headings are included under the Community Centre heading on the Balance Sheet.

14 Debtors

An analysis of the debtors at 31 December 2022 is given below:

Account Code		2022		2021	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
a) Voluntary Giving					
0601	Gift Aid reclaim - General Account	3120		3120	1752 Nov & Dec 2022 (received in February 2023)
0701	Legacies	17430		17430	0 Estate of Noel Fletcher - final payment
	sub-total	20550		20550	1752
d) PCC Activities					
1150	Vicarage Electricity & Gas	674	0	674	0
1230	Community Centre - Adult Groups		2059	2059	2164
1232	Community Centre - Under 18s		595	595	746
1233	Community Centre - "one-offs"		216	216	0
1235	Community Centre - Lunch Club		448	448	0
	sub-total	674	3318	3992	2910
n) Grants Received					
1150	Chester DBF (Clergy Housing Committee)	700		700	0 Vicarage dehumidifier operation
	Total debtors	21924	3318	25242	4662

Notes to the Accounts

15 Investments

Movements in the year:

Market value at 1 January 2022	22089
Add: Additions to investments at cost	0
Less: Disposals at carrying value	0
Add: gains on revaluation	-2575
Market value at 31 December 2022	19514

Details of holdings

	Holding 31 Dec 2022	Price per Share 31 Dec 2022	Value 31 Dec 2022	Value at 31 Dec 2021	Gain on Revaluation
CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Income Shares					
Fabric Fund					
Ref 609146 001S	844.52	2066.14	17449	19751	-2302
General Fund					
Ref 609146 002S	100.00	2066.14	2065	2338	-273
Total			19514	22089	-2575

16 Cash at Bank

	Account Number	31 Dec 2022	31 Dec 2021
Current Accounts - HSBC			
PCC General Account	01466909	44958	27220
Community Centre Operations Account	01466917	43925	7963
Planned Giving Account	61043358	60	1055
100 Club Account	61043374	1295	556
Cash in safe		1100	0 Men in Sheds
<i>sub-total</i>		91338	36794
Capital Accounts			
Fabric Reserve Account - HSBC	51070916	43284	72298
Fabric Reserve CBF	60914 001D	47648	46513
<i>sub-total: Fabric Fund</i>		90932	118811
Community Centre Capital Account - HSBC	71059998	3052	5089
Community Centre CBF	60914 002D	7515	7418
<i>sub-total: Community Centre</i>		10567	12507
Total		192837	168112

CBF = Church of England Central Board of Finance

Total cash investments with CBF	55163	53931
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Notes to the Accounts

Note 17 - Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

Account Code	2022		2022	2021
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
d) Charitable activities				
i) Work of the PCC				
2401	Church Running Expenses	251	251	38
	Churchyard maintenance		0	65
	Vicarage gas and electricity		0	-706
2370	Visiting clergy	45	45	43
2530	Community Centre - electricity	1837	1837	4995
2540	Community Centre - Community Engagement Projects	604	604	
2565	Community Centre - Food & drink	50	50	
2590	Community Centre - Repairs	78	78	
2321	Organist fees	1679	1679	805
	Outreach, Young People		0	734
2002	Salaries	302	302	
2010	HMRC	76	76	
2101	Working expenses of incumbent	264	264	
2201	Outreach & Young People	67	67	
2361	Miscellaneous expenditure	30	30	
2360	Church Management & Administration	63	63	328
	sub-total - Work of the PCC	5346	0	5346
				6302
iii) Grants				
1830	Relief & Development Agencies		1410	41
1850	Home Mission		757	341
1870	Secular Charities		4220	773
	sub-total - Grants		6387	1155
	sub-total: Charitable activities	5346	6387	11733
				7457
g) Other Creditors *				
		4502	0	4502
	sub-total: Other Creditors	4502	0	4502
				1466
	Total Creditors	9848	6387	16235
				8923

* For weddings and funerals, the PCC acts as agent for the fees due to the Diocesan Board of Finance, clergy travel to Landican Crematorium, organist, vergers and sexton. Hence this income and expenditure is not shown on the Statement of Financial Activities. However, the outstanding amounts due to be paid need to be shown here to ensure that the Net Current Assets figure shown on the Balance Sheet presents a true picture.

Note 18 - Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years

Loans from members of Christ Church Higher Bebington (Interest-free)

	Community Centre	Organ Project	Total
Opening balance at 1 January 2022	9850	20500	30350
New loans during 2022	0	0	0
Loans repaid during 2022	2000	0	2000
Closing balance at 31 December 2022	7850	20500	28350

Notes to the Accounts

19 Movements in restricted funds during 2022

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Revaluation of Assets	Transfers	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2022
Fabric Fund	19751	8593	6194	-2302	0	19848
Churchyard and Church Grounds	2339	0	0	-273	0	2066
Community Centre	890101	98508	90790		1025	898844
Fund for St Paul's Project	12500	0	12500		0	0
Special charitable efforts	2843	6297	10020		880	0
Total Restricted Funds	927534	113398	119504	-2575	1905	920758
Unrestricted Funds	117401	161385	127010	0	-1905	149871
Total PCC Funds	1044935	274783	246514	-2575	0	1070629

NOTES

Fund for St Paul's Project

During 2020, £5,000 was anonymously given to support the St Paul's Project. On this £1,250 Gift Aid was claimed. A further £5000 plus £1250 Gift Aid was given anonymously during 2021 bringing the total to £12,500.

At the time that these donations were made, there was a general expectation that a Pastoral Scheme joining Christ Church Higher Bebington with St Paul's Tranmere would be implemented during 2021. For various reasons, this is not now being taken forward and the donor asked that the funds be transferred to St Paul's Tranmere PCC to support their building project.

Note 20

This page does not form part of the Annual Accounts but demonstrates that day-to-day income during 2022 usefully exceeded the corresponding outgoings.

The figures exclude the Community Centre which is covered in detail in Note 8.

Also excluded is legacy income and capital expenditure.

	Actual 2022
Income	
a) Voluntary Giving	
Bank Direct (Standing Orders)	79978
Envelopes	1697
Gift Aid Lump-sums	814
Total Planned Giving before Gift Aid claim	82489
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	20220
Total Planned Giving	102709
Loose Cash	7080
Total Voluntary Giving	109789
Donations	9703
Donations via SUM-UP	1519
Total miscellaneous donations	11222
Total Voluntary Income	121011
d) Charitable Activities to further PCC's objectives	
PCC fees, church heating etc	9499
e) Other incoming resources	
Contributions to cost of Vicarage gas and electricity	2804
Grant from Chester Diocesan Board of Finance for church heating	986
Grant from Listed Places of Worship Scheme to defray VAT	1633
Insurance claim relating to storm damage	2180
Total Other Incoming Resources	7603
Total Operating Income	138113
Expenditure	
a) Costs of generating voluntary income	74
b) Fundraising costs	453
d) Charitable activities	
Church Running Expenses	13769
Churchyard and church grounds upkeep	4501
Church repairs and improvements	6194
Clergy Costs	20594
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	69666
Organist	4716
Outreach; Young People	2213
Office Costs & Miscellaneous Expenditure	5522
Total Operating Expenditure	127702
Operating surplus	10411

Commentary

Forward guidance

The figures illustrate that during 2022, our regular income to cover our day to day operating expenditure has returned to, and indeed exceeded, the pre-COVID situation.

Given the level of the PCC's *Cash at Bank* (Note 16) and level of *Net current assets* (Balance Sheet), the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations and can thus be reasonably described as a "going concern".

Appendix II

Administrative information

Christ Church Higher Bebington is situated in Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Parish Office, Christ Church Community Centre,
Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (ref: 1132356).

Connected Charity information

The Vicar and Churchwardens are the trustees of the Thomas Robinson Charity; Charity Commission ref 233412.

Membership of the PCC:

Up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 22nd May 2022:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Helen Byrne
Rhona Snelson
John Theobald (*died on 23 February 2022*)
Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – Co-opted 9 June 2021 and re-appointed as PCC Secretary
Tracy Evans - Co-opted on 6 December 2021
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Karen Lewis (*died on 1 August 2021*)
Kate Lewis
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – Lay Vice-Chairman (re-appointed on 9 June 2021)
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – Treasurer (re-appointed on 9 June 2021)

Sub-total: 10

Grand total: 18 (17 from 2 August 2021, then 18 from 6 December 2021, then 17 from 23 February 2022)

From the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 22nd May 2022:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Helen Byrne
Rhona Snelson
Nydia Gibson

Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – re-appointed as PCC Secretary (8th June 2022)
Sandra Evans
Tracy Evans
Mark Gleave
Kate Lewis
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – re-elected as Lay Vice-Chairman (8th June 2022)
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – re-appointed as PCC Treasurer (8th June 2022)

Sub-total: 10

Grand total: 18

Deputy Churchwardens

At the meeting of the PCC held on 8 June 2022, the following people were appointed Deputy Churchwardens:

Fiona Murphy
Rose Rogers
Diane Shaw
Rhona Snelson

Sidespeople for 2022 – 2023; appointed at the PCC meeting held on 8 June 2022

Alan Abbott
Liz Bird
Gail Boisson
John Boisson
Terry Cunningham
Rob Evans
Tracy Evans
Derek Fogg
June Fogg
Nye Gibson
Graham Loach
Jill Loach
Barbara Mayers
Fiona Murphy
Beverley Price
Judith Renton
Joan Rippon
Diane Shaw
Rhona Snelson
Mike Thorne
Janet Wallace
Jim Wallace
Linda White
Helen Young

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace (Re-appointed at the APCM held on 22 May 2022)

On 8 June 2022, the new PCC following the 2022 APCM confirmed the following:

100Club Organiser	Beverley Price
Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer	Diane Shaw
Church Website co-ordinator	Julie Scarsbrook
Eco Church Development	Alan Hollinshead
Electoral Roll Officer	Tracy Evans (tbc)
Flag Captain	Sarah L Loach
GDPR Co-ordinator	Ian D Millington
Parish Legacy Officer	Ian D Millington
Recorder – Community Centre Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Organ Project Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Envelopes	Michael Blackburn
Recorder – Standing Orders	Barbara Thomas
Relief Count Supervisor	Jim Wallace
Safety & Security Officer	<i>To be arranged</i>
Social Media Co-ordinator (except CCHB website)	Revd Michael Loach
Vestry Team Leader	Diane Shaw

and

Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with HMRC regarding PAYE (and RTI) and on-line Gift Aid reclaims	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Pensions Regulator	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Charity Commission for England & Wales	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with SUMUP and Give A Little (online giving)	PCC Treasurer
Authorised to negotiate energy contracts <i>(through Parish Buying)</i>	Terry Cunningham

The new PCC following the APCM also confirmed the composition of the following bodies all of which report to the PCC:

Buildings & Finance Committee

Ian Murray (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham (Secretary)
Revd Michael G Loach
Alan Jackson
Charles Van Ingen

Community Centre Management Team

Charles Van Ingen (Chairman)
Sheila Clarke MBE
Jane Dalziel (Centre Administrator)
Revd Michael Loach
Sarah Loach (Centre Supervisor)
Ian Murray
Diane Shaw

Social Committee

Vicki Midgley (Chairman)
Helen Byrne
Sarah Loach
Colette Millington
Ian Millington
Libby Potter

Men in Sheds Team

Stephen Ion (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham
Alan Jackson

Charity & Fundraising Committee

Roy Mayers (Chairman)
Mark Gleave (Secretary)
Revd Eunice Blackmore
Jane Dalziel
Gary Shaw
Paul Price

The PCC authorised the following pastoral/social initiatives:

Initiative

Bereavement Support Group
Boulders Group
Bumps & Babies
Carers' Group
Coffee Club
Connect Coffee
Film Club
Indoor Bowls
Knit & Natter
Just Sew
Lunch Club
Oasis Mental Health Support Group
Singing Café
Sunday Club
Supper Club
Tea Dance
Thirsty Wednesday
Toddler Group (Mondays)

Leader/s

Vera Jackson
Libby Potter
Victoria Gleave
Rhona Snelson, Graham Loach
June Fogg
Vicki Midgley, Libby Potter, Rhona Snelson
To be arranged
Vicki Midgley
Heather Whitehead and Joan Rippon
Sarah Loach & Julie Scarsbrook
Vicki Midgley
Jill Wright, Steve Flatt
Revd Eunice Blackmore
To be arranged
Terry Cunningham
Sarah Loach
Terry Cunningham
Sarah Loach

Accounts

Christ Church Higher Bebington - Annual Report 2021

Diocese of Chester

Christ Church Higher Bebington

Parochial Church Council

Annual Report 2021

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral
CH63 8LX

Charity Commission Ref: 1132356

Christ Church Higher Bebington - Annual Report 2021



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Christ Church Higher Bebington

1 Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Higher Bebington's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and the Community Centre.

2 Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to know the love of God through worship at our church and engagement with our members in and around the parish. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we properly maintain the fabric of Christ Church, which is a Grade II listed building dating back to 1859, and the Community Centre which opened in April 2011.

The PCC's policy is to deliver Christmas and Easter cards to every home in the Parish giving details of the church services and outreach activities planned for these festivals.

3 Achievements and Performance

3.1 Incumbent's Report (by Revd Mike Loach)

Without doubt, 2021 proved to be another challenging year, with returns to regular services in church being interspersed with returns to lockdown, virtual services and meetings and, consequently, finding a rhythm to our ministry to the parish has not been particularly easy. Even at times when most restrictions were removed, identifying the needs of our worshipping community and working out the best ways to communicate with the parish has, to say the least, been a steep learning curve. That said, I've been so impressed with how we have responded and that we were able to move into 2022 with most of our capacity to serve intact, is testimony to the hard work and creativity of our members.

Worship

A clear highlight of our worshipping life in 2021 was being able to celebrate Revd George's ordination as Priest and Helen's licensing as Reader at Chester Cathedral. Despite mask wearing still being a necessity and a restriction on numbers attending, both occasions were so joyful, and it was wonderful to be able to praise God for George's and Helen's ministries. We have been very blessed by their contributions over the past year, as we have with others being willing to get more involved in our services not least, Colette and Ian Millington. I am thankful for our Ministry Team and for all those who contribute to our worship.

Throughout 2021 we continued to operate a hybrid model of worship with people being able to connect either online through our livestream on YouTube or within the church building. The 10am Sunday Parish Communion remained the main weekly service, but over the course of the year we reintroduced the 8.30am Sunday service, along with evening worship. In addition, the midweek Communion at 10.30am on Wednesdays made a full return, alongside the continuation of weekly Zoom prayer meetings.

Attendance at our regular services varied greatly over the course of the year. At times when infection rates were high and lockdown restrictions being tightened, numbers attending the church building, understandably dropped off. However, by the end of the year, averages at the 10am were up to around 80 – considerably lower than pre-lockdown, but up from the 40-50 that initially made the return. Online, the numbers viewing the 10am service steadied at around 200, but increased when infection rates went up and, conversely, dropped off when people felt able to return to church.

It was a great joy to be able to welcome more worshippers into church for our seasonal services and Remembrance Sunday will long live in the memory for its wonderfully eclectic mix of attendees – Headteachers mixing with Councillors, Brownies, shopkeepers and bikers! The service really seemed to reflect our outreach to the community and our hope that Christ Church be a place that all can turn to in all phases of life.

The pattern of pastoral services followed on from 2020 with a higher proportion of funerals and an understandable reduction in the number of people booking baptisms and weddings. We recorded 18 baptisms, 2 weddings and 33 funerals (19 in church and 14 at the crematorium). Though our churchyard is now closed for full burials, 5 burials took place in existing plots and we continue to offer space for burial of cremated remains with 10 new plots being added and 9 interments into existing plots.

Our worshipping life at Christ Church continues to be very much blessed by the wonderful musicians and singers that we are able to call on to play at our services. June Fogg has done a marvellous job in building up the choir and leading it with such enthusiasm and expertise. I've been delighted that they have been able to return to the chancel and our praise and worship is enhanced by their invaluable contribution. We are also greatly blessed to have such a wonderfully talented organist/musician/composer/impresario to accompany and direct us. Wendy Dickinson gives such a lot to the Christ Church community and I continue to be amazed by her versatility and patience! It has been good to see a new church band starting up and Wendy has been a source of great support and encouragement.

Our tech team has been an invaluable support as we've moved in and out of lockdown. Sam Loach has continued to develop our streaming resources and has been ably assisted on a Sunday morning by Grace Gleave, Sarah Loach, Harry Loach and Bev

Price. Ian Carr, Ian Murray, Alan Jackson, Gary Shaw and Revd Eunice have also been a great help in repairing and upgrading our equipment. Sam will shortly be stepping back from taking a lead on our Sunday broadcasts as he prepares to move to Liverpool, and I'd like to record my immense gratitude to him for all that he has given us over the past few years.

Pastoral care

One of the particularly difficult challenges during a year of opening and closing has been to keep track of our members and to recognise when people need help. Even in more settled times, it is hard to notice absence among a fluid congregation of over a hundred, but as many people's attendance patterns have changed and Ministry Team members are now moving between two churches, the challenge has been further exacerbated. Consequently, I am very grateful for the many people involved in our pastoral work who do their best to look out for those who might be in need. June Fogg continues to do an amazing job as our Pastoral Worker Emeritus and it has been wonderful to see Lynn Ion developing her skills as a pastoral worker in training. Our team of visitors do a great job, but we are always glad to hear from others who might be able to help with this important work.

A particular highlight from the past year has been the start of the Bereavement Journey course that Rev Eunice has organised. This has clearly met a great pastoral need and people from all over the Wirral continue to make enquiries about how they might enrol. Alongside this, Vera Jackson was able to restart the Befrienders Group, offering a safe and welcoming space for anyone wishing to meet with others who have been bereaved.

Other groups have also been able to restart during 2021, though some meetings have had to be postponed when local guidelines advised against gathering indoors. The Oasis group continued to provide vital support to anyone struggling with their mental health and we were so fortunate to have Jill Wright and Steve Flatt willing and able to lead sessions.

Our Carers' Group enjoyed some fantastic speakers and benefitted from essential fellowship and eating together, under the leadership of Graham Loach & Rhona Snelson.

"Men in Sheds", with Terry Cunningham, Alan Jackson and others grew still further, adding a clubhouse(!), new members and connecting with the local community in important ways. Knit & Natter and Ladies in Stitches offered still further ways for our community to get together, whilst producing some wonderful items, often at the Vicar's request!

And then Penny's Happy Reading Group, Sarah Loach & Kate Lewis's indoor bowls, offered opportunities to be alongside others in different ways. I'm very grateful to all who have given their time and effort to keep these groups going.

Throughout the year, we have also used seasonal celebrations as an opportunity to show our care for others. Easter cards and Christmas cards were again delivered to every home and business in the parish and both contained a list of numbers to call if in need of any support, which were widely used. On several occasions, we worked alongside charitable organisations and the Council to deliver hampers and essential supplies to those who were particularly struggling. Sadly, once again, Covid prevented us from hosting our Christmas Day lunch, but we were able to deliver a meal and gifts to

over 140 people in and around the parish. I was very grateful to all those who were able to volunteer their time and resources to make these initiatives possible.

Mission, outreach and discipleship

Another real challenge over the past two years has concerned how we might manage to keep connected with our local community when, so often, contact has not been possible and when planning events has had to work around predicting changes to lockdown rules. Within this context, I have been delighted by the amount that we have been able to achieve and even a quick review of the pictures at the start of the document will attest to the hard work and creativity of our members in ensuring that we were able to maintain hard won relationships within the parish.

When lockdown conditions eased, we were able to restart several of our regular Centre activities, such as Connect Café, Singing Café and the Tea Dance. We were also able to offer a number of community events, including a teddy bears' picnic, harvest afternoon tea, various eco events, a community bonfire and several Christmas activities. Jill Wright continued to organise a walking group, which has been such a blessing to many, and was also able to take a group away for a weekend to Grange-over-Sands.

We were disappointed not to be able to run our Summer Fair along with various other seasonal events, but we look forward to reintroducing these and others in the coming year. I was delighted that we were eventually able to crown Grace Gleave as our Rose Queen and relieve Charlotte Millington from her record-breaking stint(!), and Grace's events proved to be a great success. As ever, we are very grateful to both of our 2021 Rose Queens who unfailingly represented our church with great generosity and joyfulness.

A really important aspect of our outreach during lockdown was the many displays that we were able to share with the local community, and during November, we certainly reached a new standard of excellence with the unveiling of the knitted poppy installation. Pictures of the display were posted far and wide and it was even discussed on Radio Merseyside in an interview with the Bishop of Birkenhead. The thousands of poppies were knitted by our parishioners (with some contributing dozens) and they were then attached to netting by many volunteers, before Terry Cunningham and friends fixed it to scaffolding. I'm very grateful to all who contributed, but especially to Helen Byrne, who drove the project from start to finish – a remarkable achievement and great tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom.

One of the major regrets from 2021 was our inability to regularly visit our schools and nursing homes. Such visits formed a key part of our ministry pre Covid and keeping relationships alive has not been easy. However, regular emails and calls to staff, shared video resources and then some visits to church in the autumn and winter have ensured that we have a strong platform to build on in the coming year.

Our Ministry Team members have continued to represent Christ Church in a number of voluntary roles. Helen Byrne has been actively involved in supporting Reader training within the Diocese, Pam Hollinshead has served as president of the regional Soroptimist branch and Revd Eunice has maintained her role within the Arrowe Park Chaplaincy Team. George has been providing important support to the North West Ambulance service in his role as Chaplain and I have continued as chair of the Unilever Ethics Committee, chaplain at Claire House and governor to a couple of local schools.

At Christ Church, we recognise that a key aspect of our mission and evangelism within the parish concerns how we are seen to contribute to the good in our world. If we clearly communicate a concern for the wellbeing of all and are obviously striving for justice and fairness in our communities, then the increasing majority who have had no previous contact with church may well feel inspired to join in with us. Over the past year we have been able to keep our environmental work very much alive and are now very close to applying for an Eco Church Gold award. We have contributed to various campaigns and were able to join a number of marches around the time of COP26. We have been blessed by the work of our wonderful Mothers' Union and supported Christian Aid initiatives and joined with our Muslim brothers and sisters at the Wirral Deen Centre in protesting against racial and religious discrimination.

Obviously, when physical gatherings have been restricted, our online presence has taken on increased importance. Via our YouTube channel, our Zoom activities and our Facebook page, we have been able to connect with members unable to join us in person and have continued to expand our reach to new audiences. Discipleship events and activities have also been hard to sustain, but regular prayer and devotional meetings on Zoom and some opportunities for face-to-face meetings have provided a fair degree of sustenance. I'm very grateful to Revd Eunice and other members of the Ministry Team for all that they have been doing to encourage us all to grow as disciples of Jesus. We look forward to more opportunities to share our faith in the coming months, including the return and growth of our House Groups.

St Paul's

After working with the Parish of St Paul with St Luke since 2019, it was a great privilege to finally be licensed as "Priest-in-Charge" by the Bishop of Chester back in April. Seeing so many members of the local community coming together and expressing their hopes for the future of St Paul's was very encouraging. Local councillors, teachers, fellow clergy and even the Mayor all gathered to recognise the blessing that St Paul's has been and, hopefully, will continue to be in the future.

We had intended for the pastoral scheme, aimed at expanding the parish boundaries to accommodate both Christ Church and St Paul's Tranmere to be completed by the end of the year. However, the discovery of substantial damage to the spire at St Paul's church led to the process being suspended. Christ Church will continue to work alongside St Paul's, but it is not yet clear how any future relationship will be formalised. I am thankful for the support that members of both churches have shown to each other and am confident that this will help build a bright future.

Infrastructure

At Christ Church, we are greatly blessed by our beautiful buildings and land, but these obviously take a lot of work to maintain. Our eco church projects, expertly led by Pam Hollinshead, continued to bear fruit (both metaphorically and literally!) and making the gardens available to the general public has enabled us to create new relationships and attract further good will. The memorial orchard has developed to contain around 20 trees and further tree planting from the Soroptimists has enhanced the landscape. I've been delighted that our uniformed groups have joined in with the work and was especially impressed with the construction of a very large "bug hotel"! Landscaping at the back of church has opened up a view of the East Window and freed up space for the construction of a new "garden stage". This will hopefully facilitate a programme of summer concerts in the years to come. Much of this work has been funded by successful grant applications and I am very grateful to Kate Lewis for her expertise and endeavour in this area.

The churchyard continues to provide various changes ranging from the relentless expansion of weeds around the cremated remains plots through to foxes and other animals disturbing the land. Working alongside Wirral Council is not always easy and I've been so thankful for our committed band of volunteers who have worked so hard to fill the gaps. We always need more help, so please do let us know if you can be an extra pair of hands.

The Christ Church shed empire continued to expand and we now have six sheds on site, with another on the way! These have given us new storage facilities but most of all, have enabled our "Men in Sheds" group to flourish. They are a fantastic group and so often are on hand to help fix problems around church or to make something at the Vicar's request!

Using our grounds and buildings to communicate our faith was something that we developed in the first year of lockdown and that continued in 2021, with poppy displays, yellow ribbons on the railings, chiming of bells and a selection of colourful flags helping to express a number of emotions and prayerful responses. The collection bins outside the Centre grew to include a recycling point for blister packs and I am extremely grateful for the continued efforts of Ann Preston, Jill Loach and Gary Shaw to ensure that the various collections get to the right places.

Our church building continues to be open to the public every day from 10am until 7pm at night and so many people continue to use it on a daily basis. Many will just take the opportunity to find some time away from the busyness of life, some will leave a prayer or light a candle and many of these are not regulars on a Sunday. This is an important ministry and I am very grateful to our wonderful Vestry Team led by Diane Shaw and Helen Byrne, who, throughout the past year, continued to offer creative displays and weekly support for our worshipping life. I am also thankful to our flower team and cleaning team who ensure that our church looks stunning whenever people attend.

We are very fortunate to have such a talented and experienced team available to us on the Buildings and Finance Committee and the Centre Management Committee and I continue to be particularly grateful to Terry Cunningham and Charles Van Ingen for chairing the groups. I must also register special thanks to members of the PCC, to Jane Dalziel for her work as Secretary, our fantastic Wardens, Gary Shaw and Ian Murray, and to Charles Van Ingen for his unwavering support and the remarkable job he has done in navigating our finances through some very difficult waters. We were all devastated to lose our friend and fellow PCC member, Karen Lewis, in August 2021 and this was a terrible blow to the whole church family. Karen was a relentless supporter of Christ Church and her absence has been keenly felt. We will, however, continue to be inspired by the enthusiasm and joyfulness that she brought to the life of our church.

Despite the challenging circumstances, our Parish Office continued to be open every weekday morning and we are very fortunate to have such a capable and welcoming team working there. I have been very grateful to Julie Scarsbrook, Sarah Loach and Jane Dalziel for the wonderful work that they have done to keep our Centre running so smoothly. Julie officially left her post towards the end of the year, but I am delighted that she has been able to return and look after our website. And, of course, a special mention must go to our amazing Parish Secretary, Victoria Gleave. Many of you will know just how lost I would be without her and the rest of the team!

And finally, a word of thanks to my fellow clergy members, Revd Eunice and Revd George, and to also those who have assisted us at times, in particular, Revd Andrew

Haslam and Revd Andrew Mannings. Their friendship has been invaluable, and I give thanks that they have been such a source of salt and light to our parish.

Thank you...

There are so many people who have regularly helped me in my ministry over the past year. Again, I won't attempt to name you all for fear of missing someone out, but I would like to register particular thanks to our Readers & Readers Emeritus, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Jill Wright & Ted Jones; the Church Wardens, Gary Shaw & Ian Murray; Deputy Church Wardens, Rhona Snelson, Alan Jackson, Diane Shaw and Rose Rogers; Pastoral Worker, June Fogg; Lay leaders, Ian Millington, Colette Millington & Lynn Ion; Bereavement support, Vera Jackson; Electoral Roll, Tracy O'Connell; Parish Poet, John Hulme; Fundraiser, Kate Lewis; our office staff, Victoria Gleave, Julie Scarsbrook and Jane Dalziel; Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen; members of the PCC; Organist, Wendy Dickinson; Choir leader, June Fogg; our Curate, George Roach, Associate Minister, Eunice Blackmore, and to Sarah (Centre Supervisor & wife!), Sam (AV technician) and Harry (puppeteer) & Jumble(!), for their help to me on a daily basis.

3.2 Churchwardens' Report (by Gary Shaw and Ian Murray)

Alleluia! We have successfully negotiated the Covid pandemic and are now almost back to the new 'normal'. Despite all the government restrictions, we once again managed to keep the church open every day throughout the year for private prayer. Sunday services also continued throughout the year by live stream and, when allowed, with an 'actual' congregation and choir. We are blessed to have such a talented organist and 'soloist' in Wendy who, together with our choir most ably led by June Fogg, bring something special to our services as do our new 'band'.

We are so fortunate to have a wonderful ministry team in Revd Mike, Revd Eunice, Revd George and Ian Millington, who leads our All Age Worship, as well as our wonderful Readers Jill Wright, Pam Hollinshead, Helen Byrne, Lynn Ion and Collette Millington, who is in training with Ian. This team is much appreciated by us all for what they bring to the spiritual life at Christ Church. Every successful team requires quality leadership and in Mike, superbly supported by Eunice and George, we have a team which gives so much of themselves. We are so blessed to have them all.

A special thanks must go to the Loach family, including Jumble, for all they do for us and for the support they give to Mike. Special thanks to Sam for continuing to work his 'magic' in streaming the services, ably helped by his brother Harry and Grace Gleave. Christ Church is blessed to have you all.

And what can I say about Victoria, who continues to provide such a smiling welcome to all who visit the Office and has supported us all magnificently through a unique period. Thank you. We also welcome Jane Dalziel, who has already become a very valued member of the team.

Not only were the 8.30am and 10.00am services held every Sunday throughout the year but we also managed to have our usual special traditional services – Easter, Remembrance, Blue Christmas, Nativity, Time to Remember, Carol Service, Christingle and Midnight Mass. A special thanks to Helen Byrne and her band of Crocheters and Knitters who created that amazing fall of poppies – spectacular. The Harley Davidson Motorcycle procession was amazing, as was the sight of Mike perched on a Harley in his surplice outside the British Legion! I now know what he wants for a Christmas present!!!

Thanks to all who helped to deliver these much-loved services.

The Parochial Church Council meet bi-monthly to plan how we move forward. They are a very perceptive group who do so much on your behalf. The meetings, surprisingly, are not dry affairs but full of lively debate and laughter. Thank you for contributing so much to our church family.

Grateful thanks to all those in the Vestry and Flower Teams who worked tirelessly behind the scenes throughout this testing year to make our church such a welcoming and attractive place. This army of unseen helpers do so much to support Ian Murray and I and we very much appreciate what they do.

Thanks also to our Sidespeople who have supported us throughout this unique year.

As Church Wardens and Deputy Wardens we have been very busy on your behalf attempting to ensure that all runs smoothly at Christ Church. We have 'enjoyed' (?) this year with its many challenges, and we thank everyone for being so supportive and patient. This has meant so much to us. Thank you all.
Let us hope that this forthcoming year 'normal' service is resumed.

3.3 Deanery Synod Report (by Rhona Snelson)

Deanery Synod is a meeting of clergy and lay representatives from the churches in our Deanery and with guest speakers, to share information and ideas which will be of help in parishes. They meet four times a year.

Due to Covid restrictions the first meeting of the year took place on Zoom when appointments were made to fill posts - Lay Chair, Deanery Secretary, Deanery Treasurer and Standing Committee. Deanery Accounts were accepted and this was followed by a general discussion of "Ministry during the Pandemic".

In early June, also via a zoom link, Revd Canon Sarah Fenby, Diocesan Director of Vocations, spoke on the theme of "Let's Talk Vocations". She gave a brief history of her work to date and then gave an interesting outline of how we can best serve using our different gifts.

'From a life of Faith comes discipleship and ministry', be it Parish Ministry, Called to Serve or Foundations for Ministry.

By November most restrictions had been eased and a face-to-face meeting gathered (socially distanced) at St. Chads, Irby, when Revd Jane Proudfoot, a member of the Diocesan Advisory Group for Living in Love and Faith gave a most interesting presentation. This topic is an initiative set up by the Church of England to find a consensus of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage in our world today. By running a course on this subject in our parishes, it is hoped to allow different voices to speak in safe places without feeling judged. Feedback from the churches via an online questionnaire will then be passed to the House of Bishops for their consideration.

As always, all are welcome to attend these interesting meetings.

3.4 Buildings Report (by Terry Cunningham)

The committee continued to have another quite busy year with various items being addressed and more appearing that required attention. These included:

- A new garden equipment shed sourced, installed and fitted-out, as well as removal of the old steel container.
- Completion of the church audio/visual upgrades.
- Churchyard fence repairs/replacement.
- Vicarage CCTV server relocation and subsequent rewiring due to extremely poor workmanship.
- Community Centre folding door replaced.
- Pigeon issue in the bell tower identified (resolved in 2022).
- Plan to have the church guttering replaced, as well as high level stonework repairs.
- The damp issues in the vicarage cellar persist with only intermittent support from the diocese.
- St Paul's Quinquennial was completed and highlighted some potentially serious issues with the spire's structural integrity.

3.5 Pastoral Care (by Rev Eunice Blackmore)

Pastoral care is all about looking out for one another, supporting and encouraging each other, praying for one another. Thank you for all who have helped, particularly by providing extra support during Covid. Unfortunately, home and hospital visits were restricted in 2021, but it is great that there are opportunities to do so once again. We aim to regularly review the support we provide for all who we are aware of needing it. Inevitably some people will slip through the net, so please do not hesitate to inform us if there is anyone who you may feel would benefit from our help.

Our thanks especially to June Fogg who has recently had her Pastoral Worker Emeritus certificate renewed to enable her to continue with pastoral care and to Lynn Ion for persevering through training.

We have not yet been able to renew our regular communion visits to residential homes, but we did bring them some Christmas cheer and hope when we sang carols outside Salisbury House, Lezayre and Bebington Care Home. We also regularly (through June and your giving) provide them with toiletries.

3.6 Communication

Our weekly parish newsletter and the magazine are available both on-line and as hard copy. The printed version of the magazine is made available at local libraries and other locations visited by members of the public. The website continues to provide a vital link for many members of our community who cannot reach church regularly and we try to keep it updated with news and links to resources used in our services. Our Facebook page has grown considerably over the past couple of years and, in connecting with other community groups, can now attract thousands of views for a single post.

The new YouTube channel has added another way for people to join in with our services and now has almost 300 subscribers. This online presence has enabled us to communicate in a different way and with people who would not usually have access to our newsletters or magazines.

3.7 Pastoral and Social Initiatives run by Christ Church

3.7.1 Men in Sheds (by Terry Cunningham)

Well, 2021 proved to be a very much start/stop affair for Beb Shed, as it was for other groups. Fortunately, we came through it and have actually increased the number of active members (though that does mean that we get through even more biscuits!).

We have continued to build bird tables, planters and some more bespoke items, as well as some rebuild/refurbishment projects, which keeps us busy. We have also addressed some repair/maintenance issues in and around the church building and Community Centre, proving a useful asset to both.

The biggest change for us was the addition of the second shed which has proved to be extremely useful, allowing us a cleaner environment for our IT equipment and laser cutter; not to mention that it is also the de-facto tea room for us!

3.7.2 Singing Café (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

After a break of around 18 months due to Covid, Singing Café recommenced on 17th August and has now become a bi-monthly activity – meeting on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. Numbers are encouraging and a good time is had by all. We're really grateful for the music and enthusiasm from Heswall team led by Chris Youngman who tell us we're their best café for joining in the singing! And thanks too, goes to June Fogg and helpers including several cake makers.

3.7.3 Ladies in Stitches (by Sarah Loach)

Ladies in Stitches have been very busy and the group is growing. We welcome anybody with any sewing ability and have now changed the name to Just Sew!

We always have tea and biscuits, there is a lot of discussion, swapping of sewing tips and we make a lot of lovely things. As well as making for charities, we have been making lots of bunting for forthcoming events and some people have been altering their own clothes.

New members always welcome every 1st and 4th Tuesday morning of the month, 10.30am until 12.30pm.

3.7.4 Connect Café (by Rhona Snelson)

Despite some Covid restrictions and periods of closure, Cafe Connect has continued to provide a place of meeting and refreshment every Wednesday morning 10.00am - 12noon in the Kings Hall, As always, thanks to the regular group of helpers who provide a warm welcome with tea, coffee and toast.

Our gatherings have been reduced in number but, as the year came to its end, people had more confidence to come out and enjoy the company of others and things at last began to return to normality. During the year, we were delighted to welcome a group of Community Connectors, who go out into the community seeking those who are isolated and feeling lonely. They encourage them to make the difficult steps outside and have made Connect Cafe a regular meeting place for them and we are delighted to meet with them too.

3.7.5 Knit & Natter Group (by Joan Rippon)

The Knit and Natter group held their first meeting after Covid lockdown on 19th May 2021. The meeting was well supported and gradually more members returned over the following weeks. Ladies had been busy at home and provided a collection of knitted goods for sale. Baby items were delivered to the Neonatal Unit at Arrowe Park Hospital. On 17th November the group held an early Christmas lunch at the Mediterranean Kitchen. Leading up to Remembrance Sunday, members knitted poppies for a weeping window installation at Christ Church.

In February 2022 the group assisted in a coffee morning by selling knitted goods to raise funds for Christian Aid. The group has expanded and has welcomed several new members.

The following donations have been made-

August 2021 - £70 to Rose Queen Fund

December 2021 - £100 donated to Claire House

February 2022 - £100, approximately, donated to Christian Aid (Coffee Morning)

March 2022 - £100 donated to Rose Queen Fund

March 2022 - £100 donated to Ukranian Appeal Fund

The Knit and Natter group usually meet on the first and third Wednesday in the month at 1.15 pm and always welcome new members.

3.7.6 Tea Dance (by Sarah Loach)

Circumstances have meant that we have only been able to hold one Tea Dance since Covid restrictions were lifted. It was very enjoyable. Graham Loach organised live music for us as well as a quiz.

We aim to hold more in the coming year and will relaunch in September on a Wednesday afternoon once every other month. People enjoy coming together to listen to or dance to the music and to sample the delicious cakes and drink unlimited cups of tea or coffee.

Thank you to Jill and Graham Loach, Victoria Gleave, Catherine Scott and Christine Williams for all their hard work and Barbara Thomas for her delicious scones!

3.7.7 Oasis Group (by Jill Wright)

Our group meetings were obviously affected by the pandemic lockdown which commenced in March 2020.

We did not resume our group meetings until July 2021 as we were conscious of protecting the vulnerable members of the group from the Covid virus. It was decided that Steve Flatt, psychotherapist, would take over the leadership of the group in future, as Jill Wright was seeking to streamline her workload. Jill is still co-leading the group, with Steve, and is responsible for administration. Penny Golby assists with refreshments. Ted Jones has stepped down as a group leader.

Although the group entered its 11th year in 2021, it has still proved popular with regular meetings on the second Wednesday afternoon of each month (except in August and December).

We are very grateful to Steve for his expert help and also members of his team:- Laura and Kate – who regularly assist at our meetings. Numbers attending fluctuate from around 6 to 14. All are very welcome.

3.7.8 Friendship Weekend (by Jill Wright)

Since the first Friendship Weekend in September 2015, it has been decided to run it every 2 years at the Thornleigh hotel in Grange over Sands. Jill Wright is the organiser. However, like everything else, our planned weekend in May 2020 had to be postponed because of the Lockdown. Fortunately, we were able to rearrange our booking for May 2021 when 24 'weekenders' were able to enjoy the traditional weekend. Restrictions were just easing and the hotel opened to guests the weekend before our arrival.

Obviously, we were still conscious of being careful, regarding the virus, but the sun shone, we went on a lovely visit to Holker Hall gardens and enjoyed the craft fair on the esplanade on the Sunday.

We all look forward to our next visit in 2023.

3.7.9 Church Walking Group (by Jill Wright)

One of the (few!) benefits of the Pandemic lockdown was that we were still allowed outdoor exercise.

At the suggestion of Revd Mike, Jill Wright and Penny Golby invited church members and their friends to join us on regular monthly walks. At the time we were only allowed to meet in groups of up to 6 outside. As we gathered for our first scheduled walk some 22 of us arrived in the church car park on 22nd April 2021. A swift rearrangement followed, and, nothing daunted, we split into small groups and set off in convoy to Storeton Woods.

The walking group has proved popular ever since; offering both a long and short, Wirral based walk on the first Friday of every month (moving from a Thursday because of church choir practice). It offers folk a welcome opportunity to walk and talk with others in the fresh air. We often also stop for a coffee.

3.7.10 Befrienders (Bereavement Support) (by Vera Jackson)

The Befrienders Group continue to support those in need in the parish when Revd Mike, Revd Eunice, Revd George or Jill Wright has been introduced to a family prior to arranging a funeral or interment.

The Befrienders then become involved following the funeral. Contact is made usually after a few weeks but sooner if it is thought to be more beneficial to the relatives. An introductory phone call is made when a visit is offered or, if preferred, a follow up phone call. This is our way of offering support in a sympathetic manner.

Befrienders Lunch

Now in its 11th year and continues to be appreciated and beneficial by those who attend. These informal meetings offer an opportunity for supporting each other and, when necessary, one to one listening support is made available by one of the team.

3.7.11 Bereavement Journey (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Our first Bereavement Journey took place during September to November 2021. It comprised videos and discussion (obtained from by <https://thebereavementjourney.org>). I was amazed how beneficial people found having a safe and empathetic environment to honestly share their deepest emotions. Many new friendships were formed along with a real sense of release (for some) and hope (for all). Two further courses have now been run and the fourth is starting soon!

Remembrance Book

This book which is kept in church is made available for families that wish to have their relatives name added to it.

Time to Remember/Blue Christmas Services

Once again, these were very poignant services and were well attended and much appreciated. We all need ways to express our grief and find empathy from others and, as a church, we're uniquely placed to do so.

3.7.12 Carers' Group (by Rhona Snelson & Graham Loach)

4Cs Carers Group – 'Carers, Coffee, Cake (and sandwiches!) and Chat'

The 4Cs provides opportunities for carers, and those who have previously been carers, to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship together. Although the pandemic has severely affected all of us in recent years, we were delighted to be able to resume our meetings in 2021.

The first meeting was a coffee morning in June at which we all enjoyed coffee, cake and the opportunity to chat again.

In July we enjoyed lunch in the church grounds. We brought or own sandwiches and once again had cake and chat!

In September, Jay Wheeler was our first speaker of the year and it was a privilege to be able to hear his story. The way he coped with serving in Afghanistan and then spread love via his artwork is inspirational.

In October we welcomed back our friend Billy Hui and enjoyed his stories of Chinese culture and traditions.

In November, we were pleased to welcome Julie Cobb from the Wirral Falls Prevention Service. The talk was both relevant and very helpful with plenty of good advice for our members.

The final meeting of the year was our Christmas Social where we sang a few carols and enjoyed each other's company.

As you can see, we enjoy a mixture of practical helpful talks and some that entertain and bring good cheer. Our annual day trip to Llandudno was cancelled due to Covid but will be taking place in 2022.

New members are always welcome and we look forward to a seeing friends old and new at our lunchtime meetings, which are usually on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except in August, at 12.15pm in the Community Centre.

3.7.13 Indoor Bowls (by Sarah Loach)

After the summer months when the bowlers were playing outdoors, we recommenced Indoor Bowls which was very well received for the last few months of the year. We had our regulars back and welcomed some newcomers who all enjoyed it twice a month on a Friday morning. Thanks to all who helped with this especially Men in Sheds who got the mats out every session and the ladies serving refreshments.

3.7.14 Christmas Day Lunch

We decided as Covid cases were still quite high that we would deliver Christmas lunches again in 2021. We worked with *Home Instead* who kindly provided gift bags which meant everybody who was having a lunch had a Christmas present too. Thanks to donations and Council funding we were able to purchase the lunches from Parsley Box and there was enough money left for some sweet treats as well.

Special thanks to everybody who helped to prepare the packages and distribute them on Christmas Day so people receiving them saw a friendly face and had a Christmas greeting.

3.7.15 Eco Church (by Pam Hollinshead)

During the past 12 months the Eco church group have worked with the relevant committees in the five areas of

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Community and global engagement
- Management of church land
- Lifestyle

Our worship continues to include songs, prayers and teaching on the subject of Creation; how we may enjoy it and sustain it, how we tell others about the opportunities to recycle and reuse many different items. Following on from that it is interesting to note that our collection of tablet strips is growing, weekly deliveries of which are made to a Birkenhead chemist for recycling. Thanks to Jill and Graham Loach!

The fabric of the church buildings is constantly under review by the Buildings committee, currently the issue of pigeons in the belfry is being dealt with.

Eco church currently simply keeps up to date with any issues, inside or outside, and make sustainable suggestions if applicable.

Our community and global engagement continues via our support of Tools with a Mission (TWAM) led by Men in Sheds group. Eco church has also worked with Diane Shaw regarding Christian Aid, planting seeds and buying cakes!!!

Locally it is the outdoor spaces which attract our community. Our graveyard team work hard to keep the cremation memorials area weed free - many thanks to all who are involved.

The Garden is looking fabulous at present, thanks to many hands helping recently in cutting back brambles, renewing the paths, sowing seeds, weeding etc!

Our memorial orchard is increasing in size! People have given money in memory of loved ones which has provided more fruit trees. The names of those remembered are in a memorial book in the care of Gary Shaw. A local organisation, Soroptimist International of Bebington, planted 5 fruit trees as part of the Soroptimist Centenary

(1921-2021) this was part of an international planting project which on 1st April 2022 — 124,611 trees had been planted across the world. In addition, Soroptimists using the Ecosia search engine, have contributed to a further 679 trees being planted. That is something anyone who uses a computer is also able to do.

The ponds are providing water for water born insects, pollinators, we're also hoping for a good frog population this year.

You may have noticed a new development in the Garden – no longer do we have the ugly blue shed - now we have a lovely green stage, just ready for our Jubilee Celebrations on 4th June!

There is a new Eco Church notice board in the Community Centre (near the kitchen) which will be highlighting various aspects of how we as a church family are taking care of God's world. Information will be updated regularly.

As with any endeavour, a great deal of hard work goes on behind the scenes. Many thanks to all those who support Eco church in whatever way.

3.7.16 Boulders (by Libby Potter)

Boulders is our group for young people aged 11-18years. Meetings continue to include faith-based sessions and monthly social events. Meetings continued throughout 2021 on Zoom or in person and attendance was 8 -12 each time. The social meetings are a mix of fun events, helping prepare for church events and working for our community.

The Boulders leaders have changed; in July 2021 Dawn Coulter and Alan Abbott stepped down having both served as leaders for 10+ years. Since then Libby Potter has organised the social events recruiting parents and other member of the congregation to help. The Ministry team continue to run the faith sessions monthly on a Sunday morning.

Highlights of the social events include the bowling evening, now an annual event made possible by a kind donation by Sandra Evans. This is a very popular and competitive event!

Other events were an evening of crazy golf, rounders followed by chips and a film night. Boulders also helped prepare for church events by preparing poppies for the remembrance cascade and Christingle oranges at Christmas.

Boulders continues to support our young people to make friends, take an active part in church and community activities and grow in faith.

3.7.17 Sunday Club

Due to continued Covid restrictions, Sunday Club did not begin meeting until late September 2021. However, this coincided with Harvest and it gave the children the opportunity to think about 'Our World' and all that can be done to ensure that it is cared for in the future; linking in with COP 26. They enjoyed watching a video clip of Rev Mike when he joined with the pilgrims walking to Glasgow on the Macclesfield – Cheadle leg and wore the Coat of Hopes.

Other group sessions have explored All Souls Day and Remembrance Day, as well as preparing for the Nativity, which was well received by those who attended the service.

It has been wonderful to be able to meet again in person and re-connect with the children.

3.7.18 Noisy Church (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

Sadly, Noisy Church has not recommenced but it would be great to re-start some form of a Toddler service – so if have a passion for little ones and long to see young families in church – do let me know!!

3.7.19 Toddler Group (by Sarah Loach)

Toddlers has gone from strength to strength since re-opening after lockdown. We have a group of regulars who attend and we are always happy to welcome new people. We have child minders, parents, carers and grandparents bringing their little ones and we are full most weeks. The group is a fantastic link with the community.

It wouldn't be possible to run it without our volunteers. My thanks go to Diane Shaw, Margaret Theobald, Jackie Jones, Ruth Greenall and Beckie Jones for all they do to help with this valuable group.

3.8 Choir (by June Fogg)

Over the year the choir numbers have increased, now totalling fourteen equally divided between sopranos and altos, tenor, and bass.

During the past twelve months, due to Covid restrictions, the choir has had to carefully distance and mask between items to be sung. Hopefully we can look forward to assembling to sing more freely in the future. The choir visited local care homes at Christmas time and, again due to Covid, were not allowed inside but entertained staff and residents through open windows in true carol singing fashion.

Recently we have had to say goodbye to Geoff Newns. Due to illness Geoff will no longer be able to sing in the choir. He was a valued member of the church choir and for many years sang with the Roy Castle singers raising vast sums of money for the Roy Castle charity. Thank you for the music, Geoff.

The choir meets for rehearsals on Thursday afternoons at 2pm. Rehearsal time is normally one hour, when members study the hymns for the following Sunday and for any other occasions during the following week where choral music is required. This sounds very formal, but things don't always go according to plan and there are a lot of laughs. The choir needs more members to fulfil commitments when people are on holiday. Anyone is welcome to come and join us on Thursday afternoons. Music is to be loved and enjoyed by all.

Thank you to Wendy Dickinson our wonderful Director of Music. Wendy is always there to guide us. I know that I speak for everyone in church when I say how much we appreciate her talent each week and look forward to the coming year when Wendy will direct the band and choir together in worship.

3.9 Organ Report (by Wendy Dickinson)

The organ has been played at least once a week in the past year at the regular 10am services as well as at many funerals, memorials and occasional weddings etc and of course the extra services including Evensong and during festival times. The organ is regularly tuned (by David Wells Organ Builders who maintain the Liverpool Cathedral organ) and is in good condition despite a few ciphers occurring and very minor issues throughout the year as to be expected. Some money on new organ music is due to be

spent so if any of the congregation have requests, and you've not already let me know, please do get in touch.

3.10 Music Group (by Wendy Dickinson)

The church band has had an exciting year – full of lots of change and resurgence. We have been meeting regularly on Monday evenings from 5.30 -6.30pm and have built up to 7-10 regular attendees. The band have contributed approximately once a month to morning worship in the past year and augmented worship at Christmas and Easter times as well. Due to the natural progression of time for some of our older teenagers going onto university in Autumn 2021, we had to grow and adapt and we are very grateful both to all those who left and those who arrived in the past year.

We are currently hard at work building up to playing as part of the Jubilee Celebrations in June 2022. We are always welcoming and open to new singers and players of any instrument and at any level of proficiency. If you fancy giving it a go – we'd love to welcome you!

3.11 Mothers' Union (by Liz Bird)

Mothers' Union, in common with most other groups, was unable to meet during the pandemic lockdown, so we were very pleased to be able to resume our meetings in September 2021, when we had a talk by Viv Ley, our former Diocesan President.

Our October meeting was taken up with a collection of toys and other small gifts for the Shoebox Appeal, which our branch has been doing for several years now. In November, we had our AGM, after which we enjoyed a craft activity.

In December, we always have a Preparation for Christmas activity. This was led by Rhona Snelson, as Heather Ritchie was unable to be there.

3.12 Zoom courses (by Revd Eunice Blackmore)

We've continued with Zoom activities throughout 2021.

- Start the week – morning prayer Mondays at 9 am – continued with numbers higher than when we met in church (it does help not having to battle the school traffic!) and is a great way to start the week!
- Celtic prayer – Tuesdays at 9pm ably and dedicatedly led by Helen Bryne
- Alternate Thursdays Lectio Divina – is encouraging to read, mediate and share Scripture together – and has provided a great link with Audrey Smith in residential care
- Thursday evening discussion group – at the beginning of 2021 we looked at the relevance of the Ten Commandments today using J. John's videos as a starting point. In April/May we discussed together Pete Grieg's course on Unanswered Prayer. However once Lockdown rules were further eased and house groups could re-commence, this group was suspended.

3.13 Illuminations Report (by Sarah Loach and Charles Van Ingen)

As 2021 was a difficult year we tried to connect with the community as much as possible in safe ways. Many people commented how the outside lights at Christ Church brought such joy. There were 700 multi-coloured lamps across the front of the car park, 100 lamps in the tree and a further 600 across the front of the Community Centre. We kept these lights on in the evenings until the clocks changed at the end of March.

We use LEDs as they last a long time and consume very little electricity. We also displayed our animal tableau on the roof of the Community Centre throughout December.

We also had another star on top of an amazing stable and wooden nativity scene especially made by our Men in Sheds group.

Thank you to Terry Cunningham and all the Men in Shed members who helped to make all this possible.

3.14 Christ Church Community Centre (by Sarah Loach, Centre Supervisor)

Thankfully the Centre is becoming busy again. We have the uniform groups back; Baby Sensory and Vibe Dance School are again fully operational and we were pleased to welcome back Weightwatchers on Saturday mornings. We also now have a Bridge Club using the Centre twice a week.

It is also a privilege to have the Men in Sheds group outside who work so hard for the Community and turn their hands to anything they are asked to do by the Vicar!

The number of Church based groups has also been growing, we have:

Toddlers
Singing Cafe
Happy Reading group
Knit and Natter
Indoor Bowls
Just Sew
Oasis
Befrienders
Carers Group
Bereavement Support Courses
Mothers' Union

all running on a regular basis.

Connect Cafe runs on a Wednesday morning and we have been really pleased to have support from the Wirral Community Connectors who attend regularly to offer support and advice for anyone who needs it.

We have become a very popular venue for parties in the recent months, especially children's parties. We can provide the main hall, smaller hall or the whole Kings Suite along with kitchen facilities. People have been very pleased with the space and the service they've received and recommended us to other people.

I would like to thank Victoria Gleave and our new Centre Administrator, Jane Dalziel, for all their hard work and dedication to ensure the smooth running of the Community Centre and for helping to make it such a welcoming place for all.

4 Rose Queen (by Grace Gleave)

I was delighted to be asked to be Rose Queen for 2021/2022 and was crowned during the 10.00 am service on Sunday 10th October 2021 due to Covid restrictions and the cancellation of the Summer Fair.

A fortnight later, my first fundraising event took place. I chose to organise an evening of Bingo, as this enabled those attending to sit in small groups, to ensure that everyone felt comfortable and safe, seeing as this was one of the first large social events that had been arranged post Covid. There was a fantastic turn out and everyone was hugely supportive - raffle prizes were generously donated and with the help of my retinue there were a large variety of cakes to choose from. A tremendous £586 was raised, which will be shared between Dementia UK, my chosen charity, and Christ Church, to support the outreach activities run from the Community Centre.

Preparations were then in full swing for the Christmas Coffee morning which took place on Saturday 27th November. Local businesses generously donated prizes for the Grand Raffle and following an appeal, we received a wonderful array of items for the 'Treats and Sweets' Tombola. Both Knit & Natter and Ladies in Stitches had prepared many handcrafted items for sale and bakers had been hard at work to provide cakes and artisan bread for the refreshment stall. Although Storm Arwen kept some folk away, the event was still well supported and there was a friendly atmosphere in the Community Centre.

I am looking forward to events in 2022 including a Quiz, Beetle Drive and Afternoon Tea.

5 Electoral Roll (by Tracy Evans on behalf of Lynn Ion)

At last year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting, members were advised that there were 236 names on the Electoral Roll.

We currently have 254 members on the Electoral Roll. Sadly, 6 members have passed away; 5 members have moved out of the area. We therefore have 29 new members.

With regards the geographic make up of Christ Church, there are 59 members living outside the parish; this figure is 25% of the overall total.

To ensure the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, can I remind all members of the need to notify the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their name or contact details (address, home telephone number, mobile number & email address). This can be done by either completing another application form or detailing the changes in an email which can be sent via the Parish Office (parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk).

6 Safeguarding Report (by Diane Shaw)

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator, along with Revd. Mike Loach and Victoria Gleave, held meetings throughout the previous year to update the Safeguarding file and to complete DBS documentation.

The annual audit has been completed and both verbal and written reports presented to the PCC at appropriate meetings.

There were two reported Safeguarding incidents during this last year. One incident was deemed sufficiently serious to advise a referral to Social Services. No further action was deemed necessary for the second one as it was not specifically a safeguarding issue.

Several personnel have been advised to attend specific Safeguarding Training and a record of this is being held by the Safeguarding Officer. It is hoped that face to face

training can be arranged over the coming months to ensure that our church is following the basic requirements.

7 Financial Review (by Charles Van Ingen, PCC Treasurer)

7.1 Introduction

The overall financial situation is presented in the Financial Statements which appear as Appendix I to this report. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission which has created the Charities SORP (Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice). This gives charities clear guidelines on what information to keep and what reports to produce to meet their legal obligations.

The Church of England has adopted the SORP as its standard basis for annual reporting by parishes so that a single set of information and reports meets the requirements of both the Charity Commission (accessible by the general public) and the wider Church.

The accounts presented here have been prepared on an Accruals basis.

The coronavirus pandemic has continued to have a very serious impact on our finances. Comparison with the pre-Covid 2019 figures are startling; comparison with 2020 shows generally similar figures.

Total incoming resources were £194,778 (of which legacies contributed £16,340 - see 7.6 below) against total expenditure of £198,678 including depreciation of £24,836 principally relating to the Community Centre and its contents. The total funds carried forward decreased from £1,046,097 to £1,044,935 the bulk of which reflects the capitalisation of the Community Centre.

7.2 Day-to-day operations including the Community Centre; see Note 20 in the Annual Accounts

Despite Covid continuing, Planned Giving including the Gift Aid tax reclaim was £300 higher than 2020 reflecting the importance of regular giving by standing order. Special thanks are due those individuals who generously increased their standing orders or made one-off lump-sum donations.

Loose Cash picked up to £4,634 compared to £3,419 in 2020. General Account donations were £600 higher than 2020. Our new venture into on-line giving using the Church of England's Giving Team's recommendation of SUM-UP brought in an additional £2,942.

PCC fees etc were significantly lower at £7,827 compared with £9,733 in 2020 which was a significant drop from 2019.

With the Community Centre being closed for much of the year or operating under severe restraints, income from Users was only £13,301 slightly up on 2020's £11,948 but way down on the £30,278 received in 2019.

Our general running expenses were very similar to 2020.

The overall operating shortfall before exceptional grants was £19,449.

Offsetting the substantial shortfall were grants totalling £17,863 as noted below:

- Wirral Borough Council – for Christmas Lunch Project: £800
- Wirral Borough Council – Wirral Together Fund (via a Government scheme): £2,660
- Wirral Borough Council – Road to Recovery Grant (via a Government scheme): £5,000
- Liverpool City Region – Hospitality Top Up Grant (via a Government scheme): £3,750
- Liverpool City Region – Additional Restrictions Top Up Grant (via a Government scheme): £1,200
- ASDA Foundation: £399
- HMRC Job Retention Scheme: £4054

For help securing these grants, thanks are due to Kate Lewis and Sarah Loach of CCHB; also Martin Harrison at St Bridget's West Kirby.

Receipt of these grants reduced the operating shortfall to £1,586. Given our financial reserves and the substantial legacy income, this is manageable.

7.3 Fabric Fund for Church Repairs & Improvements; See Note 6 in the Annual Accounts

Fabric Fund expenditure totalled £8,548 (2020: £42,027) covering completion of the audio-visual project, upgrade to the electrical installation following the 5 year electrical inspection and new furniture at the west end of the church.

7.4 Men in Sheds

For accounting convenience, Men in Sheds is incorporated under the Community Centre heading. However, the group endeavours (and is succeeding) to be self-sufficient covering its costs through donations and grants. Using an earlier Big Lottery grant, expenditure totalled £6,430 principally on purchase of a new "Craft Shed" plus fitting out and electrical services. A grant of £350 was received from Benevity using Terry Cunningham's connections with Shell plc (administration of Shell's corporate social responsibility scheme is outsourced to Benevity).

7.5 Investments; See Note 15 in the Annual Accounts

The value of the PCC's investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares for the Fabric Fund increased by 14% to £19,751. The Churchyard investment increased similarly to £2,339.

7.6 Legacies

We received a final £5,340 from the estate of Jenny Rome; also a second interim payment of £10,000 from the estate of Noel Fletcher and £1,000 from the estate of Dorothy Peers.

We have further expectations from the estate of Noel Fletcher. However, the coronavirus pandemic has delayed finalising of this estate by the executors.

7.7 Reserves Policy

Given that our Grade II listed church building is over 160 years old, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance in the Fabric Reserve accounts of at least £10,000 in cash to cover emergency situations coupled with the circa £19,000 holding in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares which are easily realisable if required.

7.8 Forward Guidance

It is anticipated that the operating income in 2022 will return to near pre-COVID levels by around Q2 2022. Given the level of the PCC's Cash at Bank (Note 16) and the level of Net Current Assets (see Balance Sheet), the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations and can thus be reasonably described as a "going concern".

7.9 Acknowledgements and thanks

My thanks are due to Barbara Thomas for monitoring the standing orders (and watching over the interest-free loan portfolio), Michael Blackburn for recording the envelope giving, the many sidespeople who assist (in normal circumstances!) with counting the cash on Sunday mornings, Jim Wallace for standing in during my holidays, the Churchwardens for maintaining a general oversight and to Janet Wallace for once again being our Independent Examiner to ensure that we meet all the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Church of England.

And finally to Terry Cunningham who handles the task of purchasing and managing the supplies of electricity and gas through the Church of England Parish Buying Scheme.

8 Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church of England Church Representation Rules. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and to consider standing for the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

9 Risk Management

The PCC continues to identify and manage the risks which arise from the day-to-day activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC categorises the risks that face Christ Church Higher Bebington under the following headings:

Financial - Risks relating to the fiscal activities of the PCC and the management of the financial affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington. These risks include those applicable to the best use of the PCC's financial resources, the availability of funds and risk of fraud.

All cheques (and all new direct debit mandates) require two signatures. Authorised by the PCC, there are four signatories: Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer. HMRC has tightened up its administrative processes surrounding Gift Aid tax reclaims. To ensure that we only claim the Gift Aid to which we are entitled, we have re-designed the Thanksgiving Pledge form to include the Gift Aid declaration. We claim Gift Aid on a monthly basis using HMRC's online reclaim system. We provide HMRC with monthly information about salaries paid to our part-time staff through their on-line Real Time Information system – known as RTI.

Strategic and Operational - Risks relating to the way in which the PCC undertakes the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC has developed policies for: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Environmental, Equal Opportunities and Lone Workers. These are kept under regular review so that they can be amended in the light of changing needs, emerging best practice guidelines and statutory regulations.

Governance & Regulation - Risks relating to external factors which affect the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington and the regulatory environment in which we operate.

Reputational - Risks relating to the image and perception of Christ Church Higher Bebington in the wider community.

The PCC maintains careful oversight of the groups, activities and events that operate under its aegis and authorises appropriate leaders. The PCC is particularly conscious of the inherent reputational risks of websites and social media generally and takes steps to ensure that proper control is exercised.

Appendix I

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC

Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2021

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Christ Church Higher Bebington

General Information

Status

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission reference is: 1132356. The parish is within the Diocese of Chester's Wirral North Deanery; the parish reference is 0806.

Incumbent

The Reverend Michael G Loach

Associate Minister

The Reverend Eunice Blackmore

Curate

The Reverend George Roach

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Details of the membership of the Parochial Church Council during 2021 are set out in Appendix II of the Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington

Honorary Treasurer

Charles Van Ingen
1 Blakeley Brow
Raby Mere
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 0PS

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

Bankers

HSBC plc
58 Bromborough Village Road
Bromborough
Wirral
Cheshire
CH62 7ET

Accounts

01466909 PCC General Account
01466917 Community Centre Operating Account
61043358 Planned Giving Account
61043374 100 Club Account
71059998 Community Centre Capital Account
51070916 Fabric Reserve Account

Investment Managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
The CBF Church of England Funds
Senator House
85 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4ET

Deposit Fund Accounts

609146001D Fabric Reserve
609146002D New Community Centre

[All cheques require two signatures. The authorised signatories as approved by the PCC are: the Vicar, the two Churchwardens and the Treasurer]

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Church Customer Services
Beaufort House
Brunswick Road
Gloucester
GL1 1JZ

Insurance Policy

04/XPG/0256401 ParishPlus (covering the Church and the Community Centre).

Statement of the PCC's Responsibilities for the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require the members of the PCC to prepare financial statement for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC and of the incoming resources and the application of resources in the year ended.

In preparing these financial statements, the members of the PCC are required to:

- a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- b) Make adjustments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The members of the PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

PCC members are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These accounts were prepared by the Hon Treasurer to the Parochial Church Council:



Charles Van Ingen 1 March 2022

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on Monday 4 April 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Reverend Michael G Loach 4 April 2022 (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Higher Bebington

I report on the accounts of the Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2021 on pages iv to xv which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out herein.

Respective Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and the Independent Examiner

The members of the Parochial Church Council (who are the trustees of the Charity) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Parochial Church Council 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
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning 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'; 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:

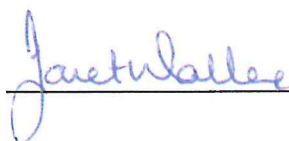
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- 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.

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU



31 March 2022

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020	Additional information
A Incoming Resources						
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds						
A1a Voluntary income	2a	127478	11716	139194	180304	
A1b Activities for generating funds	2b		7163	7163	3333	
A1c Investment income	2c		596	596	783	
A2 Incoming resources from charitable activities	2d	7827	13301	21128	21681	
A3 Other incoming resources	2e	8837	17860	26697	33297	
Total incoming resources		144142	50636	194778	239398	
B Resources Expended						
B1 Costs of generating funds						
B1a Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	77	0	77	76	
B1b Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs	3b	0	0	0	56	
B1c Investment management costs	3c	0	0	0	0	
B2 Charitable activities	3d	117307	81294	198601	221586	
B3 Governance costs	3e	0	0	0	0	
B4 Other resources expended	3f	0	0	0	0	
Total resources expended		117384	81294	198678	221718	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		26758	-30658	-3900	17680	
C Transfers						
Gross transfers between funds	19			0	0	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before other recognised gains and losses		10014	-13914	-3900	17680	
D Other recognised gains/losses						
D1 Gains on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use		0		0	0	
D2 Gains/losses on investment assets	15	0	2738	2738	1245	
D3 Actuarial gains/losses on defined benefit pension schemes		0	0	0	0	
Total of recognised gains/losses		0	2738	2738	1245	
Net movement in funds		10014	-11176	-1162	18925	
E Reconciliation of Funds						
Total funds brought forward	19	107387	938710	1046097		
Total funds carried forward	19	117401	927534	1044935		

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
A Fixed assets					
A1 Intangible assets				0	0
A2 Tangible assets	13		889510	889510	910016
A3 Heritage assets		0	0	0	0
A4 Investments	15	0	22089	22089	19351
Total fixed assets		0	911599	911599	929367
B Current assets					
B1 Stocks and work-in-progress		0	0	0	0
B2 Debtors	14	1752	2910	4662	4383
B3 Investments			0	0	0
B4 Cash at bank	16	121951	46161	168112	156756
Total current assets		123703	49071	172774	161139
C Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	6302	2786	9088	13059
Net current assets		117401	46285	163686	148080
Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years	18		30350	30350	31350
Total Net Assets		117401	927534	1044935	1046097

Represented by:

PCC Funds					
Unrestricted	19	117401		117401	107387
Restricted	19		927534	927534	938710
Total PCC Funds		117401	927534	1044935	1046097

Legacies

In the terms of the Will (Grant of Probate issued on 2 January 2020) of the late Henry Noel William Fletcher (of 77 Mill Road, Higher Bebington), who died on 17 January 2019, the PCC has been left a one-twentieth share of his estate.

On 9 June 2020, the Executors made an interim payment to the PCC of £15,367.

On 10 September 2021, the Executors made a second interim payment to the PCC of £10,000.

As yet, despite enquiries, we do not have any definitive information from the Executors as to the final payment or when it is likely to be paid; however, the PCC is likely to benefit by a sum of a few thousand pounds. Given the uncertainty, nothing from the estate is shown in these accounts.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on Monday 4 April 2022 and signed on its behalf by Reverend Michael G Loach (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council):



Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which 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 financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Endowment Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC does not benefit from any endowment funds and so there is no reference to such funds in these accounts.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds comprise revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds that are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC has no funds which are designated and thus no such information will be found in these accounts.

1.3 Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. User contributions to the running of the Community Centre are recognised as they become due. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are readily quantifiable. Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable; interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.4 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 expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a Faculty for disposal are inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings	50 years
Buildings (wooden)	8 years
Office equipment	4 years
Garden equipment	2 years

1.6 Investments and short-term deposits

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange, or whose value derives from them, are valued at market value at the year-end.

Short term deposits are held as cash with the CCLA or at the bank.

Notes to the Accounts

2 Incoming Resources

	Note	2021 Unrestricted	2021 Restricted	2021 Total	2020 Total	Additional Information
a) Voluntary Income						
<i>Christ Church Congregation Giving</i>						
Direct to bank: Standing orders and GAYE		72435		72435	72483	
Envelopes		1285		1285	2394	
Gift Aid lumpsums		3156		3156	922	
Total planned giving before Gift Aid claim		76876		76876	75799	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - General		19099		19099	18782	
Total planned giving		95975		95975	94581	
Loose cash collections		4634		4634	3419	
Total voluntary giving		100609		100609	98000	
<i>Christ Church - miscellaneous donations and other voluntary income</i>						
Donations - General		7587		7587	6943	
Donations - General via SUM-UP		2942		2942	0	On-line donations
Donations - Community Centre operations			0	0	1184	
Donations - Churchyard			505	505	0	
Donations - Fabric Fund			6360	6360	5524	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Fabric Fund			1398	1398	1410	
Total miscellaneous donations		10529	8263	18792	15061	
<i>Christ Church Community Centre Project</i>						
Donations - General			2675	2675	3780	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Community Centre			468	468	771	
Community Centre excluding grants			3143	3143	4551	
<i>Organ Project income</i>						
Donations			310	310	825	
Organ Project			310	310	825	
<i>Legacies</i>						
Legacy income		16340		16340	61867	
Total Voluntary Income		127478	11716	139194	180304	
b) Activities for generating funds						
Fund-raising activities and events (new Community Centre)	11		1238	1238	1218	
Fund-raising - Organ Project	11		0	0	195	
Special charitable efforts (general)	12		5925	5925	1921	
Total from activities for generating funds			7163	7163	3334	
c) Investment income						
Bank interest and dividends - Fabric Fund			533	533	689	
Bank interest and dividends - Churchyard			44	44	57	
Bank interest and dividends - Community Centre			19	19	36	
Total Investment income			596	596	782	
d) Incoming resources from charitable activities to further the PCC's objects						
Services provided by the PCC for which fees are payable:						
- Church Services and administrative activities (PCC fees)		6101		6101	7551	
- Use of organ for weddings and funerals		766		766	818	
- Church heating		756		756	912	
- Music licence		204		204	252	
Magazine income		0		0	200	
Community Centre - User Contributions	8a		13301	13301	11948	
Total Income from charitable activities		7827	13301	21128	21681	
e) Other incoming resources						
Grants for Community Centre: Men in Sheds			0	0	10000	
Grant for Community Centre: Men in Sheds			350	350	350	Benevity
Grant for Community Centre: Men in Sheds			1148	1148	0	Co-op
Grants (Misc): Wirral Borough Council for Christmas Lunch Project			800	800	157	
Grant (Defibrillator): Wirral Borough Council			0	0	1970	
Grant (Discretionary for Community Centre): Wirral Borough Council			0	0	10000	
Grant - Wirral Borough Council - Wirral Together Fund			2660	2660	0	
Grant - Wirral Borough Council - Road To Recovery Grant			5000	5000	0	
Grant - Liverpool City Region - Hospitality Top Up Grant			3750	3750	0	
Grant - Liverpool City Region - Additional Restrictions Top Up Grant			1200	1200	0	
Grant (Social Outreach activities): Co-op Academy			0	0	270	
Grant - ASDA Foundation			399	399	0	
Grant: Chester Diocesan Board of Finance				0	2000	
Grants: HMRC Job Retention Scheme		4054	0	4054	4693	
Grants: LPOW - Church fabric (VAT)			650	650	0	
Grants: LPOW - Electrical (VAT)			0	0	3401	
Grants: LPOW - Organ Project (VAT)			0	0	456	
Grant - for Community Centre			1903	1903	0	
Grant - anonymous		4000		4000	0	
Other		783		783	0	
Total Other incoming resources		8837	17860	26697	33297	
Total Incoming Resources		144142	50636	194778	239398	
Total Gift Aid reclaim				20965	20963	HMRC
Total grants from LPOW scheme to offset VAT				650	3857	Listed Places of Worship Scheme

LPOW = Listed Places of Worship

Notes to the Accounts

3 Resources Expended

	Note	2021 Unrestricted	2021 Restricted	2021 Total	2020 Total	Additional Information
a) Costs of generating voluntary income		77		77	75	Pledge Envelopes
b) Fundraising costs: cost of goods sold, prizes etc		0		0	57	
c) Investment management costs		0		0	0	
d) Charitable activities						
<i>ij) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church</i>						
Church - running expenses	5	11765		11765	15178	
Churchyard upkeep	7	11494	0	11494	5305	
Community Centre running costs	8b		41484	41484	38403	
Church - repairs, maintenance and improvements	6		8549	8549	42027	
Magazine production		0		0	45	
Ministry: clergy costs	4	14602		14602	17007	Includes secretarial support
Ministry: Parish Share - Chester Diocese		68132		68132	67624	Paid to Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
Organist and choir		3338		3338	1530	
Outreach/Young people		2950		2950	2792	
<i>sub-total (i)</i>		112281	50033	162314	189911	
<i>ij) Church management & administration supporting the above</i>						
Office costs and miscellaneous expenses	9	5001	0	5001	7422	
Capital expenditure and depreciation						
Capital expenditure			4330	4330	0	
Depreciation charge	13		20506	20506	23048	
<i>sub-total (ii)</i>		5001	24836	29837	30470	
<i>iii) Grants to charitable organisations</i>	10	25	6425	6450	1205	
Total Charitable activities		117307	81294	198601	221586	
e) Governance costs (Audit charges)				0	0	
f) Other resources expended						
Outings		0	0	0	0	
Total Other Resources Expended		0	0	0	0	
Total Resources Expended		117384	81294	198678	221718	

Transactions with related parties that require disclosure

During 2021, the wife of a member of the PCC (Mark Gleave) was employed as a part-time Parish Secretary on a job-share basis. The contract of employment has been in place for some years and allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Victoria L Gleave during 2021 was: £8609. Employee benefits: nil.

Also during 2021, the wife of the chairman of the PCC (Rev'd Michael G Loach) was employed as the Community Centre Supervisor. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Sarah L Loach during 2021 was: £6364. Employee benefits: nil.

Towards the end of 2021, the secretary of the Parochial Church Council (also an elected member of the PCC and thus a trustee) was employed as the Community Centre Administrator. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Jane E Dalziel during 2021 was: £524. Employee benefits: nil.

Declaration as to employees earning above certain figures

The number of employees of the PCC with total emoluments (excluding employer pension costs) above £60,000 per year: Nil (2020 Nil)

Notes to the Accounts (4 - 7)

	2021	2020
4 Clergy Costs		
Clergy working expenses	1472	849
Secretarial support*	8608	9931
<i>Vicarage expenses:</i>		
Council Tax	2840	2711
Electricity & gas (Vicar's Study and public areas)	469	1037
Telephone and Broadband	487	1677
Water (United Utilities)	509	513
Visiting clergy	216	289
Total	14601	17007
*During the year, to support the clergy, the PCC employed one person in the role of Parish Secretary on a part-time basis		
5 Church Running Expenses		
Insurance	4642	4598
Heating (gas)	2631	2992
Lighting (electricity)	944	721
Maintenance and Minor Repairs	2162	2354
Upkeep of services	1386	4505
Water	0	8
		Working through a credit from United Utilities
Total	11765	15178
6 Church Repairs and Improvements (Fabric Fund)		
Miscellaneous	306	1208
Furnishings	3278	0
Upgrades to electrical installation	2347	0
Organ Restoration project	0	2740
Lighting project	0	20567
Audio-Visual project	2617	17512
		Completion of project started in 2019
Total Expenditure	8548	42027
7 Upkeep of Churchyard		
Maintenance charges	4261	4000
Materials, servicing, petrol, oil etc	1488	270
Projects	5745	1035
		Petrol etc; servicing the lawn tractor
		Fencing; Storage facility electricians etc; tree clearance; skip hire; etc
Total Expenditure	11494	5305

Notes to the Accounts

8 Community Centre Report (includes Men in Sheds)

	2021	2020	
8a Operating Income			
Adult Groups; Professional Groups	9335	8119	
Men in Sheds	105	491	
Voluntary Groups (Under 18s)	796	1222	
Income from Social initiatives	1677	1031	Tuesday activities, Connect Coffee, Film Club, Tea Dance etc
One-off bookings	1388	1084	
	13301	11947	
8b Operating Expenditure			
Cleaning materials & consumables	640	1411	
Cleaning	9080	5624	
Electricity	5529	5589	
Insurance	1626	1599	
Licences	228	225	
Management**	10851	10461	
Men In Sheds	2099	211	New craft shed (£4330) and fitting out; electrical connection
Milk	0	152	
Repairs, refurbishments and improvements	6470	4574	Replacement sliding door; electrical repairs and upgrades
Servicing of plant & equipment	2671	6090	
Stewarding	50	0	
Waste removal	1940	1437	
Water	300	1030	Credit from 2020 has worked through 2021
	41484	38403	
	Operating Shortfall	28183	26456

In practice, in the light of COVID, the Centre Supervisor re-allocated cleaning resource from the Community Centre to the church building to help ensure a safe environment for members of the congregation and visitors.

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Administrator on a part-time basis
This person also deputised for the Parish Secretary during holidays

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis

Notes to the Accounts

9 Church Management & Administration

	2021	2020	
Office costs	2538	2621	Telephone (moved away from BT), broadband, photocopier
Stationery	495	356	
Miscellaneous	1968	4444	
Total	5001	7421	

10 Grants Paid

	2021 Unrestricted	2021 Restricted	2021 Total	2020 Total	
a) Local charities					
Alder Hey Children's Charity		2300	2300	0	
Friends of Chester Cathedral	25		25	25	
Claire House Children's Hospice		133	133	0	
Forum Housing Association, Birkenhead		0	0	250	
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington		211	211	0	
b) National charities					
Church of England Children's Society (CECS)		129	129	300	Christingle
Macmillan Cancer Support		395	395	0	
Mary's Meals		0	0	300	
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington		15	15	230	We actually sent £245 as the 2020 cheque for £230 was never presented
c) Overseas charities					
Christian Aid		2042	2042	100	
Medecins Sans Frontieres		200	200	0	
YEMEN Appeal		1000	1000	0	
Total grants paid	25	6425	6450	1205	

Because of the coronavirus, the usual succession arrangements for the Rose Queen did not occur during 2020. In turn, that meant that no donation was made from Rose Queen generated funds during 2020. During 2021, the retiring Rose Queen (Charlotte Millington) presented a cheque for £2300 to the Alder Hey Children's Charity.

11 Fund-raising activities & events supporting the Community Centre and Services provided

	2021 Unrestricted	2021 Restricted	2020 Restricted
100 Club		1238	1173
Sales of cakes, pies and preserves		0	240
Total Fund Raising		1238	1413

12 Special Efforts Income

	2021 Restricted	2020 Restricted
Christian Aid	2041	100
Christingle (CECS)	129	268
Claire House Children's Hospice, Clatterbridge	133	0
Macmillan Cancer Support	395	0
Mary's Meals	0	278
Rose Queen	2105	1054
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington	15	221
Thomas Robinson Charity	212	0
YEMEN Appeal	895	0
Total Special Efforts	5925	1921

Notes to the Accounts

13 Tangible assets: Capital Spending and Depreciation

		Community Centre				Churchyard		Overall Total
		Community Centre Building	Men in Sheds	Craft Shed	Vicarage Basement	Community Centre Total	Garden Machinery Store	
Actual/Deemed Cost	At 1 January 2021	1109962	3210	2900	1798	1117870	10653	1128523
	New capital spending	0	0	4330	0	4330	0	4330
	At 31 December 2021	1109962	3210	7230	1798	1122200	10653	1132853
Depreciation	At 1 January 2021	215506	1203	0	1798	218507	0	218507
	Charge for the year	22199	401	904	0	23504	1332	24836
	At 31 December 2021	237705	1604	904	1798	242011	1332	243343
Net book value	At 31 December 2021	872257	1606	6326	0	880189	9321	889510
	At 31 December 2020	894456	2007	2900	0	899363	10653	910016

The Community Centre was opened in April 2011.

Men in Sheds and the Craft Shed are part of the Community Centre's social engagement activities. The Vicarage basement is used to store items for the work and mission of Christ Church in Higher Bebington. Accordingly, for capital accounting purposes, these three headings are included under the Community Centre heading on the Balance Sheet.

14 Debtors

An analysis of the debtors at 31 December 2021 is given below:

		2021	2021	2021	2020
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
a) Voluntary Giving	Donations - Community Centre project			0	230
	Gift Aid reclaim - General Account	1752		1752	2953
	Gift Aid reclaim - Community Centre			0	155
	Legacy			0	500
	<i>sub-total</i>	1752		1752	3838
d) PCC Activities	User Contributions - Adult Groups		2164	2164	0
	User Contributions - Under 18s		746	746	0
	<i>sub-total</i>		2910	2910	0
g) Grants Received	HMRC Job Retention Scheme			0	545
Total debtors		1752	2910	4662	4383

Notes to the Accounts

15 Investments

Movements in the year:

Market value at 1 January 2021	19351
Add: Additions to investments at cost	0
Less: Disposals at carrying value	0
Add: gains on revaluation	2738

Market value at 31 December 2021 **22089**

Details of holdings

	Holding 31 Dec 2021	Price per Share 31 Dec 2021	Value 31 Dec 2021	Value at 31 Dec 2020	Gain on Revaluation
CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Income Shares					
Fabric Fund					
Ref 609146 001S	844.52	2338.67	19751	17302	2448
Churchyard Fund					
Ref 609146 002S	100.00	2338.67	2339	2049	290
Total			22089	19351	2738

16 Cash at Bank

	Account Number	31 Dec 2021	31 Dec 2020
Current Accounts - HSBC			
PCC General Account	01466909	27220	31189
Community Centre Operations Account	01466917	7963	4239
Planned Giving Account	61043358	1055	860
100 Club Account	61043374	556	318
<i>sub-total</i>		36794	36606
Capital Accounts			
Fabric Reserve Account - HSBC	51070916	72298	60376
Fabric Reserve CBF	60914 001D	46513	45987
<i>sub-total: Fabric Fund</i>		118811	106363
Community Centre Capital Account - HSBC	71059998	5089	6373
Community Centre CBF	60914 002D	7418	7414
<i>sub-total: Community Centre</i>		12507	13787
Total		168112	156756

CBF = Church of England Central Board of Finance

Total cash investments with CBF **53931** **53401**

Notes to the Accounts

Note 17 - Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2021	2021	2020	
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
d) Charitable activities					
i) Work of the PCC					
Church Running Expenses	38		38	0	
Organ tuning	0		0	480	
Church 5 year electrical inspection	0		0	734	
Churchyard maintenance	65		65	180	
Churchyard Major Projects	0		0	3950	
Vicarage gas and electricity	-706		-706	-420	
Visiting clergy	43		43	43	
Community Centre	4995		4995	3340	
Organist and choir	805		805	1445	
Outreach, Young People	734		734	1466	
Church Management & Administration	328		328	0	
sub-total - Work of the PCC	6302	0	6302	11218	
iii) Grants					
Christian Aid		41	41	100	
The Children's Society		129	129	300	
Claire House		133	133	0	
Macmillan Cancer Support		395	395	0	
Royal British Legion		245	245	230	
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington		212	212	0	
sub-total - Grants		1155	1155	630	
sub-total: Charitable activities	6302	1155	7457	11848	
g) Other Creditors *					
Chester Diocesan Board of Finance		1466	1466	955	DBF fees: Oct, Nov and Dec 2021
Clergy travel expenses (Landican)		49	49	89	
Organist fees		116	116	85	
Verger fees (weddings and funerals)		0	0	82	
sub-total: Other Creditors		1631	1631	1211	
Total Creditors	6302	2786	9088	13059	

* For weddings and funerals, the PCC acts as agent for the fees due to the Diocesan Board of Finance, clergy travel to Landican Crematorium, organist, verger and sexton. Hence this income and expenditure is not shown on the Statement of Financial Activities. However, the outstanding amounts due to be paid need to be shown here to ensure that the Net Current Assets figure shown on the Balance Sheet presents a true picture.

Note 18 - Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years

Loans from members of Christ Church Higher Bebington (Interest-free)

	Community Centre	Organ Project	Total
Opening balance at 1 January 2021	10850	20500	31350
New loans during 2021	0	0	0
Loans repaid during 2021	1000	0	1000
Closing balance at 31 December 2021	9850	20500	30350

Notes to the Accounts

19 Movements in restricted funds during 2021

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Depreciation	Revaluation of Assets	Transfers	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2021
Fabric Fund	17052	3001	8549	0	2448	5799	19751
Churchyard	12702	549	0	1332	290	-9870	2339
Community Centre	899363	34911	41484	23504		20815	890101
Fund for St Paul's Project	6250	6250	0			0	12500
Special charitable efforts	3343	5925	6425			0	2843
Total Restricted Funds	938710	50636	56458	24836	2738	16744	927534
Unrestricted Funds	107387	144142	117384	0	0	-16744	117401
Total PCC Funds	1046097	194778	173842	24836	2738	0	1044935

NOTES

Fabric Fund

All the cash reserves in the Fabric Fund were expended on the church fabric and fittings; hence the remaining funds at the year end are purely the investment assets; see Note 15. Also note that expenditure on the church fabric, fittings etc is not capitalised.

Churchyard

The Garden Machinery facility was constructed at the end of 2020 and is capitalised; see Note 13. Depreciation has been charged from 2021. The remaining Restricted balance equals the value of the investment assets; see Note 15.

Community Centre

The Community Centre expenditure includes £23,504 for depreciation as shown in Note 13.

Fund for St Paul's Project

During 2020, £5,000 was anonymously given to support the St Paul's Project. On this £1,250 Gift Aid was claimed. A further £5000 plus £1250 Gift Aid was given anonymously during 2021 bringing the total to £12,500. At the time that these donations were made, there was a general expectation that a Pastoral Scheme joining Christ Church Higher Bebington with St Paul's Tranmere would be implemented during 2021. For various reasons, this is now viewed as being unlikely and the donor will be consulted during 2022 as to how we should proceed in the new circumstances.

Note 20

This page does not form part of the Annual Accounts but illustrates the impact of coronavirus on the "routine" income and expenditure of Christ Church Higher Bebington including the Community Centre.

These figures **exclude** income from legacies, fundraising and grants not related the the pandemic or day-to-day operations. Also excluded is capital expenditure.

	Actual 2021	Actual 2020
Income		
a) Voluntary Giving		
Bank Direct (Standing Orders)	72435	72483
Envelopes	1285	2394
Gift Aid Lump-sums	3156	922
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	19099	18782
<i>sub-total, Planned Giving</i>	95975	94581
Loose Cash	4634	3419
Donations	7587	6943
Donations via SUM-UP	2942	0
Total Voluntary Giving	111138	104943
d) Charitable Activities		
PCC fees, church heating etc	7827	9733
Community Centre User Contributions	13301	11948
Total Charitable Activities	21128	21681
Total Operating Income	132266	126624
Expenditure		
a) Costs of generating voluntary income	74	74
d) Charitable activities		
Church Running Expenses	14765	15178
Churchyard upkeep	5749	5305
Community Centre running expenses	37104	35203
Magazine Production	0	45
Clergy Costs	14602	17007
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	68132	67624
Organist & Choir	3338	1530
Outreach; Young People	2950	2792
Office Costs & Miscellaneous Expenditure	5001	7422
Total Operating Expenditure	151715	152180
Operating shortfall before exceptional grants	-19449	-25556
Grants linked to Coronavirus		
Grant - Wirral Borough Council for Christmas Lunch Project	800	
Grant - Wirral Borough Council - Wirral Together Fund	2660	
Grant - Wirral Borough Council - Road To Recovery Grant	5000	
Grant - Liverpool City Region - Hospitality Top Up Grant	3750	
Grant - Liverpool City Region - Additional Restrictions Top Up Grant	1200	
Grant - ASDA Foundation	399	
Grant - HMRC Job Retention Scheme	4054	
Total Coronavirus Grants	17863	16963
Operating Shortfall after exceptional grants	-1586	-8593

Commentary

As will be seen, without the various special grants, the Operating Outcome would have been a shortfall of around £19,500. However with grants of £17,900, the deficit was £1,600.

Given our financial reserves and the substantial legacy income (see Note 2), this shortfall was manageable.

Forward guidance

It is anticipated that the operating income in 2022 will return to near pre-COVID levels by around Q2 2022. Given the level of the PCC's *Cash at Bank* (Note 16) and level of *Net current assets* (Balance Sheet), the PCC is well able to meet its financial obligations and can thus be reasonably described as a "going concern".

Appendix II

Administrative information

Christ Church Higher Bebington is situated in Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Parish Office, Christ Church Community Centre,
Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (ref: 1132356).

Connected Charity information

The Vicar and Churchwardens are the trustees of the Thomas Robinson Charity; Charity Commission ref 233412.

Membership of the PCC

Up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 30 May 2021:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Helen Byrne
Rhona Snelson
John Theobald

Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Jane Dalziel – Secretary (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Alan Jackson
Karen Lewis (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Kate Lewis (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Barbara Mayers
Victoria Midgley (Co-opted on 13 January 2021)
Ian Millington – Lay Vice-Chairman (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)
Tracy Evans
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – Treasurer (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)

As from the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 30th May 2021:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

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Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Helen Byrne
Rhona Snelson
John Theobald (died on 23 February 2022)
Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – Co-opted 9 June 2021 and re-appointed as PCC Secretary
Tracy Evans - Co-opted on 6 December 2021
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Karen Lewis (died on 1 August 2021)
Kate Lewis
Victoria Midgley
Ian Millington – Lay Vice-Chairman (re-appointed on 9 June 2021)
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – Treasurer (re-appointed on 9 June 2021)

Sub-total: 10

Grand total: 18 (17 from 2 August 2021, then 18 from 6 December 2021, then 17 from 23 February 2022)

Deputy Churchwardens

At the meeting of the PCC held on 9 June 2021, the following people were appointed Deputy Churchwardens:

Rose Rogers
Rhona Snelson
Diane Shaw

Sidespeople for 2020 – 2021; appointed at the PCC meeting held on 9 June 2021

Alan Abbott
Liz Bird
Gail Boisson
John Boisson
Terry Cunningham
Rob Evans
Tracy Evans
Derek Fogg
June Fogg
Nydia Gibson
Graham Loach
Jill Loach
Barbara Mayers
Fiona Murphy
Beverley Price
Judith Renton
Joan Rippon
Diane Shaw
Mike Thorne
Janet Wallace
Jim Wallace
Linda White
Helen Young

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Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace (Re-appointed at the APCM held on 30 May 2021)

On 9 June 2021, the new PCC following the 2021 APCM confirmed the following:

100Club Organiser	Beverley Price
Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer	Diane Shaw
Church Website co-ordinator	Julie Scarsbrook
Eco Church Development	Alan Hollinshead
Electoral Roll Officer	Tracy Evans (tbc)
Flag Captain	Sarah Loach
GDPR Co-ordinator	Ian D Millington
Parish Legacy Officer	Ian D Millington
Recorder – Community Centre Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Organ Project Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Envelopes	Michael Blackburn
Recorder – Standing Orders	Barbara Thomas
Relief Count Supervisor	Jim Wallace
Safety & Security Officer	To be arranged
Social Media Co-ordinator (except CCHB website)	Revd Michael Loach

and

Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with HMRC regarding PAYE (and RTI) and on-line Gift Aid reclaims	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Pensions Regulator	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Charity Commission for England & Wales	PCC Treasurer
Authorised to negotiate energy contracts (through Parish Buying)	Terry Cunningham

The new PCC following the APCM also confirmed the composition of the following bodies all of which report to the PCC:

Buildings & Finance Committee

Ian Murray (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham (Secretary)
Revd Michael G Loach
Alan Jackson
John Theobald (died on 23 February 2022)
Charles F Van Ingen

Community Centre Management Team

Charles F Van Ingen (Chairman)
Sheila Clarke MBE
Jane Dalziel (Centre Administrator) (appointed 1 November 2021)
Revd Michael G Loach
Sarah Loach (Centre Supervisor)
Ian Murray
Julie Scarsbrook (Centre Administrator) (resigned on 30 September 2021)
Diane Shaw

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Men in Sheds Team

Stephen Ion (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham
Alan Jackson

Charity & Fundraising Committee

Roy Mayers (Chairman)
Mark Gleave (Secretary)
Revd Eunice Blackmore
Kate Lewis
Gary Shaw
Paul Price

The PCC authorised the following pastoral/social initiatives:

<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Leader/s</u>
Bereavement Support Group	Vera Jackson
Boulders Group	Dawn Coulter and Libby Potter
Carers' Group	Rhona Snelson and Graham Loach
Coffee Club	June Fogg
Connect Coffee	Revd Michael Loach and Rhona Snelson
Film Club	To be arranged
Knit & Natter	Heather Whitehead and Joan Rippon
Ladies in Stitches	Sarah Loach & Julie Scarsbrook
Lunch Club (1st Tuesdays)	Heather Whitehead
Oasis Mental Health Support Group	Ted Jones and Jill Wright
Singing Café	Revd Eunice Blackmore
Sunday Club	Victoria Gleave
Supper Club	John Theobald (died on 23 February 2022)
Tea Dance	Sarah Loach
Thirsty Thursday	Terry Cunningham
Toddler Group (Mondays)	Amy Lee and Sarah Loach

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Diocese of Chester

Christ Church Higher Bebington

Parochial Church Council

Annual Report 2020

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral
CH63 8LX

Charity Commission Ref: 1132356

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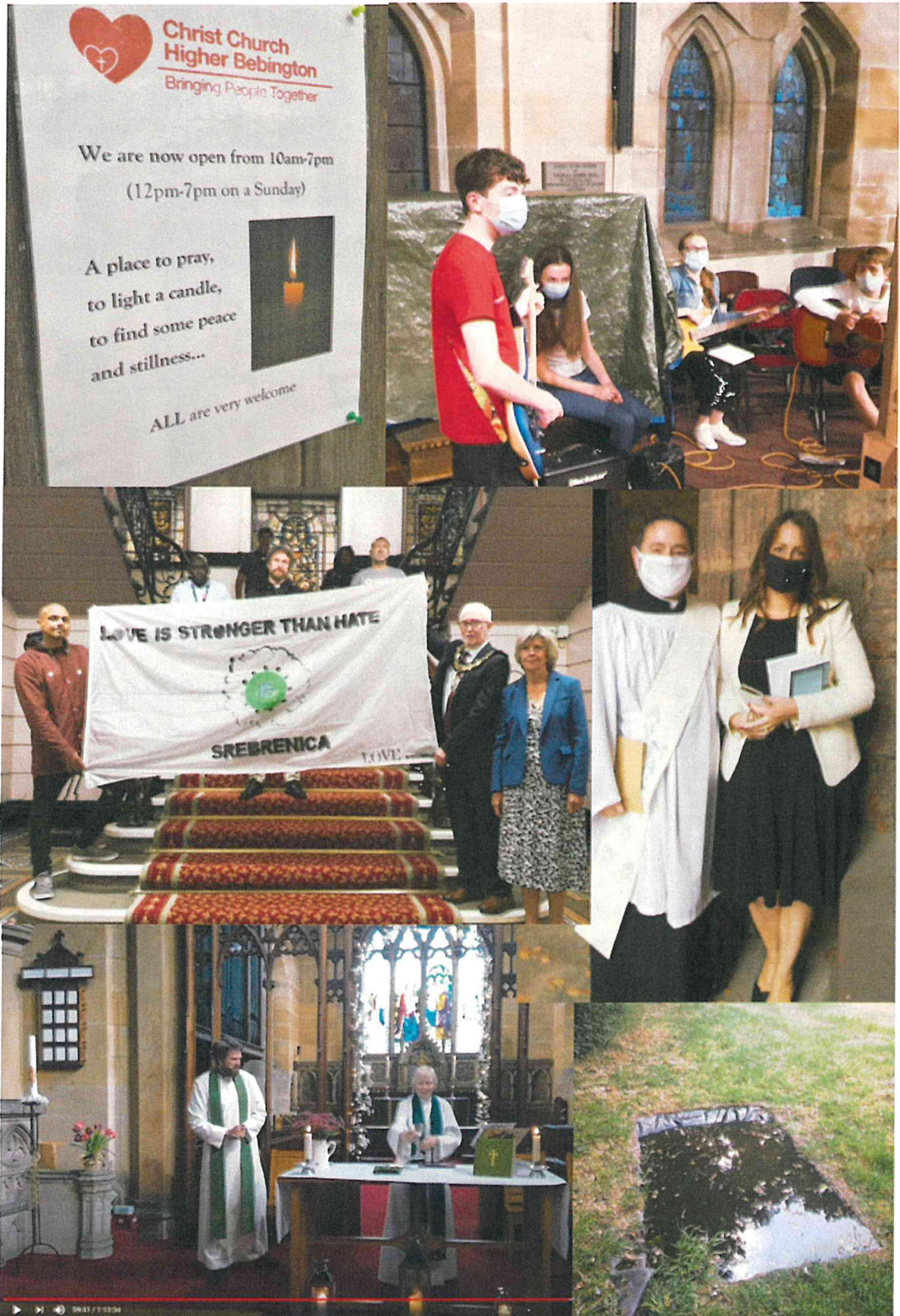


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Christ Church Higher Bebington

1 Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Higher Bebington's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and the Community Centre.

2 Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to know the love of God through worship at our church and engagement with our members in and around the parish. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we properly maintain the fabric of Christ Church, which is a Grade II listed building dating back to 1859, and the Community Centre which opened in April 2011.

The PCC's policy is to deliver Christmas and Easter cards to every home in the Parish giving details of the church services and outreach activities planned for these festivals.

3 Achievements and Performance

3.1 Incumbent's Report (by Rev. Mike Loach)

Writing any sort of report for the year 2020 will undoubtedly be a very unusual experience. Over the course of this year, parish life changed in ways that few of us would ever have imagined and changes to our worshipping life were unprecedented, at least in the past 1000 years! Our movements were curtailed,

worship in our buildings ceased, pastoral services were suspended or became almost unrecognisable and even clergy were unable to access church buildings.

There was clearly much distress, but alongside the considerable challenges, opportunities to reach out in new ways also arose. We were forced to develop our technological capabilities, to imagine how we might connect when unable to be alongside each other and to rethink how we use our land and buildings to communicate when conventional services are not possible. Amongst the very real hardship and heartache, blessings could often be found, and this seemed to contribute to a sense of hopefulness.

Worship

Our final congregational service before the first national lockdown came into place was held on Sunday 15th of March. Up until this point, our services had retained a familiar pattern with average numbers attending the regular services as follows:

Sunday	8.30am – 12 attendees aged over 16
	10am – 110 over 16 & 20 under 16
	6.30pm – 20 over 16
Wednesday	10.30am – 20 over 16

The first service held without a congregation took place in church on Sunday, March 22nd. This was our first livestream service on YouTube, conducted in protective gloves, but with no masks(!), and involved the Loach family, Rev Eunice, Rev George and our organist, Wendy. Just one week later, lockdown was firmly in place and use of church buildings was forbidden. This obviously required a rethink, and the Vicarage Sunday service began! Sam Loach quickly worked out what was required for our weekly livestream and Harry and Sarah faithfully supported the Vicar in taking various roles in the service, sourcing hymns to be played through the computer, finding props and operating puppets! Rev Eunice's help was also invaluable in putting together slides for hymns, readings etc. and the team's levels of competency and sophistication grew week by week. Eventually we were able to use videos sent by members of the Ministry Team and this enabled us to be blessed by prayers, readings and sermons featuring other members of the church family.

We had no idea how the videos would be received or who would be able to access them but were astounded when on Palm Sunday we reached a peak of 1,100 views! For those who couldn't tune in online, we started to make DVDs available, with volunteers dropping these off around the parish. Online viewing figures eventually settled between 400-500 as other churches started to offer similar services and some of our viewers were able to reconnect with their regular church.

When in the summer we were able to open our doors again, around 40-50 made the return and our online numbers dropped off a little to around 250-300. Calculating total numbers connecting with our services is not easy as more than one person may be watching on the same screen, but equally, those viewing

may not watch for long! However, we should be very encouraged by the total number who have engaged with our services either in person or online. As we emerge from lockdown and start to welcome back most of our regular members, we will still continue to stream our services for those who cannot make it into church.

In those times when we were able to be in church, the presence of our organist, Wendy, and our choir, led by June Fogg, brought great delight to many. Wendy is an incredibly versatile and talented musician and her willingness to take a lead, to improvise and work with others has been invaluable. I was also greatly heartened by numbers attending choir rehearsals during 2020, due, in no small part, to the enthusiasm and dedication of their leader, June Fogg. As we move out of lockdown, we look forward to even greater contributions from the choir, to Wendy being able to again inspire and direct our youth band and, of course, to hearing the voices of our congregation!

The integration of new technology into our regular worship patterns has been one of several blessings received during lockdown and it will continue to be a key part of our mission to reach out beyond the church walls. It will certainly enable us to expand the life of our church in new ways, though I hope it won't dominate every part of our worshipping life and look forward to finding some opportunities to press the "off" switch as social distancing regulations start to ease.

In addition to our regular worship services, we continued to offer pastoral services when possible. Obviously, for much of the year, baptisms and weddings were not possible and when permitted, those who had made bookings often preferred to postpone. In 2020, we conducted 3 baptisms, 2 weddings and 43 funerals (20 in church and 23 at the crematorium). Though our churchyard is now closed for full burials, 8 burials took place in existing plots and we continue to offer space for burial of cremated remains with 2 new plots being added. Taking funerals in lockdown was a real challenge and my thanks must go to Revd Eunice, Revd George, our Wardens, Victoria Gleave, Wendy Dickenson, Sam and Sarah Loach and all who worked hard to keep those attending safe and able to grieve without unnecessary distraction.

I am very proud to be able to say that during the whole of lockdown, we did not miss a single Sunday service, being able to livestream throughout. In addition, other than those first few months when churches were forced to close, we have opened our doors every day between 10am and 7pm for private prayer. This was a great blessing and has brought so many new faces into the building for a whole host of reasons. I am grateful to all those who volunteered to open and close the church, especially our cleaners, Gavin & Peter; Gary Shaw; and Sarah, who often stepped in when others were unavailable.

And finally, I must record our thanks to Sam Loach for the endless hours that he invested over the past year in making the livestream possible and then responding to the many snags and glitches that inevitably followed. He has rarely missed a Sunday and each week sets up the stream in advance and then

records the service to DVD, ready for delivery. We're very lucky that he's been so willing to commit to this project and put up with his Dad's frequent requests!

Pastoral care

Like everything else, our pastoral care to the parish took on a very different shape during 2020. Christ Church was one of the very first local organisations to offer support to people during the early stages of the pandemic. Once it became clear that a lockdown was possible, we made a decision to change the content of our Easter card, removing the details about the Community Centre and events that were no longer likely to take place and replacing them with lists of numbers to ring if in need of help. We recruited volunteers from our pastoral team, other churches, local undertakers, and councillors and offered help with shopping, picking up prescriptions, dog walking as well as a listening service for those who just needed to talk. For the first couple of months, we received daily requests and responded to calls from all over the Wirral. A good few of those arrangements are still continuing and relationships formed out of regular phone calls have led to some starting to come to church, occasionally for services, but often to just spend time in peaceful surroundings or to light a candle.

Throughout the year, we were also able to join in with a variety of initiatives aimed at providing for those who had been particularly affected by the pandemic. Various hampers, gifts, bags of food and items of clothing were entrusted to the church for distribution, and we were blessed that volunteers from around the parish were willing to help with this work. Clearly, our usual Christmas Day lunch arrangements could not take place, but this didn't stop us delivering to those we knew would appreciate some festive food and a doorstep conversation on the 25th. Following a generous donation from our local councillors and help from all around the community, we were able to deliver 140 meals and gifts and, perhaps more importantly offer some face-to-face contact on this special day.

Alongside these initiatives aimed at the wider public, we also endeavoured to stay connected with our regular members and I was very grateful for the organisational skills of June Fogg, Rev Eunice and others who ensured that those in need received regular contact from our pastoral team. We have been blessed to have so many members willing to give their time and effort to helping others, often in very uncomfortable circumstances.

Mission, outreach and discipleship

Aside from our Sunday services, we were able to connect online in a number of new and creative ways that helped to bring a sense of being together even at the height of the pandemic. Seasonal services such as Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension and Pentecost were all livestreamed, either from the vicarage (we won't forget trying to walk the stations of the cross in the Vicarage whilst keeping within range of the Wi-Fi signal!) and numerous community videos were made for schools and social media. A particular favourite of mine was the Christmas video featuring all our local shopkeepers and community figures. We were also very blessed with several Zoom initiatives aimed at keeping alive our social activities. The Friday night quiz has been a mainstay of our lockdown

social life, taking place every Friday evening and bringing many families together. We're indebted to Tracy and Rob Evans for their hosting the group and for their willingness to keep it going. Ian and Colette Millington also worked hard to keep us entertained, running a Zoom bingo event, along with a Eurovision night that will live long in the memory! Our young people also greatly benefitted from their willingness to host a Zoom Youth Alpha course over several weeks, which, along with the Zoom Boulders' Quiz nights brilliantly organised by Dawn Coulter and Libby Potter, ensured that our teenagers stayed connected. And even some of our more creative groups managed to carry on doing things together during lockdown, with Ladies in Stitches meeting on Zoom and then being nominated for a national award for making flags to be used in the "Remembering Srebrenica" initiative. In addition, the Knit and Natter group came together around projects such as Helen Byrne's knitted poppy appeal, Libby Potter produced several story telling videos using Makaton, and Krista and Philip Robinson blessed us with Noisy Church videos and other resources on YouTube.

A number of courses have also been offered online over the past year. Rev Eunice has done a wonderful job of picking out those that seem appropriate, and the response has been very positive. This has been a considerable commitment and I'm sure all those who have attended would want to join me in offering thanks for her hard work. We have also offered a monthly reading group and various prayer groups on a weekly basis. Often the technology is no substitute for face-to-face meetings, but it has certainly enabled more to connect on a regular basis.

Our Facebook presence has also grown since the start of 2020 as we have been able to connect with new community pages and publicise our work in the parish to a larger audience. During the first national lockdown, we committed to post a "prayer for the day", each day until the churches were allowed to reopen and a record of these prayers was later made available in a booklet published out of the church office. Our Facebook presence has been a vital part of our mission and outreach, enabling new relationships and the opportunity to reach local needs in ways that wouldn't have been possible without it.

Within the wider community, our clergy continued to connect with an array of local groups and organisations. I supported Higher Bebington Junior School and Co-op Academy in my role as a governor and, along with Revd Eunice and Revd George continued to connect with all five of our parish schools, offering prayer and resources wherever possible. After the retirement of Revd Jane Parry at the end of July, we also offered pastoral support to three other schools within the Parish of St Paul with St Luke, Tranmere. Regular contact was also maintained with local nursing homes and we were delighted when it became possible for us to sing carols for residents, albeit from the other side of a window. My role as a Chaplain to Claire House and as Chair of the Unilever Ethics Committee continued, though the vast majority of this work was carried out over the phone or via video call.

Though a large amount of our mission and outreach activity in 2020 had to be conducted remotely, this certainly didn't replace all of our work. We maintained regular contact with local shops and, where possible, our clergy continued to attend physical meetings. End of life care was permitted for most of 2020 and our clergy attended to parishioners both at home and in nursing homes. It was frustrating for Revd Eunice not to be able to continue her chaplaincy work at Arrowe Park Hospital, but Revd George was able to return to active service as a paramedic, and we were all very proud of him for being willing to step up and serve in this way.

Our attitude towards other denominations and other faiths has long been a very open and inclusive one. Christ Church has been an active member of our local Churches Together network and, in recent years, we have fostered close working relationships with a local Mosque, The Wirral Deen Centre. These relationships continued to bear fruit during the pandemic, with members of other churches working with us to deliver food and prescriptions and coming together to resource and deliver meals at Christmas. I was also able to join members of the Deen Centre in delivering takeaway food, freely provided by local restaurants. Working together in such ways both provides a valuable service to the community and also a visible sign of our love for one another, something that newspaper headlines often suggest is not possible.

The past year also saw us greatly blessed by a number of our members making significant strides into new areas of ministry that will greatly help our mission to the parish in years to come. Ian Millington and Colette Millington, Jeanette Roach and Beryl Smith from St Paul's all successfully completed the Foundations for Ministry course, while Helen Byrne moved close to qualifying as a Reader and Lynn Ion began her training in pastoral ministry. I very much look forward to seeing where their journeys take them in the coming year and am very grateful for what they already contribute to both Christ Church and St Paul's. I would be delighted to speak with anyone who might wish to explore how they can use their gifts in new ways. We all have a ministry and I would encourage everyone to be attentive to how God might be calling them to serve, especially as we move towards an expansion of the parish and union with St Paul's Tranmere.

St Paul's

The pastoral scheme aimed at expanding the parish boundaries to accommodate both Christ Church and St Paul's Tranmere was due to be completed in the summer of 2020, but, for obvious reasons, this did not happen. Consequently, following the retirement of Revd Jane Parry, clergy and lay workers from Christ Church began an informal relationship with St Paul's, leading services and providing pastoral and practical support where necessary. It is now anticipated that the scheme will eventually be implemented in September or October 2021 and we look forward to working with our friends at St Paul's towards a fruitful relationship between the two churches.

Infrastructure

Our land and buildings proved to be an invaluable asset over the course of the past year. Where face-to-face contact was not possible, our church building was often able to connect in ways that we could not. As people slowed down and were able to notice their surroundings a little more, the bells began to be appreciated in new ways and those taking daily walks began to take time to read notice boards and to enjoy the public spaces that we provide. In the time when the church doors were locked, many people took the opportunity to sit in the churchyard, and as we have developed the church gardens and woodland, the invitation to explore this very special space was taken up by dozens of parishioners who had previously never set foot on Christ Church land.

We aimed to connect with the public mood by displaying flags, both on the flagpole and hung outside the Community Centre, by programming the bells to chime at times of national celebration or to coincide with the weekly applause, and by keeping up festive lights to brighten the mood. We received many comments about how much all of this was appreciated and are lucky to have such dedicated fairy light champions in Charles and Sarah (who is also Flag Captain!). As we approached the summertime, a "stone snake" began to form and lengthen along the church walls. This attracted a lot of local attention and some fantastic creations were added over several months. New collection bins also were positioned outside the Centre to allow donations for the Foodbank and Wirral Ark to continue. I was very grateful for Anne Preston's willingness to continue to empty and deliver the contents throughout the year.

Our buildings and grounds were also able to offer the means for people to stop and pray whenever passing. Members of BebShed, brilliantly led by Terry Cunningham and Alan Jackson, once again blessed us with new constructions such as a prayer box, installed outside the church door; the frame for a remembrance cairn; an amazing 6ft stable/cave(!) and countless other jobs. We are very lucky to have them and what they produce often greatly enhances both our mission and ministry to the parish.

Lockdown enabled us to give attention to various tasks that might have been difficult to achieve with the usual busyness of church life all around us. We were able to welcome the arrival of BebShed 2, create a new garden storage shed and remove the blue monstrosity that preceded it! We were also able to begin various gardening projects, including the creation of new wildflower gardens, a garden pond, and several new paths around the woodland. The churchyard was also transformed by a wonderful team of volunteers who committed to removing the weeds from around the cremated remains plots. I have been very grateful for the help of Duncan Allender and many others in bringing our outdoor space back into public use and to Kate Lewis for her priceless(!) fundraising activities, without which, much of what we achieved would not have been possible. Much of this work will enable us to move ever closer to our Eco Church Gold award and I give thanks for Pam Hollinshead and the members of our Eco Church group who are helping to progress this.

A slightly quieter church building gave us the opportunity to complete the fitting of the screens, projectors, cameras and microphones that have been so essential since we were allowed back in. Ian Murray, Alan Jackson, Gary Shaw and others did a fantastic job of overseeing these projects and we will continue to explore how to improve the viewing and listening experience of those attending our services.

A great lesson for me during lockdown has been just how much people have appreciated having the church open on a daily basis. So many people now visit regularly and the addition of a reading area, a book exchange, many fantastic displays and prayer resources will continue to encourage use of the building. I feel that this is something that we must continue to offer if we are build on the unexpected blessings that this most challenging of years has given us. I am very grateful to our wonderful Vestry Team led by Diane Shaw and Helen Byrne, who, throughout the past year, continued to offer creative ideas and weekly support for our worshipping life. I am also thankful to John and Barbara Champion for their fantastic displays, and to our flower team and cleaning team who ensured that our church looked stunning whenever we were able to attend.

I am also thankful to have such a talented and experienced team available to me on the Buildings and Finance Committee and the Centre Management Committee and continue to be particularly grateful to Terry Cunningham and Charles Van Ingen for chairing the groups. I must also register special thanks to members of the PCC, to Jane Dalziel for her work as Secretary, our fantastic Wardens, Gary Shaw and Ian Murray, and to Charles Van Ingen for his unwavering support and the remarkable job he has done in managing our finances in such testing times.

For much of the year, our parish office continued to be open every weekday morning and we are very fortunate to have such a capable and welcoming team working there. I am very grateful to Julie Scarsbrook and Sarah Loach for the wonderful work that they do to keep our Centre running so smoothly. And, of course, to our marvellous Parish Secretary, Victoria Gleave. Many of you will know just how lost I would be without them!

Thank you...

There are so many people who have regularly helped me in my ministry over the past year. Again, I won't attempt to name you all for fear of missing someone out, but I would like to register particular thanks to our Readers & Readers Emeritus, Pam Hollinshead, Jill Wright & Ted Jones; the Church Wardens, Gary Shaw & Ian Murray; Deputy Church Wardens, Rhona Snelson, Diane Shaw and Rose Rogers; Pastoral Worker, June Fogg; Lay leaders, Ian Millington, Helen Byrne & Lynn Ion; Bereavement support, Vera Jackson; Electoral Roll, Tracy O'Connell; Parish Poet, John Hulme; our office staff, Victoria Gleave and Julie Scarsbrook; Treasurer, Charles Van Ingen; members of the PCC; Organist, Wendy Dickinson; our Curate, George Roach, Associate Minister, Eunice Blackmore, and to Sarah (Centre Supervisor & wife!), Sam and Harry (& Jumble) for their help to me on a daily basis.

3.2 Churchwardens' Report (by Gary Shaw and Ian Murray)

2020 has been an interesting year at Christ Church.

Amazingly, despite all the government restrictions, we managed to keep the church open every day for private prayer. Sunday services also continued throughout the year either by live stream or, when allowed, together with an 'actual' congregation and choir. It was so good to have the choir back, most ably led by June. We are also blessed to have such a talented organist and 'soloist' in Wendy who always brings something special to our services.

We are so fortunate to have a wonderful ministry team in Mike, Eunice, George, the Readers and Ian Millington. This team is so special and very much appreciated by us all for what they bring to our spiritual life at Christ Church. Every successful team requires quality leadership and in Mike, superbly supported by Eunice, we have a team which gives so much of themselves. We are so blessed to have them both.

A special thanks must go to the Loach family for all they do for us and for the support they give to Mike. They are much loved by us all: Sam who performs, what appears to us, 'miracles' in getting our live stream out to the community every Sunday; Sarah who deserves an Oscar for the cinematography and for the humour that Harry and friends brings to the service with their puppets. Christ Church is blessed to have such a group of committed folk.

Not only were the 8.30 and 10.00 a.m. services held but we also managed to have our usual special traditional services –Easter, Remembrance, Blue Christmas, Nativity, Time to Remember, Carol Service, Christingle and Midnight Mass. Thanks to all who helped to deliver these much-loved services. A new initiative for us was that many services required folk to pre-book. This was a complicated process but Victoria worked her admin magic and all went very smoothly. Thank you Victoria for organising what turned out to be quite a complex operation. Very impressive.

Grateful thanks to all those who worked behind the scenes throughout the year to make our church such an attractive place in which to worship. Thanks to the sides people who this year have ensured that we recorded all attendees as required under Covid guidelines. This army of unseen helpers do so much to support Ian and I and we very much appreciate what they do.

Let us hope that this forthcoming year is less disruptive and traumatic and that 'normal' service is resumed.

3.21 Deanery Synod Report (by Rhona Snelson)

The first meeting of the year was held at St. Andrew's West Kirby on 4th March, when Revd. Canon Jane Brooke (Vice Dean and Canon Missioner of

Chester Cathedral) outlined the five year Strategic Plan for the Cathedral entitled "Chester Cathedral will follow Christ through discovery, encounter and faith".

As the pandemic took hold the planned meeting for September was held via Zoom. Arch Deacon Michael Gilbertson took the Chair in place of the Rural Dean, Revd. Peter Froggatt, who had moved from Christchurch Barnston to become Director of Outreach based at Church House Daresbury. (Revd. David Vestergaard from St. Andrew's Bebington took over as Rural Dean for Wirral North). The Arch Deacon gave us news from the Diocese, including the appointment in May, of the new Bishop of Chester, Revd. Mark Tanner and he led a discussion on ways to help churches cope with the pandemic.

3.3 Buildings Report (by Terry Cunningham)

REVIEW OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

Church - audio visual project completed but minor improvements ongoing. Reading area created at the back of church.

Churchyard & Grounds - major improvements to the wooden area, including pathways & ponds, by a host of volunteers and some contractor involvement. Old garden equipment container removed from site and landscaping taking place in that area.

Vicarage - still some outstanding issues (damp & CCTV, in particular), which are being discussed with the diocese, to seek resolutions.

External works - new garden equipment shed groundworks completed, concrete base put in, shed erected, furnished and electrics completed. Additional Beb Shed erected.

3.4 Pastoral Care (by Rev Eunice Blackmore)

Pastoral care was obviously very different in 2020 without the opportunity to physically get alongside people but we were very active! At the start of the pandemic we made sure all that who were on the electoral roll were in touch with someone and were joined by an enthusiastic team of volunteers who made contact regularly, either by telephone or "doorstepping". We are very grateful for their support which was very much appreciated. The Easter and Christmas cards also provided contact numbers should any within the Parish need support – or just a listening ear – and that received a positive response with many new friendships being established.

We are grateful for all the help with pastoral care by members of our church family enabling our ministry team to be aware of people experiencing difficulties and requiring help.

Lynn Ion is at present Pastoral Worker in training – we ask you to please support Lynn with prayer as she continues with her ministry training.

3.5 Charitable giving (by Kate Lewis)

2020-2021 saw significant challenges to Christ Church. Thankfully, we have been blessed with the opportunity to attract some resource, being able to support our congregation and the wider community throughout the pandemic. The Community Centre was chosen for the next round of the Co-op Local Community Fund. To date we have received over a £1000!

Christ Church Higher Bebington Community Centre

Spaces

We would like to create a community focused outside seating area to encourage the community to come and spend time together in a safe and socially distanced way.

Raised so far:

£1,183.31



Social Sector Setting Road to Recovery Fund has been a huge support in helping us get back on track. A recent award of £5,000 has helped to remobilise the Community centre and the Church following the repeated closures over the last year.

We are continuing to explore lots of other opportunities for the coming year, focusing on the Eco Garden and maximising the use of the grounds for the local community.

If there are any recommendations relating to funding opportunities, please get in touch with Kate on katelewis10@aol.com.

3.6 Communication

Our weekly parish newsletter and the magazine are available both on-line and as hard copy. The printed version of the magazine is made available at local libraries and other locations visited by members of the public. The website continues to provide a vital link for many members of our community who cannot reach church regularly and we try to keep it updated with news and links to resources used in our services. Our Facebook page has grown considerably over the past couple of years and, in connecting with other community groups, can now attract thousands of views for a single post. The new YouTube channel has added another way for people to join in with our services and now has almost

300 subscribers. This online presence has enabled us to communicate in a different way and with people who would not usually have access to our newsletters or magazines.

3.7 Pastoral and Social Initiatives run by the church:

3.7.1 Men in Sheds (by Terry Cunningham)

Like all groups, we have been severely affected by the pandemic and associated lockdowns. We did manage to reconvene between the most severe lockdowns but even then with reduced numbers. Finally, we are now returning to a firm of normality but it is likely to be a couple of months before our attendance returns to previous levels.

During our short restricted openings we did however manage a couple of decent projects for the church. The first was the wonderful stable, including holy family & crib, that was ready for advent and throughout the Christmas period. It was subsequently repurposed as a tomb for Easter, with John Champion's skilful artwork.

Our most recent activity was the bench that has been fitted around the base of the large tree on the vicarage lawn. It was a bit of a challenge but one that, Bob & John in particular, embraced and executed over several weeks.

Our connection with TWAM was also impacted and we have not had any tool pick-up for over 12 months. As a result, our storage capacity is just about at its limit but we are hopeful of a pick-up within the next couple of weeks. We'd like to thank everyone for their generous tool donations to date, they are much appreciated and will go a long way to changing the lives of our brothers and sisters in Africa.

Looking ahead, we are slowly getting back to where we were though can only take on a few commissioned projects at the moment.

3.7.2 Singing Café (by Eunice Blackmore)

We were able to hold Singing Café in January and February of 2020 with the support of the Heswall team led by Chris Youngman. However we agreed to suspend this in March and towards the end of the year the team were able to combine their Singing Cafes (now 6 across the Wirral) with an online fortnightly zoom activity of music and conversation. We really appreciate all that they do.

3.7.3 Ladies in Stitches (by Sarah Loach)

It was different in 2020 for Ladies in Stitches but thanks to Julie Scarsbrook we were able to have our sessions on Zoom. This was fantastic to still be able to chat and share ideas and show each other what we had been making during lockdown. Also we were given the opportunity to make 11 flags to be flown on

public buildings on the Wirral including Wallasey Town Hall to remember the 25th Anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre. The flags were made by the group then Jay a local artist was able to add his designs to them. The flag project was nominated for a national award. Thanks to everybody in the group and especially to Julie for enabling us to be able to stay in touch and carry on sewing.

3.74 Connect Café (by Rhona Snelson)

Our year began quietly for the Wednesday morning Connect Coffee group, offering a social space for people of all ages to come together for refreshments and to enjoy each other's company. However, in March we faced a Covid pandemic which brought "lockdown" for all, for many months and meant the closing of the Centre. We were able to start up again in late Autumn with restrictions in place - sanitizing of hands, social distancing and table-service being adhered to - but it was a joy to be able to meet together though in smaller numbers. Then end of the year brought a second "lockdown". We look forward to a better year in 2021. All are very welcome.

3.75 Knit & Natter Group (by Joan Rippon)

Some knitting projects have been put on hold during the Covid pandemic however Knit and Natter members have been undaunted and carried on regardless. Christmas Angels were made for display in local shop windows. More recently the request for even more poppies has resulted in knitting needles clacking nonstop and friends of friends being recruited in the drive to make sufficient poppies for a display on Christ Church tower in November 2021. Ladies have also made various items for future coffee mornings and summer fairs including a scarecrow for display inside Christ Church.

Although ladies mostly live locally they have managed to keep in touch with each other in various ways and are looking forward to meeting in the centre again when restrictions are lifted.

The Knit and Natter group usually meet on the first and third Wednesday in the month at 1.15 pm and always welcome new members.

3.76 Tea Dance (by Sarah Loach)

We were able to hold one Tea Dance in 2020. It was in February and had a Valentine theme for the cakes and treats. Graham Loach was our compere and hosted one of his quizzes before the tea and dancing began. Thanks to Graham for his entertainment, Jill for being on the door and Victoria, Christine and Catherine for their hard work in the kitchen. We look forward to starting again later in the year.

3.77 Oasis Group (by Jill Wright and Ted Jones)

This well being support group continues to thrive although, like everything else, face to face meetings were cancelled from 24th March 2020 due to the pandemic.

Prior to the Lockdown there were three meetings in the community centre in 2020 The first meeting of the year on 8th January, marked the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the group. There were at least 10 members present to mark this milestone and share celebratory refreshments. Ted Jones and Jill Wright started the group off at the back of church and there have been monthly meetings held ever since, with an average attendance of 8-10 members. We have also been very fortunate to have additional help from Penny Golby and Helen Byrne, Steve Flatt, psychotherapist, has attended most meetings and there is always support from members of the clergy in the form of Rev's Mike and George. We were able to meet face to face on February 12th and March 11th before lockdown occurred.

During Lockdown Jill, Penny, Helen, Steve and the clergy have kept in touch with members by phone and email.

The group is currently looking forward to resuming face to face meetings again soon.

3.78 Befrienders (Bereavement Support) (by Vera Jackson)

Due to the restrictions imposed from the pandemic visiting people in their homes has not been an option. I have made the usual type of follow up phone calls when possible, and minimal doorstep visits.

When things improve, hopefully I can get back to offering a better level of support again. When all restrictions are lifted, we will be recommencing our lunch time meetings. I will then be able to update everyone with further details.

Remembrance Book – this is available in the church to all who wish to add their relatives name.

Time to Remember Service & Blue Christmas

These were very poignant services in 2020 as provided an opportunity for families, many who had been severely limited during the pandemic, to express their grief and isolation. The cairn, which remains, outside is also a much valued place of remembrance.

3.79 Carers Group (by Rhona Snelson & Graham Loach)

4Cs Carers Group – 'Carers, Coffee, Cake (and sandwiches!) and Chat'

The 4Cs provides opportunities for carers, and those who have previously been carers, to meet and enjoy friendship and fellowship together.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has meant us having to cancel most planned activities and we only had 2 meetings in 2020.

At the January meeting we welcomed back Christina Spencer to tell us part two of her amazing life story.

Glyn Williams was the February speaker and he provided an update on factors influencing 'Tax, Care and Toyboys'.

We hope to recommence as soon as restrictions are lifted and greatly look forward to welcoming existing and new members to our meetings.

All are most welcome at our lunchtime meetings which are usually on the 3rd Tuesday of each month apart from August. We meet at 12:15 in the Community Centre.

3.80 Indoor Bowls (by Sarah Loach)

We were running indoor bowls twice a month before we had to stop. The group had increased in number and enjoyed playing sometimes quite competitively on those Friday mornings in January and February! We all had refreshments together in the Kings Hall in between games. We look forward to starting back in September.

3.81 Men's Supper Club (by John Theobald)

January 2020.

2020 was here at last, out with the old decade and in with the new. An exciting year ahead with what wonderful new culinary delights to tickle our taste buds! Little did we know what the road ahead had in store.

After our, yet again, highly successful Christmas meal at West Cheshire College, we decided to fall back on a well-tested favourite in the Refreshment Rooms in Rock Ferry. We knew that the food, service and ambiance would be great and once again it didn't disappoint. We even got the opportunity to be offered the discounted over 60s, for all of us, even though a number had certainly not crossed the 60 threshold. The food was good and the laughter and good fellowship abounded.

February 2020.

The half term break meant the church centre was available and we took advantage for our well-loved fish and chip supper evening. All hands to the pumps buttering bread, heating plates, setting up tables and chairs and putting out cutlery while others were at the Eastern Delight chippy in Borough Road getting the goodies. Bring your own booze also made this a very welcome cheap evening for all. Well attended by 24 of us and thoroughly enjoyed. The Eastern Delight once again did us proud.

March 2020.

Another local favourite is the Mediterranean Kitchen in Bebington. It was our choice this month. I got a good initial booking for 20 of us, but that was before the clouds began to gather. Ever increasing reports of a thing called Coronavirus were spreading and causing very serious concerns. The Government was giving daily worrying reports of something called a lockdown. As a result, my phone never stopped ringing with apologies that concerns outweighed supper club. By the time of the proposed meal we were down to 5 faithful willing to take the risk. None of those five included myself as I had been threatened by my eldest son about going. I took heed of the warning.

I popped up to the Med Kitchen on the evening to say hello and there were just the five in the restaurant. They had a good meal. However, a number of the five said to me afterwards, that if the news from the Government in the following couple of days had come sooner, they wouldn't have gone either. Lockdown came shortly afterwards.

The rest is history. Till we eat again.....

3.82 Christmas Day Lunch

Sadly, we were unable to host our Christmas Day Lunch in the Community Centre this year. However, we were pleased to be able to deliver a Christmas lunch to those people who needed one. We were fortunate to receive funding from our local council and also Asda to cover the cost of the lunches which we purchased from Parsley Box. Home Instead were also able to provide us with wonderful gifts to go to everyone who received a lunch. These were very much appreciated.

Thank you very much to all those volunteers who delivered meals on Christmas Day. Over 140 lunches were delivered.

3.83 Eco Church (by Pam Hollinshead)

Great strides have been made in our part of God's Acre during these challenging times.

Mike has gathered around him a veritable army of workers of varying ages and talents!

On a practical level socially distanced work has continued outside as weather permits; paths have been de-weeded then re-outlined with tree trunks, not only outlining the path but also providing much needed cover for various insects. It has been lovely witnessing the snowdrops and blue bells bringing colour to the undergrowth - like jewels!

A new pond has been dug, shortly to be populated with frogs which are currently hopping in and out of the older one already.

Over in the orchard area more fruit trees have been planted, over looked by a lovely new bench, while overgrown areas have been cut back opening up yet another part of the garden.

The old decrepit blue shed has been removed, some may not even realise we had one! In it's place is a wonderful open space which I know Mike has ideas to develop - watch that space!

The graveyard is looking well kept and quite a few folk seem to wander from there through to the garden to enjoy it's serenity.

Moving inside our worship has included songs, prayers and teaching on the subject of Creation, how we may enjoy it and sustain it.

As with any endeavour a great deal of hard work goes on behind the scenes many thanks to all those who support Eco church in whatever way Our Creator God continues to lead and bless us in His plans for this part of His Acre.

3.9 Boulders (by Libby Potter)

Boulders is our Youth Group for young people 11-18yrs. Whilst they have missed out on seeing each other in person they have stayed connected in a variety of ways, and for some they have never been so actively involved in church life! They were supported by Ian and Collette to do the Youth Alpha course (see Ian's report) during the first lockdown. After the summer holidays we still couldn't get Boulders together in person, so we started a monthly Zoom quiz instead. Our young people stepped up, grabbed this opportunity and designed their own quizzes and hosted all the Zoom evenings themselves with leaders taking a supportive back seat. They did this whilst coping with school work and all the uncertainty of the Covid situation. Our Boulders showed us how talented and creative they are with their choice of topics and variety of questions and fun activities.

Some Boulders have been involved in the worship band, rehearsing and playing at services when rules allowed. Others have played a huge role in the live streaming of the weekly services. Some have joined the teams on the Eco church gardening afternoons, contributed to the Food bank and other collections and taken part in services doing readings and prayers. Our Boulders have supported church life, their community and each other and Christ Church is blessed to have such a wonderful group of young people.

It has been a real privilege for the present 3 leaders of the Boulders social events to work with such a fabulous group of young people. Being a Boulders leader is fun, rewarding and a pleasure and it is with very mixed emotions that the present team of Dawn Coulter, Libby Potter and Alan Abbott are handing over the reins to a new team of leaders to take Boulders forward.

Youth Alpha

At the time of the last APCM Report there were 2 sessions left of the Youth Alpha course. Who knew in June 2020 that the rest of the year and part of 2021 was to be punctuated by a further 2 lockdowns and restrictions on physical meetings? We still haven't been able to get the 2020 cohort together for their Holy Spirit weekend! As we hopefully continue to move into safer times ahead we will revisit getting the group together socially. Hopefully the seeds planted in Youth Alpha have supported and encouraged our teenagers through what has often been a bewildering and unsettling period.

We hope to run another course with the teenagers this year – potentially now with a mix of both virtual and “in person” meetings. Please continue to pray for our young people – we are truly blessed that they are choosing to encounter God at Christ Church.

God bless
Ian & Colette Millington

3.91 Sunday Club

Sunday Club met in January and February and were making preparations for the Mothering Sunday service when the first lockdown began and the group could no longer meet.

In order to stay connected, many of the children kindly made Easter cards for members of the congregation, created posters to thank the local shopkeepers and key workers and added painted stones to the snake that appeared on the wall outside of church. Some also created scarecrows which were displayed in church at Harvest and added to the pumpkin display at All Hallows.

Remarkably, a willing team of volunteers organized a socially distanced Nativity play on Christmas Eve, which was well received by those who attended and watched online and enjoyed by the youngsters who took part.

When restrictions allow, Sunday Club will return and we look forward to welcoming new members as well as those who have been part of the group for some time.

3.92 Noisy Church (by Rev Eunice Blackmore)

Noisy Church started 2020 well with regular attenders really enjoying the time together ably led by Krista Robinson and occasionally Jessica Walters. Easter services went online but this was not continued past the summer. We need to review how this valuable activity with young families is best continued.

3.93 Mothers' Union (by Liz Bird)

As most Mothers' Union members have been shielding or at least very careful about seeing anyone face to face, we have been unable to meet for over a year and our normal programme was put on hold.

Usually, in October and November, we collect small gifts for the "Shoe-Box" appeal, so instead in 2020 some of our members made personal donations to the organisers, Teams4U, who are based in Wrexham. I know they were very grateful for the support.

When the restrictions are eased, we shall start to meet again.

3.94 Alpha (by Rev Eunice Blackmore)

We finished the Alpha group just in time before lockdown! It proved to be an invaluable course, with such much growth in faith being evident and deep friendships being formed which really sustained each other during the lockdown – through zoom chat, garden coffees when allowed and even graveyard gardening!

3.95 Meditation Group (by Fr George Roach)

This year has been an interesting and somewhat challenging first year for my curacy as I have had to adapt to periods of inactivity and, at other times, working in strange new ways. The monthly meditation group, which last met just before lockdown, sadly, had to be put on hold. This was something I started up a number of months earlier and it had been very well received. I do hope that we get to a place soon where I am able to offer this again. The highlight of my year was, undoubtedly, my trip to Jerusalem in January, which gave me a new breath of life! I found a renewed appreciation for Old Testament history as well as a sense of having had the Gospel stories brought to life.

As we begin to emerge from a period of being apart, I really look forward to the next 12 months with CCHB and St Paul's and pray that God will bless our ministry together.

3.96 Choir (by June Fogg)

2020 began with so much to look forward to; extra members joining the choir to allow the opportunity for four-part harmony. The new rehearsal time of 2 p.m. on Thursday was chosen by all and I really appreciated having one hundred percent being present each week: each person making a valuable contribution to the balance of the whole choir. However, it soon became evident that 2020 was to be very difficult for members of the choir to rehearse and perform due to the pandemic. I recall that we had a lovely programme for Mothering Sunday and that was the first Sunday Church was closed. We had planned and rehearsed for weeks for Easter Songs of Praise performance which had to be cancelled.

Following government guidelines the choir were unable to meet at all during lockdowns, but in the more relaxed period the choir quickly re-assembled and apart from providing choral music for services and funerals, Christmas was a time for celebration enabling us to perform for the many very special services over Christmas. A few of us sang outside care homes providing carols for those in care unable to meet family and friends. This was an enjoyable experience but emotional thinking about those we were visiting.

The choir kept in touch on social media and I would really like to mention Grace with her funny cartoons which kept us all cheerful, and the love, prayers and support the choir shared. We were not idle – poppies galore! Not only were the knitting needles sparking away, but each choir member spread the word that Helen needed poppies, ringing friends and distributing wool and patterns.

Christ Church Choir now has strong bonds and I look forward to us growing in numbers and providing choral music not just in church but reaching out into the local care homes. I would like to invite anyone in the community to come and join us. Come and enjoy making music together. Light refreshments will be provided.

3.97 Introducing Zoom! (by Rev Eunice Blackmore)

From not knowing what Zoom was at the start of 2020 it has become a vital means of supporting, praying and encouraging one another. We were able to establish the following

- Start the week – morning prayer Mondays at 9 am (with numbers even tripling from church only attendance)
- Celtic prayer – Tuesdays at 9 pm ably led by Helen Bryne
- Alternate Thursdays Lectio Divina – where we're amazed what we discover in mediating on Scripture together
- Thursday evening discussion group – which involved watching individually online sessions from The Prayer Course and God's Big Picture and then coming together to share our thoughts and learn from each other.

3.98 Toddler Group (by Sarah Loach)

Toddlers was going well at the start of the year. We came back in January after Christmas with large numbers and some new toys! We increased our staff in the kitchen and we were lucky to have Libby Potter join us to teach the toddlers some makaton which they loved. We made the decision to close just before the schools closed before lockdown. We aim to come back in September. My thanks go to Libby, also Amy Lee, Beckie Jones, Ruth Greenall, Diane Shaw and Margaret Theobald for all their help running the group.

Illuminations Report (by Sarah Loach and Charles Van Ingen)

As this was a difficult year we tried to connect with the community as much as possible in safe ways. Many people had commented how the outside lights at Christ Church brought such joy and so we bought more for Christmas 2020! There were 600 lamps across the front of the car park, 100 lamps in the tree and a further 600 across the front of the Community Centre. We kept these lights on in the evenings until the clocks changed at the end of March.

We use LEDs as they last a long time and consume very little electricity.

We also displayed our animal tableau on the roof of the Community Centre throughout December.

As part of an initiative to bring hope during the pandemic we joined in by displaying a star in the window of the link. We also had another star on top of an amazing stable and wooden nativity scene especially made by our Men in Sheds group.

Thank you to Terry Cunningham and all the Men in Shed members who helped to make all this possible.

We use LED lights as they last a long time and consume very little electricity.

Again this year, the illuminations have drawn many positive comments from local people.

4 Rose Queen

Once upon a time in a land far, far away a Rose Queen was crowned called Charlotte. Her reign started well with a successful Beetle Drive, a festive Christmas coffee morning and a mind-bending quiz night.

Future events were to include an Easter Bingo Social (March 2020) and an Afternoon Tea (May 2020).

John Lennon once said "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans". And so it turned out....

I wrote in one of the Parish magazine articles about the success of the 2019 Christmas Coffee Morning "At some points the hall was so full that there wasn't space to have a cuppa and a mince pie!". It seems like a lifetime ago!

Thanks to my Dad's computer skills we did manage to host an online Bingo night at the end of April 2020. Folk were so generous and we/you raised £444.

The challenges of social distancing, restrictions on indoor meetings, and rules on numbers able to gather, have put paid to further events, and so, some 23 months after being crowned my reign will shortly come to an end. God willing, the new Rose Queen will enjoy an uninterrupted year and we will once again be able to come together as a community, have fun, laugh together, and support another worthy charity.

For now, thank you once again for your generosity throughout my reign and I look forward to seeing you at the new Rose Queen's first event.

With very best wishes,

Charlotte Millington Rose Queen (2019-2020/21)

5 Electoral Roll (by Tracy Evans on behalf of Lynn Ion, Electoral Roll Officer)

At last year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting I advised members that the number on the Electoral Roll was 235 names.

We currently have 234 members on the Electoral roll

Unfortunately, 8 members have passed away

We therefore have 7 new members

With regards the geographic make up of Christ Church, there are 60 members living outside the parish, this figure is 25% of the overall total.

The current pandemic has hindered the collation and promotion of the Electoral Roll again this year. As our last AGM was not held until October 2020 and we have also been in a national lockdown for over 7 months it has been very difficult to obtain an accurate written record of our new members. We hope that once the lockdown and social distancing measures are lifted an accurate record of new members can be obtained.

The booklet listing all the names of those on the Electoral Roll is displayed in the red box on the table at the back of church. It is accompanied by a supply of application forms for those whose names are not yet on the Roll. New/Revised forms can be completed at any stage during the year and should be placed in the box or given to the Electoral Roll Officer.

To ensure the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, can I remind all members of the need to notify the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their name or contact details (address, home telephone number, mobile number & email address). This can be done in a number of ways: by completing another application form or detailing the changes in an email which can be sent via the Parish Office (parishoffice@christchurchhigherbebington.org.uk)

6 Christ Church Community Centre (by Julie Scarsbrook, Centre Administrator)

At the beginning of the year the Centre was busy with Commercial users. There were Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi, Sit fit and Dance classes, Baby Sensory group and the Cookery Course. We were also running our Toddler and Bumps and Babies groups, Carers, Befrienders, Mother's Union, Oasis, Knit and Natter, Ladies in Stitches, Singing Cafe, Film club, Connect Coffee and Indoor Bowls. Thank you to everyone involved in running all of these groups which offer chance for fellowship and invaluable support to so many in our Church and local Community.

We also welcomed a new group into the Centre. Weight watchers started meeting on a Saturday morning between 7.30 and 11.30.

Sadly, we had to close the Community Centre in March which meant that we were unable to host any of those groups mentioned and all of our voluntary organisations, Rainbows, Brownies and Explorers also had to stop meeting.

During this time, my role consisted of basic maintenance of the building while Julie continued with the administrative work, responding to phone messages and keeping the noticeboards up to date.

We tried to connect with the community as much as possible with posters on the noticeboards during this time. We also coordinated a list of volunteers to match them up with people who needed assistance with errands or pastoral support during the pandemic.

When restrictions were eased, we were able to welcome a couple of our groups back and Julie was faced with the challenge of fitting people in and allowing time between sessions for cleaning. Vibe and Baby Sensory were able to return safely.

Thank you to Peter and Gavin from Clean and Green who have helped to deep clean the Community Centre and keep both the Church and the Community Centre clean throughout.

(by Sarah Loach, Centre Supervisor)

At the beginning of the year, the Centre was busy with Commercial users. There were Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi, Sit fit and Dance classes, Baby Sensory group and the Cookery Course. We were also running our Toddler and Bumps and Babies groups, Carers, Befrienders, Mother's Union, Oasis, Knit and Natter, Ladies in Stitches, Singing Cafe, Film club, Connect Coffee and Indoor Bowls. Thank you to everyone involved in running all of these groups which offer chance for fellowship and invaluable support to so many in our Church and local Community.

Sadly, we had to close the Centre in March and my role consisted of basic maintenance of the building.

Thank you to Gavin and Peter from Clean and Green for their help deep cleaning the Centre and also the Church.

Thank you to Julie and Victoria for all their work in the office and I look forward to when we can all work together again and welcome people back into our Community Centre.

7 Financial Review (by Charles Van Ingen, PCC Treasurer)

7.1 Introduction

The overall financial situation is presented in the Financial Statements which appear as Appendix I to this report. The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission which has created the Charities SORP (Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice). This gives charities clear guidelines on what information to keep and what reports to produce to meet their legal obligations.

The Church of England has adopted the SORP as its standard basis for annual reporting by parishes so that a single set of information and reports meets the requirements of both the Charity Commission (accessible by the general public) and the wider Church.

The accounts presented here have been prepared on an Accruals basis.

Of course, the coronavirus pandemic has had a very serious impact on our finances; many comparisons with the previous year figures will be quite startling.

Total incoming resources were £239,398 (of which legacies contributed £61,867 - see 5.7 below) against total expenditure of £221,718 including depreciation on the Community Centre and its contents of £23,048. The total funds carried forward increased from £1,027,172 to £1,046,097 the bulk of which reflects the capitalisation of the Community Centre.

7.2 Day-to-day operations including the Community Centre; see Note 20 in the Annual Accounts

Planned Giving including the Gift Aid tax reclaim was only £457 lower than 2019 reflecting the importance of regular giving by standing order. Special thanks are due those individuals who generously increased their standing orders or made one-off lump-sum donations.

Loose Cash was £2413 lower. General Account donations at £6,943 were £1,213 lower than 2019.

PCC fees etc were significantly lower at £9,733 compared with £12,609 in 2019.

With the Community Centre being closed for much of the year or operating under severe restraints, income from Users was only £11,948 compared to £30,278 in 2019.

Church running expenses were only slightly higher than 2019 (£15,178 vs £14,869).

The overall operating shortfall before exceptional grants was £25,556.

Offsetting the substantial shortfall were grants totalling £16,963: Wirral Borough Council (via a Government scheme), £10,000; HMRC Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, £4,693; Chester Diocesan Board of Finance, £2000; and the local Co-op Academy, £270.

Receipt of these grants reduced the operating shortfall to £8,593. Given our financial reserves and the substantial legacy income, this is manageable.

When the coronavirus pandemic is over, we will need to run a Thanksgiving initiative. Sadly, we always lose pledged givers during the year through death and moving away. Also, our costs rise so we need to secure new pledges and to ask existing donors to increase their contribution if at all possible.

If you can join the Pledged Giving Scheme now or increase your existing pledge, please do so now rather than waiting.

7.3 Fabric Fund for Church Repairs & Improvements; See Note 6 in the Annual Accounts

Fabric Fund expenditure totalled £42,027 covering completion of the organ project (final electrical work), completion of the lighting and audio-visual projects. However, some minor further expenditure on the audio-visual installation may be required in 2021 as we gain experience in streaming services.

7.4 Men in Sheds

For accounting convenience, Men in Sheds is incorporated under the Community Centre heading. However, the group endeavours (and is succeeding) to be self-sufficient covering its costs through donations and grants. Of special note is the £10,000 grant from the BigLottery plus £350 from Benevity.

7.5 Investments; See Note 15 in the Annual Accounts

The value of the PCC's investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares for the Fabric Fund increased by 7% to £17,302. The Churchyard investment increased similarly to £2,049.

7.6 Legacies

We received £45,000 from the estate of Jenny Rome; also £15,367 from the estate of Noel Fletcher, £1000 from the estate of Diana Hirst and £500 from the estate of Jean Thelwell.

We have further expectations from the estates of Jenny Rome and Noel Fletcher. However, the coronavirus pandemic has delayed finalising of these estates by the various executors.

7.7 Reserves Policy

Given that our Grade II listed church building is over 160 years old, it is PCC policy to maintain a balance in the Fabric Reserve accounts of at least £10,000 in cash to cover emergency situations coupled with the circa £18,000 holding in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund Income Shares which are easily realisable if required.

7.8 Acknowledgements and thanks

My thanks are due to Barbara Thomas for monitoring the standing orders (and watching over the interest-free loan portfolio), Michael Blackburn for recording the envelope giving, the many sidespeople who assist (in normal circumstances!) with counting the cash on Sunday mornings, Jim Wallace for standing in during my holidays, the Churchwardens for maintaining a general oversight and to Janet Wallace for once again being our Independent Examiner to ensure that we meet all the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Church of England.

And finally to Terry Cunningham who handles the task of purchasing and managing the supplies of electricity and gas through the Church of England Parish Buying Buying Scheme.

Special thanks are due to Kate Lewis who has prepared a number of grant applications and met with much success.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

8 Risk Management

The PCC continues to identify and manage the risks which arise from the day-to-day activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC categorises the risks that face Christ Church Higher Bebington under the following headings:

Financial - Risks relating to the fiscal activities of the PCC and the management of the financial affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington. These risks include those applicable to the best use of the PCC's financial resources, the availability of funds and risk of fraud.

All cheques (and all new direct debit mandates) require two signatures. Authorised by the PCC, there are four signatories: Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer.

HMRC has tightened up its administrative processes surrounding Gift Aid tax reclaims. To ensure that we only claim the Gift Aid to which we are entitled, we have re-designed the Thanksgiving Pledge form to include the Gift Aid declaration. We claim Gift Aid on a monthly basis using HMRC's online reclaim system.

We provide HMRC with monthly information about salaries paid to our part-time staff through their on-line Real Time Information system – known as RTI.

Strategic and Operational - Risks relating to the way in which the PCC undertakes the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington. The PCC has developed policies for: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Environmental, Equal Opportunities and Lone Workers. These are kept under regular review so that they can be amended in the light of changing needs, emerging best practice guidelines and statutory regulations.

Governance & Regulation - Risks relating to external factors which affect the activities of Christ Church Higher Bebington and the regulatory environment in which we operate.

Reputational - Risks relating to the image and perception of Christ Church Higher Bebington in the wider community.

The PCC maintains careful oversight of the groups, activities and events that operate under its aegis and authorises appropriate leaders. The PCC is particularly conscious of the inherent reputational risks of websites and social media generally and takes steps to ensure that proper control is exercised.

9 Safeguarding

All safeguarding procedures and policies are up to date and adhere to Diocesan guidelines. Regular reports are presented to the Parochial Church Council. It is crucially important that everyone remains vigilant, acts appropriately and reports any safeguarding issues that they may become aware of to Diane Shaw, Named Safeguarding Officer or Rev. Mike Loach.

Appendix I

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC

Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2020

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Christ Church Higher Bebington

General Information

Status

Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission reference is: 1132356. The parish is within the Diocese of Chester's Wirral North Deanery; the parish reference is 0806.

Incumbent

The Reverend Michael G Loach

Associate Minister

The Reverend Eunice Blackmore

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Details of the membership of the Parochial Church Council during 2020 are set out in Appendix II of the Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office
Christ Church Community Centre
Kings Road
Higher Bebington
Wirral CH63 8LX

Honorary Treasurer

Charles Van Ingen
1 Blakeley Brow
Raby Mere
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 0PS

Independent Examiner

Janet Wallace
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU

Bankers

HSBC plc
58 Bromborough Village Road
Bromborough
Wirral
Cheshire
CH62 7ET

Accounts

01466909 PCC General Account
01466917 Community Centre Operating Account
61043358 Planned Giving Account
61043374 100 Club Account
71059998 Community Centre Capital Account
51070916 Fabric Reserve Account

Investment Managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
The CBF Church of England Funds
Senator House
85 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4ET

Deposit Fund Accounts

609146001D Fabric Reserve
609146002D New Community Centre

[All cheques require two signatures. The authorised signatories as approved by the PCC are: the Vicar, the two Churchwardens and the Treasurer]

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Church Customer Services
Beaufort House
Brunswick Road
Gloucester
GL1 1JZ

Insurance Policy

04/XPG/0256401 ParishPlus (covering the Church and the Community Centre).

Statement of the PCC's Responsibilities for the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require the members of the PCC to prepare financial statement for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC and of the incoming resources and the application of resources in the year ended.

In preparing these financial statements, the members of the PCC are required to:

- a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- b) Make adjustments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The members of the PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

PCC members are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These accounts were prepared by the Hon Treasurer to the Parochial Church Council:



Charles Van Ingen 26 February 2021

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council at its meeting held on Wednesday 3 March 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Reverend Michael G Loach 3 March 2021 (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Higher Bebington

I report on the accounts of the Christ Church Higher Bebington Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2019 on pages iv to xv which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out herein.

Respective Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and the Independent Examiner

The members of the Parochial Church Council (who are the trustees of the Charity) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Parochial Church Council 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
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning 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'; the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the gross income for the year exceeds the amount provided in section 145 (3) of the Act, I confirm that I am qualified to act as Independent Examiner under the provisions of that section of the Act and that my qualification is as shown below.

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

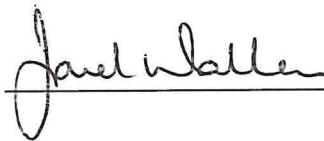
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- 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.

Janet Wallace A.C.A.
11 Mount Avenue
Higher Bebington
Wirral
Cheshire
CH63 5NU



31 March 2021

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019	Additional information
A Incoming Resources						
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds						
A1a Voluntary income	2a	166810	13494	180304	193802	
A1b Activities for generating funds	2b		3333	3333	16680	
A1c Investment income	2c		783	783	1268	
A2 Incoming resources from charitable activities	2d	9733	11948	21681	42887	
A3 Other incoming resources	2e	6850	26447	33297	54689	
Total incoming resources		183393	56005	239398	309326	
B Resources Expended						
B1 Costs of generating funds						
B1a Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	76	0	76	74	
B1b Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs	3b	56	0	56	1357	
B1c Investment management costs	3c	0	0	0	0	
B2 Charitable activities	3d	113118	108468	221586	432179	
B3 Governance costs	3e	0	0	0	0	
B4 Other resources expended	3f	0	0	0	9700	
Total resources expended		113250	108468	221718	443310	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		70143	-52463	17680	-133984	
C Transfers						
Gross transfers between funds	19			0	0	
Net incoming/outgoing resources before other recognised gains and losses		-16625	34305	17680	-133984	
D Other recognised gains/losses						
D1 Gains on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use		0		0	0	
D2 Gains/losses on investment assets	15	0	1245	1245	4054	
D3 Actuarial gains/losses on defined benefit pension schemes		0	0	0	0	
Total of recognised gains/losses		0	1245	1245	4054	
Net movement in funds		-16625	35550	18925	-129930	
E Reconciliation of Funds						
Total funds brought forward	19	124012	903160	1027172		
Total funds carried forward	19	107387	938710	1046097		

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2020	Total 2019
A Fixed assets					
A1 Intangible assets				0	0
A2 Tangible assets	13		910016	910016	919511
A3 Heritage assets		0	0	0	0
A4 Investments	15	0	19351	19351	18106
Total fixed assets		0	929367	929367	937617
B Current assets					
B1 Stocks and work-in-progress		0	0	0	0
B2 Debtors	14	3998	385	4383	6058
B3 Investments			0	0	0
B4 Cash at bank	16	104600	52156	156756	123657
Total current assets		108598	52541	161139	129715
C Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	1211	11848	13059	5810
Net current assets		107387	40693	148080	123905
Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years	18		31350	31350	34350
Total Net Assets		107387	938710	1046097	1027172
Represented by:					
PCC Funds					
Unrestricted	19	107387		107387	124012
Restricted	19		938710	938710	903160
Total PCC Funds		107387	938710	1046097	1027172

Legacies

In the terms of the Will (Grant of Probate issued on 2 January 2020) of the late **Henry Noel William Fletcher** (of 77 Mill Road, Higher Bebington), who died on 17 January 2019, the PCC has been left a one-twentieth share of his estate. On 9 June 2020, the Executors made an interim payment to the PCC of £15,367. As yet, despite enquiries, we do not have any definitive information from the Executors as to the final payment or when it is likely to be paid; however, the PCC is likely to benefit by a sum of several thousand pounds. Given the uncertainty, nothing from the estate is shown in these accounts.

In the terms of the Will of the late **Jennifer Eve Rome** (of 8 Victoria Road, Higher Bebington) who died on 15 March 2020, the PCC has been left a one-third share of her residuary estate. On 23 December 2020, the Executors made an interim payment to the PCC of £45,000. It is unclear as to the likely scale - probably small - of the final payment from the estate and nothing is shown in these accounts.

In the Will (Grant of Probate issued on 13 October 2020) of the late **Jean Margaret Thelwell** (of Riversdale Nursing Home, 14-16 Riversdale Road, West Kirby) who died on 17 January 2020, the PCC was left a legacy of £500. This is shown on the Balance Sheet above as an asset in the Debtors figure. [The money was received in January 2021].

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on Wednesday 3 March 2021 and signed on its behalf by Reverend Michael G Loach (Chairman of the Parochial Church Council):



Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which 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 financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Endowment Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC does not benefit from any endowment funds and so there is no reference to such funds in these accounts.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds comprise revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds that are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated Funds

Christ Church Higher Bebington PCC has no funds which are designated and thus no such information will be found in these accounts.

1.3 Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections and similar 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 entitled to the use of the resources, their ultimate receipt is considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are readily quantifiable. Dividends are accounted for when declared receivable; interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

1.4 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 expected to be paid over is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

1.5 Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a Faculty for disposal are inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings	50 years
Buildings (wooden)	8 years
Office equipment	4 years
Garden equipment	2 years

1.6 Investments and short-term deposits

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange, or whose value derives from them, are valued at market value at the year-end.

Short term deposits are held as cash with the CCLA or at the bank.

Notes to the Accounts

2 Incoming Resources

	Note	2020 Unrestricted	2020 Restricted	2020 Total	2019 Total	Additional Information
a) Voluntary Income						
<i>Christ Church Congregation Giving</i>						
Direct to bank: Standing orders and GAYE		72483		72483	70490	
Envelopes		2394		2394	4696	
Gift Aid lumpsums		922		922	1560	
Total planned giving before Gift Aid claim		75799		75799	76746	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - General		18782		18782	18292	
Total planned giving		94581		94581	95038	
Loose cash collections		3419		3419	5832	
Total voluntary giving		98000		98000	100870	
<i>Christ Church - miscellaneous donations and other voluntary income</i>						
Donations - General		6943		6943	8156	
Donations - Community Centre operations			1184	1184	0	
Donations - Churchyard			0	0	205	
Donations - Fabric Fund			5524	5524	300	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Fabric Fund			1410	1410	0	
Total miscellaneous donations		6943	8118	15061	8661	
<i>Christ Church Community Centre Project</i>						
Donations - General			3780	3780	896	
Donations - Church Family			0	0	535	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Community Centre			771	771	195	
Community Centre excluding grants			4551	4551	1626	
<i>Organ Project Income</i>						
Donations			825	825	15668	
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim - Organ Project			0	0	2599	
Organ Project			825	825	18267	
<i>Legacies</i>						
Legacy income		61867		61867	64378	
Total Voluntary Income		166810	13494	180304	193802	
b) Activities for generating funds						
Fund-raising activities and events (new Community Centre)	11		1218	1218	5219	
Fund-raising - Organ Project	11		195	195	4915	
Special charitable efforts (general)	12		1921	1921	6546	
Total from activities for generating funds			3334	3334	16680	
c) Investment income						
Bank interest and dividends - Fabric Fund			689	689	975	
Bank interest and dividends - Churchyard			57	57	232	
Bank interest and dividends - Community Centre			36	36	61	
Total Investment income			782	782	1268	
d) Incoming resources from charitable activities to further the PCC's objects						
Services provided by the PCC for which fees are payable:						
- Church Services and administrative activities (PCC fees)		7551		7551	9169	
- Use of organ for weddings and funerals		818		818	1086	
- Church heating		912		912	1299	
- Music licence		252		252	348	
Magazine income		200		200	707	
Community Centre - User Contributions	8a		11948	11948	30278	
Total income from charitable activities		9733	11948	21681	42887	
e) Other incoming resources						
Grants for Community Centre: Men in Sheds			10000	10000	7957	BigLottery
Grant for Community Centre: Men in Sheds			350	350		Benevity
Grants (Misc): Wirral Borough Council	157		157	157	775	
Grant (Defibrillator): Wirral Borough Council			1970	1970	0	
Grant (Discretionary for Community Centre): Wirral Borough Council			10000	10000	0	
Grant (Social Outreach activities): Co-op Academy			270	270	0	
Grant: Chester Diocesan Board of Finance		2000		2000	0	
Grants: HMRC Job Retention Scheme	4693		0	4693	0	
Grants: LPOW - Church fabric (VAT)			0	0	90	
Grants: LPOW - Electrical (VAT)			3401	3401	10110	
Grants: LPOW - Organ Project (VAT)			456	456	24281	
Miscellaneous				0	9070	
Total Other incoming resources		6850	26447	33297	52283	
Total Incoming Resources						
		183393	56005	239398	306920	
Total Gift Aid reclaim						
				20963	21086	HMRC
Total grants from LPOW scheme to offset VAT						
				3857	34481	Listed Places of Worship S

Notes to the Accounts

3 Resources Expended

	Note	2020 Unrestricted	2020 Restricted	2020 Total	2019 Total	Additional Information
a) Costs of generating voluntary income		75		75	74	Pledge Envelopes
b) Fundraising costs: cost of goods sold, prizes etc		57		57	1357	
c) Investment management costs		0		0	0	
d) Charitable activities						
<i>i) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church</i>						
Church - running expenses	5	15178		15178	14869	
Churchyard upkeep	7	5305	0	5305	7360	
Community Centre running costs	8b		38403	38403	42616	
Church - repairs, maintenance and improvements	6	0	42027	42027	235424	
Magazine production		45		45	60	
Ministry: clergy costs	4	17007		17007	18007	Includes secretarial support
Ministry: Parish Share - Chester Diocese		67624		67624	65975	Paid to Chester Diocesan Board of Finance
Organist and choir		1530		1530	4693	
Outreach/Young people		2792		2792	3992	
<i>sub-total (i)</i>		109481	80430	189911	392996	
<i>ii) Church management & administration supporting the above</i>						
Office costs and miscellaneous expenses	9	7422	0	7422	9427	
Capital expenditure and depreciation						
Depreciation charge	13		23048	23048	24550	
<i>sub-total (ii)</i>		7422	23048	30470	33977	
<i>iii) Grants to charitable organisations</i>	10	25	1180	1205	5206	
Total Charitable activities		116928	104658	221586	432179	
e) Governance costs (Audit charges)				0	0	
f) Other resources expended						
Outings		0	0	0	9700	
Total Other Resources Expended		0	0	0	9700	
Total Resources Expended		117060	104658	221718	443310	

Transactions with related parties that require disclosure

During 2020, the wife of a member of the PCC (Mark Gleave) was employed as a part-time Parish Secretary on a job-share basis. The contract of employment has been in place for some years and allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Mrs Victoria L Gleave during 2019 was: £8514. Employee benefits: nil.

Also during 2020, the wife of the chairman of the PCC (Revd Michael G Loach) was employed as the Community Centre Supervisor. The contract of employment allows for the PCC or the employee to give one month's notice. The total salary paid to Mrs Sarah L Loach during 2020 was: £6300. Employee benefits: nil

Declaration as to employees earning above certain figures

The number of employees of the PCC with total emoluments (excluding employer pension costs) above £60,000 per year: Nil (2019 Nil)

Notes to the Accounts (4 - 7)

	2020	2019	
4 Clergy Costs			
Clergy working expenses	849	853	
Council Tax	2711	2604	
Minor Repairs	0	765	
Secretarial support*	9931	10423	
Telephone and Broadband	1677	1061	£500 credit note from BT will reduce 2021 charges
Vicarage electricity & gas (office and public areas)	1037	1203	
Visiting clergy	289	594	
Water	513	503	
Total	17007	18006	

*During the year, to support the clergy, the PCC employed one person in the role of Parish Secretary on a part-time basis

5 Church Running Expenses			
Insurance	4598	4563	
Heating (gas)	2992	3425	
Lighting (electricity)	721	735	
Maintenance and Minor Repairs	2354	4064	
Upkeep of services	4505	1973	Includes £1310 for equipment for live streaming; professional cleaning £2520
Water	8	109	
Total	15178	14869	

6 Church Repairs and Improvements (Fabric Fund)

Miscellaneous	1208	834	Repairs to Vestry Roof; 5 yearly electrical inspection
Organ Restoration project	2740	145391	Final electrical work
Lighting project	20567	60957	Completion of project started in 2019
Audio-Visual project	17512	28242	Completion of project started in 2019
Total Expenditure	42027	235424	

7 Upkeep of Churchyard

Maintenance charges	4000	4956	
Materials, servicing, petrol, oil etc	270	191	
Projects	1035	2213	
Total Expenditure	5305	7360	

Notes to the Accounts

8 Community Centre Report (includes Men in Sheds)

	2020	2019	
8a Operating Income			
Adult Groups; Professional Groups	8119	19079	
Men in Sheds	491	1201	
Voluntary Groups (Under 18s)	1222	2171	
Income from Social initiatives	1031	4322	Tuesday activities, Connect Coffee, Film Club, Tea Dance etc
One-off bookings	1084	3505	
	11947	30278	
8b Operating Expenditure			
Cleaning materials & consumables	1411	1422	
Cleaning	5624	9606	
Electricity	5589	8726	
Insurance	1599	1560	
Management**	10461	9829	
Licences	225	271	
Men In Sheds	211	1818	
Milk	152	355	
Repairs, refurbishments and improvements	4574	2962	Extension to patio area: £3200
Servicing of plant & equipment	6090	3326	5 yearly electrical inspection £2380
Waste removal	1437	1798	
Water	1030	517	WaterPlus have made some adjustments and the account is currently in credit
	38403	42190	
Operating Shortfall	26456	11912	

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Administrator on a part-time basis
This person also deputised for the Parish Secretary during holidays

**The PCC employed one person in the role of Community Centre Supervisor on a part-time basis

Notes to the Accounts

9 Church Management & Administration

	2020	2019	
Office costs	2621	7059	
Stationery	356	593	
Miscellaneous	4444	1775	Includes £2020 for defibrillator, offset by grant £1970; see Note 2e
Total	7421	9427	

10 Grants Paid

	2020 Unrestricted	2020 Restricted	2020 Total	2019 Total	
a) Local charities					
Friends of Chester Cathedral	25		25	25	
Charles Thompson Mission, Birkenhead		0	0	10	
Forum Housing Association, Birkenhead		250	250	505	
Teams4u, Wrexham		0	0	100	
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington		0	0	450	
Therapy Dogs		0	0	2300	
b) National charities					
Church of England Children's Society (CECS)		300	300	375	Christingle
Mary's Meals		300	300	0	
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington		230	230	250	
c) Overseas charities					
Barnabas Fund		0	0	200	
CMS		0	0	1540	
Christian Aid		100	100	841	
Total grants paid	25	1180	1205	6596	

11 Fund-raising activities & events supporting the Community Centre and Services provided

	2020 Unrestricted	2020 Restricted	2019 Restricted
100 Club		1173	1290
Sales of cakes, pies and preserves		240	658
Summer Fair		0	2802
Total Fund Raising		1413	4750

12 Special Efforts Income

	2020 Restricted	2019 Restricted
Barnabas Fund	0	88
Charles Thompson Mission, Birkenhead	0	181
Christian Aid	100	901
Christingle (CECS)	268	371
Forum Housing Association, Birkenhead	0	503
Mary's Meals	278	0
Rose Queen	1054	5555
Royal British Legion, Higher Bebington	221	12
St John's Hospice, Clatterbridge	0	60
Total Special Efforts	1921	7671

Notes to the Accounts

13 Tangible assets: Capital Spending and Depreciation

		Community Centre				Churchyard		Overall Total
		Community Centre Building	Men in Sheds	Craft Shed	Vicarage Basement	Community Centre Total	Garden Machinery Store	
Actual/Deemed Cost	At 1 January 2020	1109962	3210	0	1798	1114970	0	1114970
	New capital spending	0	0	2900	0	2900	10653	13553
	At 31 December 2020	1109962	3210	2900	1798	1117870	10653	1128523
Depreciation	At 1 January 2020	193307	802	0	1350	195459	0	195459
	Charge for the year	22199	401	0	448	23048	0	23048
	At 31 December 2020	215506	1203	0	1798	218507	0	218507
Net book value	At 31 December 2020	894456	2007	2900	0	899363	10653	910016
	At 31 December 2019	916655	2408	0	448	919511	0	919511

The Community Centre was opened in April 2011.

Men in Sheds and the Craft Shed are part of the Community Centre's social engagement activities. The Vicarage basement is used to store items for the work and mission of Christ Church in Higher Bebington. Accordingly, for capital accounting purposes, these three headings are included under the Community Centre heading on the Balance Sheet.

14 Debtors

An analysis of the debtors at 31 December 2020 is given below:

		2020	2020	2020	2019	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
a) Voluntary Giving	Donations - General	0		0	240	
	Donations - Community Centre project		230	230	0	
	Gift Aid reclaim - General Account	2953		2953	1427	
	Gift Aid reclaim - Community Centre		155	155	0	
	Legacy	500		500	0	
	VAT reclaim - Fabric Fund (Lighting)		0	0	3890	
	sub-total	3453	385	3838	5557	
d) PCC Activities	Community Centre - Donations		0	0	275	
	Community Centre - User Contributions		0	0	166	
	PCC Fees	0		0	60	
	sub-total	0	0	0	501	
g) Grants Received	HMRC Job Retention Scheme	545		545	0	Dec 2020 (recei
Total debtors		3998	385	4383	6058	

Notes to the Accounts

15 Investments

Movements in the year:

Market value at 1 January 2020	18106
Add: Additions to investments at cost	0
Less: Disposals at carrying value	0
Add: gains on revaluation	1245

Market value at 31 December 2020 **19351**

Details of holdings

	Holding 31 Dec 2020	Price per Share 31 Dec 2020	Value 31 Dec 2020	Value at 31 Dec 2019	Gain on Revaluation
CBF Church of England Investment Fund - Income Shares					
Fabric Fund					
Ref 609146 001S	844.52	2048.73	17302	16189	1113
Churchyard Fund					
Ref 609146 002S	100.00	2048.73	2049	1917	132
Total			19351	18106	1245

16 Cash at Bank

	Account Number	31 Dec 2020	31 Dec 2019
Current Accounts - HSBC			
PCC General Account	01466909	31189	39619
Community Centre Operations Account	01466917	4239	9347
Planned Giving Account	61043358	860	837
100 Club Account	61043374	318	245
<i>sub-total</i>		36606	50048
Capital Accounts			
Fabric Reserve Account - HSBC	51070916	60376	16331
Fabric Reserve CBF	60914 001D	45987	45309
<i>sub-total: Fabric Fund</i>		106363	61640
Community Centre Capital Account - HSBC	71059998	6373	4587
Community Centre CBF	60914 002D	7414	7382
<i>sub-total: Community Centre</i>		13787	11969
Total		156756	123657

CBF = Church of England Central Board of Finance

Total cash investments with CBF **53401** **52691**

Notes to the Accounts

Note 17 - Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2020	2020	2020	2019	
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
d) Charitable activities					
i) Work of the PCC					
Church Running Expenses	0		0	28	
Organ tuning	480		480	0	
Church 5 year electrical inspection	734		734	0	
Churchyard maintenance	180		180	170	
Churchyard Major Projects	3950		3950	0	
Clergy expenses	0		0	94	
Vicarage gas and electricity	-420		-420	-679	
Visiting clergy	43		43	85	
Community Centre	3340		3340	158	
Organist and choir	1445		1445	0	
Outreach, Young People	1466		1466	792	
Church Management & Administration	0		0	724	
sub-total - Work of the PCC	11218	0	11218	1372	
iii) Grants					
Christian Aid		100	100	0	
The Children's Society		300	300	375	
Royal British Legion		230	230	0	
Forum Housing Association			0	505	
Thomas Robinson Charity, Higher Bebington			0	450	
sub-total - Grants		630	630	1330	
sub-total: Charitable activities	11218	630	11848	2702	
g) Other Creditors *					
Chester Diocesan Board of Finance		955	955	1572	DBF fees for Nov & Dec 2020
Clergy travel expenses (Landican)		89	89	76	
Gravedigger (interment of ashes)		0	0	53	
Organist fees (funeral)		85	85	328	
Vergers fees (weddings and funerals)		82	82	1079	
sub-total: Other Creditors	0	1211	1211	3108	
Total Creditors	11218	1841	13059	5810	

* For weddings and funerals, the PCC acts as agent for the fees due to the Diocesan Board of Finance, clergy travel to Landican Crematorium, organist, vergers and sexton. Hence this income and expenditure is not shown on the Statement of Financial Activities. However, the outstanding amounts due to be paid need to be shown here to ensure that the Net Current Assets figure shown on the Balance Sheet presents a true picture.

Note 18 - Creditors: Amounts falling due 2 to 10 years

Loans from members of Christ Church Higher Bebington (Interest-free)

	Community Centre	Organ Project	Total
Opening balance at 1 January 2020	13850	20500	34350
New loans during 2020	0	0	0
Loans repaid during 2020	3000	0	3000
Closing balance at 31 December 2020	10850	20500	31350

Notes to the Accounts

19 Movements in restricted funds during 2020

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Revaluation of Assets	Transfers	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2020
Fabric Fund	16189	6250	42027	1113	35527	17052
Churchyard	8158	57	10653	132	15008	12702
Community Centre	876211	41527	63991		45616	899363
Fund for St Paul's Project	0	6250	0		0	6250
Special charitable efforts	2602	1921	1180		0	3343
Total Restricted Funds	903160	56005	117851	1245	96151	938710
Unrestricted Funds	124012	177393	103867	0	-90151	107387
Total PCC Funds	1027172	233398	221718	1245	0	1046097

NOTES

Fabric Fund

All the cash reserves in the Fabric Fund were expended on the church fabric and fittings; hence the remaining funds at the year end are purely the investment assets; see Note 15. Also note that expenditure on the church fabric, fittings etc is not capitalised.

Churchyard

The Garden Machinery facility was constructed at the end of 2020 and is capitalised; see Note 13. Depreciation will be charged from 2021.

Community Centre

The Community Centre expenditure includes £23,048 for depreciation as shown in Note 13.

Fund for St Paul's Project

During 2020, £5,000 was anonymously given to support the St Paul's Project. On this £1,250 Gift Aid was claimed.

Note 20

This page does not form part of the Annual Accounts but illustrates the impact of coronavirus on the "routine" income and expenditure of Christ Church Higher Bebington including the Community Centre.

These figures exclude income from legacies, fundraising and grants not related to the pandemic or day-to-day operations. Also excluded is capital expenditure.

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
Income		
a) Voluntary Giving		
Bank Direct (Standing Orders)	72483	70490
Envelopes	2394	4696
Gift Aid Lump-sums	922	1560
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	18782	18292
<i>sub-total, Planned Giving</i>	94581	95038
Loose Cash	3419	5832
Donations	6943	8156
Total Voluntary Giving	104943	109026
d) Charitable Activities		
PCC fees, church heating etc	9733	12609
Community Centre User Contributions	11948	30278
Total Charitable Activities	21681	42887
Total Operating Income	126624	
Expenditure		
a) Costs of generating voluntary income	74	96
d) Charitable activities		
Church Running Expenses	15178	14869
Churchyard upkeep	5305	7360
Community Centre running expenses	35203	42616
Magazine Production	45	60
Clergy Costs	17007	18007
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	67624	65975
Organist & Choir	1530	4693
Outreach; Young People	2792	3992
Office Costs & Miscellaneous Expenditure	7422	9427
Total Operating Expenditure	152180	
Operating shortfall before exceptional grants	-25556	
Grants linked to Coronavirus		
Wirral Borough Council (Discretionary)	10000	
Co-op Academy (for Social Outreach)	270	
Chester Diocesan Board of Finance	2000	
HMRC (Job Retention Scheme)	4693	
Total Coronavirus Grants	16963	
Operating Shortfall after exceptional grants	-8593	

Commentary

As will be seen, without the various special grants, the Operating Outcome would have been a shortfall of around £25,500. However with grants of almost £17,000, the deficit was circa £8,500.

Given our financial reserves and the substantial legacy income (see Note 2), this shortfall was manageable.

Appendix II

Administrative information

Christ Church Higher Bebington is situated in Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Parish Office, Christ Church Community Centre,
Kings Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral CH63 8LX

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales (ref: 1132356).

Connected Charity information

The Vicar and Churchwardens are the trustees of the Thomas Robinson Charity; Charity Commission ref 233412.

Membership of the PCC:

[Note that the Annual Parochial Church Meeting was much later than customary in 2020 owing to the coronavirus pandemic.]

Up to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 4th October 2020:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Curate (Associate Minister from 30 June)
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2017 – 2020)

Ted Jones
Rhona Snelson
John Theobald

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham
Jane Dalziel – Secretary
Ron Davies
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave (Co-opted on 1 May 2019)
Alan Jackson
Karen Lewis
Barbara Mayers
Ian Millington – Lay Vice-Chairman (Co-opted on 1 May 2019)
Fiona Murphy
Tracy Evans
Paul Price (Co-opted on 1 May 2019)
Charles Van Ingen – Treasurer

As from the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 4th October 2020:

Ex Officio members

Revd Michael G Loach – Vicar and Chairman
Revd Eunice Blackmore – Associate Minister
Revd George Roach - Curate
Gary Shaw – Churchwarden
Ian Murray – Churchwarden

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Deanery Synod – Parochial representatives of the laity (2020 – 2023)

Ms Helen Byrne
Mrs Rhona Snelson
Mr John Theobald

Sub-total: 8

Elected representatives of the laity

Terry Cunningham (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Jane Dalziel – Secretary (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)
Nydia Gibson
Mark Gleave
Alan Jackson
Karen Lewis (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Kate Lewis (Co-opted on 4 November 2020)
Barbara Mayers
Victoria Midgley (Co-opted on 13 January 2021)
Ian Millington – Lay Vice-Chairman (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)
Tracy Evans
Paul Price
Charles Van Ingen – Treasurer (re-appointed on 4 November 2020)

Grand total: 21

Deputy Churchwardens

At the APCM held on 4 October 2020, the following people were appointed Deputy Churchwardens:

Alan Jackson
Rhona Snelson
Diane Shaw

Sidespeople for 2020 – 2021; appointed at the PCC meeting held on 4 November 2020

Alan Abbott
Liz Bird
Gail Boisson
John Boisson
Terry Cunningham
Rob Evans
Tracy Evans
Derek Fogg
June Fogg
Nye Gibson
Graham Loach
Jill Loach
Barbara Mayers
Fiona Murphy
Beverley Price
Judith Renton
Joan Rippon
Diane Shaw
Mike Thorne
Janet Wallace
Jim Wallace
Linda White
Helen Young

On 4 November 2020, the new PCC following the 2020 APCM confirmed the following:

100Club Organiser	Beverley Price
Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer	Diane Shaw
Church Website co-ordinator	Julie Scarsbrook
Eco Church Development	Alan Hollinshead
Electoral Roll Officer	Tracy Evans (tbc)
Flag Captain	Sarah L Loach
GDPR Co-ordinator	Ian D Millington
Parish Legacy Officer	Ian D Millington
Recorder – Community Centre Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Organ Project Loans & Lump Sum Donations	Barbara Thomas
Recorder – Envelopes	Michael Blackburn
Recorder – Standing Orders	Barbara Thomas
Relief Count Supervisor	Jim Wallace
Safety & Security Officer	<i>To be arranged</i>
Social Media Co-ordinator (except CCHB website)	Revd Michael Loach

and

Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with HMRC regarding PAYE (and RTI) and on-line Gift Aid reclaims	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Pensions Regulator	PCC Treasurer
Authorised representative of CCHB to deal with the Charity Commission for England & Wales	PCC Treasurer
Authorised to negotiate energy contracts <i>(through Parish Buying)</i>	Terry Cunningham

The new PCC following the APCM also confirmed the composition of the following bodies all of which report to the PCC:

Buildings & Finance Committee

Ian Murray (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham (Secretary)
Revd Michael G Loach
Alan Jackson
John Theobald
Charles F Van Ingen

Community Centre Management Team

Charles F Van Ingen (Chairman)
Sheila Clarke MBE
Revd Michael G Loach
Sarah Loach (Centre Supervisor)
Ian Murray
Julie Scarsbrook (Centre Administrator)
Diane Shaw

Men in Sheds Team

Stephen Ion (Chairman)
Terry Cunningham
Alan Jackson

Charity & Fundraising Committee

Roy Mayers (Chairman)

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Mark Gleave (Secretary)
Revd Eunice Blackmore
Kate Lewis
Gary Shaw
Paul Price

The PCC authorised the following pastoral/social initiatives:

<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Leader/s</u>
Bereavement Support Group	Vera Jackson
Boulders Group	Dawn Coulter and Libby Potter
Carers' Group	Rhona Snelson and Graham Loach
Coffee Club	June Fogg
Connect Coffee Snelson	Revd Michael Loach and Rhona
Film Club	<i>To be arranged</i>
Knit & Natter	Heather Whitehead and Joan Rippon
Ladies in Stitches	Sarah L Loach & Julie Scarsbrook
Lunch Club (1 st Tuesdays)	Heather Whitehead
Oasis Mental Health Support Group	Ted Jones and Jill Wright
Singing Café	Revd Eunice Blackmore
Sunday Club	Victoria Gleave
Supper Club	John Theobald
Tea Dance	Sarah L Loach
Thirsty Thursday	Terry Cunningham
Toddler Group (Mondays)	Amy Lee and Sarah L Loach