

CFA
29/4/24.



BLANDFORD FORUM

- PARISH CHURCH -

A Beacon Of God's Hope For Blandford & Beyond

Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul,
Blandford Forum

Vestry Meeting and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Wednesday 24th April 7.30pm

At Blandford Forum Parish Church

Vision:

Revitalise the Church, Transform the Town, Impact
the Area *and beyond*

Ministers Report

I continue to be encouraged by the journey of the church here in Blandford Forum. By God's grace we are continuing to grow and have an impact within our community.

We started 2023 with the move back down to worshipping in the church building – with +Stephen joining us to commission us back into the space. It was especially fitting to walk from the Parish Centre down to church as a community – reversing our steps from when we vacated the church in February 2022.

It was also a risk for us as a community as the question remained, would we retain all that we had gained during our time worshipping in the parish centre? Would the sense of community persist? Would we continue to grow as a community? In essence we returned to a building in many ways very different from that we left. We were warm, there was new technical gear, a new servery and a new carpet – all of which has contributed to the space feeling more welcome for those coming across the threshold.

+Stephen was also able to announce on that day that Will Burditt would be joining us for his curacy. Another confirmation that we were heading in the right direction as a church.

No sooner had we returned to using the church building, we were also hosting the rest of the churches of the town for our frequent but irregular United Service at which we were able to share Holy Communion (which I believe was a first?).

As we engaged with a rhythm of worship in the church building we also initiated what is now our 11am Contemporary Service. At the time this felt like a big risk, dividing the church congregation. Would it work or would it falter? Ultimately we were hoping for growth. I think time has proved that the risk has been worth taking – we now have two thriving congregations, and the number of children engaging with the church has steadily increased over the last 12 months.

Post Christmas 2022 we launched our first Alpha course in a number of years. We had a good number of people come along, and I know that those who led that first course were greatly encouraged by the conversations and the relationships built. We may not have grown in congregation size, but we definitely grew in faith of what God can do.

During Lent, we took the decision to hold weekly prayer and worship evenings under the title of Going Deeper. These gatherings on a Thursday evening were powerful for those that went along, with a real tangible sense of the Holy Spirit being present. Alongside this we held a Lent course looking at Hearing God's Voice – helping to engage with the prophetic gifting.

Easter was again another highlight – with the suite of services being such that almost everyone was able to engage with something – the Good Friday Breakfast followed by the Parish Boundary walk was very well attended and will undoubtedly become a fixture in the annual church calendar.

Post-Easter we launched our monthly evening worship gathering – on the first Sunday of the month. This effectively transitioned the weekly prayer and worship gatherings from Lent into a monthly gathering aimed at the wider community of North Dorset. This steadily grew over the year and reached 30 attendees by the end of the year, which is a huge encouragement

and show's a desire across the area for people wanting to go deeper in prayer and worship than can be achieved on a Sunday morning.

In May we assisted with the celebration of the coronation for the town, hosting a civic service attended by the MP and the town Mayor. On the Monday we invited the whole community to Afternoon Tea – and given the wet weather it was surprisingly well attended. A real highlight of the church engaging with the wider community. The Bellringers also celebrated with a quarter peel being rung in the church. Incidentally it has been good to have the ringers operating every first Sunday of the month for our combined service. We continue to strengthen the relationship between them and the church community.

In June, Archbishop Wake Primary School had a visit from ++Justin Welby as part of his mission weekend in the Diocese of Salisbury. As a parish we hosted Ben Hudd, a member of the Archbishop's College of Evangelists, who led series of events and prayer sessions over the weekend of the mission – which a small number of us took part in. Ben also preached for us on the Sunday morning.

We continue to engage with the two primary schools in the town, with Will and I both leading collective worship once a month and hosting the schools in the church at least once a term. This has been a continued encouragement to us and lays the foundation for all that we want to do in regards to ministry amongst families and children.

Over the Summer Term our preaching and teaching was on our identity in Christ (Secure, Accepted and Significant) and then our discipleship practices (Worship, Belong, Pray, Give, Serve, Witness).

At the start of July we welcomed The Burditts to our community, with Will getting ordained on 2nd July and then joining us on 9th – when we shared a bring and share meal up in the parish centre.

At the end of the Summer Term the Community Kitchen team took the difficult decision to stop their regular coffee mornings in order to provide space and time to rethink how we serve and reach the wider community of elderly and vulnerable as a whole. My personal thanks go to Mike, Juliet, Annie, Susanne and Heather who all made the ministry happen.

At the end of July, a small group of us attended New Wine United in Kent. This was a good time of fellowship, worship and teaching.

Over the Summer holidays we consolidated our usual worship pattern down to a single 10am service for all ages each Sunday – where we followed the story of Jonah and how it related to evangelism. Feedback from many was that this was a good approach to this usually fallow season in the life of the church. Alongside this, we had social gatherings each Sunday (walk, picnic, BBQ) for those who hadn't disappeared on holiday, to connect socially and go deeper in relationships.

Each Wednesday we hosted the community for our regular holiday stay and play sessions. We were able to serve many families over the holidays, giving them space for craft, games and fun as well as lunch for everyone attending. This is increasingly serving the wider community and demonstrating the church is a blessing to the town. My thanks to Tina, Barry and all others involved. This was a real team effort from the church community in making it happen.

Between September and November we worked our way through the book *The Church of tomorrow* – both in Small Groups and in our Sunday preaching. This was a very fruitful season of conversation across our congregations on the nature of church and what it looks like to engage with being disciples in the world today. The conversations we had then continue to shape us today in a very productive and healthy way.

In November Will and I played significant roles in the various remembrance events across the town. I led and Will spoke at the ceremony on the camp, and then we both had roles in the town service later that afternoon. The civic nature of the church continues to be a way we can serve the town and gives us an opportunity to speak into its wider communal life.

Over the Autumn Term Will and I were able to expand the scope of our schools ministry to include Downlands School on the Blandford Camp with the impending move of Padre Ken Adolphe to civilian life leading a church in Poole. This is an incredible opportunity to build connections with the community on the camp and see what relationships can be formed. This is also assisted by Downlands intent to join DSAT (Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust) in the near future.

Over the last year, I have also joined the Trustee Board of Faithworks (who operate Blandford Foodbank) and the Local Governing Body at Milldown School. I believe both of these roles reinforce the work of BFPC and strengthen the relationships we have with those organisations. Both are partners in mission for us as a church. In addition to this I have also been leading the local New Wine leaders' network alongside Mike Tufnell from the Lantern Church in Merley. My hope is that as we work in partnership with likeminded churches across the area we will be able to learn from them and them from us. We are stronger together.

At the end of 2023, we had a great Christmas with a good number of different worship offerings, as well as the Yuletide festival. The Yuletide festival brought a continual crowd of people into the church building and served to reinforce the need to make adjustments to the building in order to better cater for the wider community. Lack of decent toilets, a decent kitchen and the space to host hundreds in an informal manner were all clear issues!

Christmas itself for me was unusual, in that we had very good attendance numbers, but the number of church members was small in comparison to visitors. My usual experience has been Christmas is largely about church family coming together to worship...

As I look back at the above I am amazed by all that we have done and all that we have achieved in 2023. If you had told me in Jan 2022 how far we would have come in 2 years I would have been very surprised. God has been very good to us and has blessed us as we have sought to honour him in our worship and our communal life. 2024 has continued in the same vein – but I'll get to that in my APCM report next year.

Thank you to everyone who has served in some way in the life of the church over the last year. I know I don't say it enough, but I am deeply appreciative of everything you have done. Church wouldn't be church without you. I want to urge you to keep praying for this church to grow and prosper. We've come a long way, but we've still got some way to go before we can declare success! Onwards and upwards!

Revd. Chris Beaumont

Message from Will

Firstly, thank you for welcoming me and the family. It was daunting leaving Salisbury, friends, church, work, and schools etc. but the transition has certainly been softened by all your warmth and welcome. Thank you especially to Chris for all his support and kindness.

Secondly, it has been a real privilege to be a part of this church - it is clearly on an exciting journey of restoration and renewal. The first few months have been a joy to be a part of something that God is working in and through.

It is hard to comprehend that as I write this we will be coming up to a year in Blandford, we still feel very much like the newbies. But my time so far has enabled me to see all that goes on in the life of the church and contribute in part to some of those activities. I have deeply appreciated these varied experiences and opportunities that Chris has gradually and helpfully given me.

My curacy has been appreciated in part because I have learnt lots already and still have plenty to reflect on. But overall, it has been a joy because it's clear that we are a church that is not satisfied with the status quo and wants to pursue God and His mission for Blandford, and getting to play a small part in that is a real gift. I am grateful for the previous year and excited for the year ahead.

Church Reports

Electoral Roll

At the time of putting this Annual Report together there are 95 members on the Electoral Roll.

4 names have been removed and 8 names added. The electoral roll was approved by the PCC at the meeting on 14th April 2024.

Safeguarding

In line with Church of England expectations and Diocesan Guidelines the PCC has a Safeguarding Policy in place. This Policy is renewed annually.

Mary Henley was unanimously approved as Safeguarding Office at the PCC meeting on 19th June 2023.

Report from the Safeguarding Officer Mary Henley

We now have 58 people with valid DBSs - a mixture of Adult & Child DBS.

New DBSs are being processed as requested by the various activity leaders. Any existing DBSs that are reaching the three-year limit are being renewed if appropriate.

43 people have completed the Safeguarding Basic Awareness course, 33 the Foundations Course.

In addition, courses on Domestic Abuse, Leadership and Safer recruitment have been completed by some Church members.

There is a requirement for courses to be retaken every three years and this position is being monitored.

The Diocesan Parish dashboard is being used to check on our compliance with the Parish Safeguarding Handbook - this is a work in progress!

As Parish Safeguarding Officer I attend Diocesan Safeguarding Workshops.

PCC Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC Members is set out in the Church Representation Rules, a copy of which is available in the church office. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

Over the course of 2023 the PCC has met 8 times to discuss 'normal' business with an average attendance rate of 10.

Objectives and Activities

Blandford Forum Parish Church's PCC has the responsibility of working with the incumbent to promote the whole mission of the Church in Blandford Forum. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St Peter and St Paul's Church and the Parish Centre buildings.

Membership of the PCC

Administrative Information

PCC members who have served since the last APCM in May 2023 are:

Clergy: Rev. Chris Beaumont

Rev. Will Burditt (since July 2023)

Wardens: Stuart Britton and Heidi Roberts

Representatives of the Deanery Synod: Philip Whitcomb (until 2026)

Lay Chair: Rodney Smith

Secretary: Tina Stanley

Elected members:

Sara Loch (until 2026)

Philip Whitcomb (until 2024) (PCC Treasurer)

Sue Metelko (Until 2026)

Gail Del Pinto (Until 2024)

Rodney Smith (Until 2025)

Gill Ablitt (Until 2026)

Rachel Anney was co-opted on to the PCC.

Communion Distribution Assistants

The following acted as Communion Distribution Assistants during 2023 –

Rodney Smith

Dan Roberts

Barry Cox

Heidi Roberts

Sara Loch

Debby Griffiths

Philip Whitcomb

The following people have acted as Sidesmen (Welcomers) during 2023

Tina Stanley

Barry Cox

Diane Beasley

Muriel Read

Marion Warren

Val Dennis

Alan Dennis

Graham Poynter

Rodney Smith

Ian Smith

Bob Henley

Sheila Bessant

Andy Bessant

Pat Richardson

Shirley Remmer

Gail Del Pinto

Liz Wesley-Barker

Occasional Offices

Over the course of 2023 we have conducted the following:

Funerals: 8 Funerals took place at Blandford Forum Parish Church

1 Funeral took place at Blandford Cemetery

Baptisms: 8 Baptisms took place,

No Weddings were held.

Wardens Fabric Report on the Church Buildings 2023/4

Church building

During 2022/3 the following work has been carried out:

- A display area has been created on the left and right back pews with a permanently fitted collection box installed.
- Curtains have been installed in the north and south porches to enclose the working areas.
- The first toilet cubicle and north porch area have been decorated.
- The flower area in the south porch has had additional shelving installed.
- A handrail has been installed from the dais to the south aisle.
- Lightbulbs have been upgraded to LED in dimly lit areas.
- There has been general upkeep of paths and removal of ivy, etc in the churchyard.
- There have been further clearances of unwanted items in the west balcony, north and south porches.
- The fire extinguishers have received an annual service.
- The boiler has had its annual service.
- A wireless thermostat has been fitted to control and regulate the temperature inside the church.
- The electricity and gas contracts were renewed with British Gas and our broadband contract is with Now TV

Parish Centre

During 2023/4 the following work has been carried out:

- The telephone and broadband contract with BT were renewed.
- Our electricity contract is with British Gas Lite
- The heat pump central heating had its annual service and various parts were mended.
- The fire extinguishers have been serviced and the fire alarm is tested quarterly.
- The edging was added to the concrete surface to create a step down to the grass.
- An office storage cupboard was built.
- Repair to the sagging gutter over the Emmaus Room and leaf clearance of the gutters during the year.
- The shed is now more organised and useable with a large shelf for Little Peas equipment being installed.
- The raised bed in the garden has been removed to create more usable space with new gravel being added to the existing stones.
- General upkeep of the garden which is now being undertaken by Barry Cox
- A child-proof gate for Little Peas/Explorers has been installed across the corridor area.
- Fitted doormats have been installed in the office and Emmaus room to help with traffic in and out to the garden.

A huge 'thank you' goes to our maintenance team, Barry, Andy and Shane who have spent many dedicated hours mending and improving both the church and Parish Centre. Your creations are amazing!

Another big 'thank you' goes to Bob who keeps up to date with finding us the best deals and suppliers of gas, electricity, telephone and Broadband for the Parish Centre and church. We really appreciate you keeping the costs down! And of course, were would we be without Rodney! Font of all knowledge and amazing at coordinating and meeting contractors who come to mend and improve our buildings. Thank you!

Inventory and Terrier

There have been no additions to the church inventory this year.

There have been the following disposals: -

- The carrying case of a Thurible which contained asbestos.
- Three mouse damaged robes (163-165)

Stuart Britton

Heidi Roberts

Milton and Blandford Deanery Synod Report – 2023-24

The Deanery Synod met 3 times this year and the following is a summary of those meetings to share with parishes at the APCM.

In June 2023 we were delighted to welcome Heidi Roberts (deputy manager of the Blandford Foodbank), and she gave a very enlightening talk to the Deanery Synod about the work of the foodbank. The synod was very moved by Heidi's examples of real people gaining so much from the help that they're to receive not only financial and resources but also the care and relationship building. Heidi and her team are more than happy to come to individual parishes if anyone is keen to find out more about their work.

Lay Worship Leader and Lay Pastoral Assistant Training continues to be offered across the Deanery following on from the very successful courses run in 2022.

Pastoral Reorganisation is continuing albeit at a fairly slow pace, the Two Rivers Benefice due to be established in 2023, ongoing recruiting in the Chase Benefice. On a positive note, Reverend Jane Williams was installed in the Red Post Benefice in September 2023 and Reverend Will Burditt as curate for Blandford Parish Church from summer 2023.

September 2023 meeting – Reverend David Miell welcomed John Simmonds (JS), Chair of the Sudan Medical Link and Simon Tustin (ST) Executive officer, Anglican International Development to Synod. Both enlightened the audience with details of projects ongoing in the South Sudan and acknowledged the need for transparency and audit trail for any monies raised to support those projects. They also agreed that they saw the organisations as partners rather than a relief agency and there is much opportunity for the deanery to explore areas of partnership as well as continuing the Sudan Medical Link.

At this meeting the Standing Committee was elected for another 3 years, however with various family commitments it was noted that there is an opportunity for others to take the place of some members who were currently finding things a little difficult.

The February 2024 Synod included a Presentation and Discussion on the Diocesan Vision – "Making Jesus known" led by the Revd Canon Jonathan Triffitt (Diocesan Director of Mission & Ministry and Deputy Diocesan Secretary) with small group discussions.

Report on Restoration Project

The restoration of the roof, high level masonry and the internal plasterwork was completed during this year. Unfortunately, it came in approximately £100k over budget due to delays caused by, amongst other things, discovering unexpected problems. The delays meant that the expensive scaffolding stayed up at least twice as long as expected. But as far as we can see there is no water ingress, no more buckets to catch the drips.

We are still in the snagging period, but so far the only problem that has arisen is the swelling of the 4 dormer doors that are used to get access to the parapet to clean the gutter sumps. There will be a final snagging report.

It looked as if it would be impossible to find money to cover the excess required, as grant givers do not give money for work that has already been done. However, the National Heritage Lottery Fund suggested that we came back to them for a top-up grant (I didn't know they did such things), and we were fortunate to be given one to cover the excess.

The building work may be finished but there is continuing program of community engagement activities, including the monthly roof tours; the regular talks in the church and with us going out to local groups; on-going research into the history of the church building (rather excitingly we have discovered that there is an uncatalogued box of church papers in the Dorset History Centre); the extensive archive resulting from the project will provide a valuable resource for schools; and we did a mosaic workshop during a Stay and Play session. We are still encountering difficulties connecting with the Blandford Schools, mainly due to the increasingly inflexible, large curriculum. The official finishing date for this part of the project in November 2024, but we will continue most of the activities.

Church Group Activity Reports

Little Peas – 2023

Little Peas is going really well, numbers have grown and have averaged over 20 families a week over the year (Jan – Dec 2023). Many of our families have come consistently since we opened or since they joined. Quite a number of parents who came with young babies early in the year, or last year have begun to return to work, almost all are either not working on Wednesdays and can continue to come or their children are continuing to attend with grandparents. We have had a waiting list for most of the year which continues to grow. Over time it feels like we are building a lovely community which is supportive and friendly and we are really getting to know the families who come regularly well.

During the summer months we have been able to use part of the garden which has been very much enjoyed by some of the children and created a bit more space indoors. The removal of the raised bed near to the hall made this space much safer and more usable (thanks to Barry for this). In September we moved to using both the Hall and Emmaus Room for play spaces (buggies and prams have to be left in the garden) in order to try and expand the number of places available. We have welcomed a number of new families but the waiting list keeps growing. The added space is much better especially as the weather got colder and we are only using indoors.

We are continuing to invest in play equipment and developing the outside space for next summer will be the next thing to think about. We hope to add an outside kitchen and will need to think a bit more about making the garden safe now we park prams outside. The new children's resources cupboard in the office (thanks again to Barry!) has made an enormous difference with more space to keep creative resources used for Little Peas, Explorers and Stay and Play and the purchase of toddler height tables and chairs is also helpful.

We have a reliable team of both kitchen and "hall" helpers who do a fantastic job of making parents/carers and children feel welcome and loved. Coming along side and listening, playing with little ones so parents/carers can have a cup of tea, setting up and tidying away are all part of making things work so well. Having a few more people on the team would help make things easier when people are away, especially for set up so that is something to pray for and work towards next year.

We hear a lot of positive feedback from parents/carers, they comment on feeling welcome, looking forward to coming and their children wanting to come in to play on days when it's not Little Peas and being disappointed when they can't! It was lovely to see some Little Peas families at The Light Party and Christmas Services.

Thanks to all the team who help at Little Peas.

Cat B

Explorers 2023

With the move back into the Church building in January, our Sunday Children's group moved to using the small room off the porch and became "Explorers". We had a big clear out and tidy up to make the room work for children's work and created a safe play space in the coffee area for younger children staying in the service with parents/carers.

Explorers has used free sessions written by Faith in Kids, *Meals with Jesus* and then *Who am I?* and later in the year we began to use a resource called Energize which we pay for monthly. It's accessible for all those who lead sessions online and we can stop using and paying for it at any time if it doesn't work for us. We followed a series of sessions about Old Testament characters from September to November.

Attendance across the year has been gradually increasing, starting nearer an average of 3 children per week and ending between September and December with an average of over 5. The average age of the children remains fairly young at about 5 years. Over the year it became increasingly apparent that the room we were using was not really big enough for our growing numbers, especially as the children are getting older. Discussions about the possibility of moving the group to the Parish Centre in 2024 began in the Autumn Term where there would be more space for active games and no need to worry about the noise either carrying from the main worship space into the Explorers room or vice versa. One of the first steps on this journey has been thinking about storage and equipment at the Centre. The purchase of new child sized tables and chairs and the new Children's resources cupboard in the Centre are big steps forward.

The Explorers Team has grown this year and now numbers 9 people. By the end of the year we had managed to get all members of the team up to date with Safeguarding Training from Salisbury Diocese as well as having had DBS checks. Going forward new team members will undergo all the necessary checks and training prior to serving as part of the team. Role descriptions for Explorers group leaders and helpers are next on the list of things to complete for safeguarding along with updating our Safer Recruitment practice. The Explorers Team would like to thank Mary Henley for her help in all things safeguarding.

Thanks to everyone who leads and helps with Explorers.

Cat B

Stay and Play 2023

Stay and Play runs every Wednesday throughout the school holidays, providing a free session of play, craft and lunch for families. The activities are most suitable for 5–9-year-olds but younger and older siblings also attend with parents.

There are a number of families who attend regularly but also new families attending. Most sessions are fully booked as soon as they are advertised – or even before!

This year we have actively worked with our friends at Nourish to support clients attend with their children. It has been a joy to see how these families have blossomed and made friends with other families while attending sessions.

Some families have now begun to attend the AllTogether@11 services and have attended special church services such as the Crib Service and Light Party.

Running the sessions is a huge team effort by our volunteers and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gives their time and energy to make this possible.

Tina Stanley

1st Blandford Parish Church Brownies Report 2023 / 24

We have had a full and varied programme on subjects ranging from Knowing Myself, Have adventures, Be Well to Skills for my Future. Please follow the link to learn more <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/Brownies-7-10>

We took part in "Joy to the World" Christmas Tree Festival; we made some sparkly Snowflakes and helped with Refreshments and fundraising for our units at the Yuletide Festival.

Our Brownie unit has a full membership with girls moving into Blandford from different areas and the Rainbows moving up. Blandford Division are looking to recruit more volunteers to re-open another Brownie unit due to leaders leaving and volunteer shortage. Please follow the link to learn more

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer>

Ruth Jones (Tawny) March 2024

2nd Blandford (Parish Church) Guides Report for 2023

We meet every Monday evening during term time at the Parish Centre. We have had a full and varied programme with the girls running their own activities on subjects ranging from Skills for my future to Staying Healthy. Please follow the link to learn more <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/guides-10-14/>

Our first big occasion in 2023 was our celebration evening, amongst many badges presented during the evening we were able to present our first Gold Award to one of our older Guides, Eve. Since then, Eve has moved on to be a Young Leader at Brownies, she helped with Stay and Play over the Summer and has also, with another member, gained her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award.

This year for Mothering Sunday we decorated candles and tried pyrography on wooden spoons, made batter from scratch and cooked pancakes for Shrove Tuesday and transformed crème eggs into various farm animals, for our annual Easter competition.

The Summer term with lighter evenings enabled us to try outdoor activities. The girls had the opportunity to try Kayaking, Windsurfing, Paddleboarding and Archery. We also joined Guides from around the county for a campfire at Dudsbury Guide camp.

Towards the end of the Summer term we had a go at using saws and hammers making bug houses for the Centre garden and we tried to be savvy shoppers at Tesco. Learning to manage a budget so that we could buy some essential items for Nourish. The Summer term ended with a visit to Splashdown.

In September we had a weekend camp at Dudsbury, the guides sleeping under canvas and cooking their own meals under supervision. Some of our Guides also went Pond dipping on Brownsea Island. Closer to Christmas we decorated a tree for the Christmas tree trail, provided Santa with his Elves for the Yuletide festival and visited Sophie's pottery for a painting session.

There are many more activities that have taken place over the year, those mentioned are some of the more memorable ones. Keeping the unit going is very much a team effort, and the unit wouldn't be what it is without the adults who have given their time over the year to attend trainings, resource activities and lead weekly meetings and other events.

Heather Stringer

March 2024

Mothers' Union Prayer and Fellowship Group

At the beginning of 2023 Gail Del Pinto took on the leadership of Mothers' Union following the sad passing of the previous leader Anne Shire. Over the 3 sessions she led the meetings she encouraged them to build in confidence as a strong team of women with voices that could change the world around them. She also encouraged them to be strong advocates to mothers around them and share their experience.

During meetings the group prayed for families around them and around the world.

Gail also visited the Mothers' Union caravan at Rockley Park. This offers holidays at a reduced rate for families to give them the opportunity of a break together. Nourish identify and support families to benefit from this.

After Gail stepped down as leader the members wished to continue, but there was no one able to take over as leader. They continued to meet during this time and enjoyed regular trips to Salisbury to join other groups for Communion at the Cathedral.

A representative from Mothers' Union visited the group to offer support and encouragement to continue. Following this we are delighted that Muriel Read has now taken over leadership of the group and we thank her for keeping this important church group going.

In 2024 there will be regular guest speakers at the meetings.

Two new members have recently joined. New members are very welcome. If you are interested in finding out more please speak to Muriel or pop along to one of the meetings.

Gail Del Pinto/Tina Stanley

Christmas Tree Trail

In 2023 the popular BFPC Christmas Tree Trail continued with the theme being Silent Night, Holy Night. Trees from Community Groups ranging from Pre-schools to Care Homes, and everyone in between, were displayed in shop windows and the 8 school trees were displayed in the church building. The church was opened every day in December to allow people to view and vote for the trees, in addition to the usual flurry of voting at the Yuletide Festival. The most votes cast by the public online and in person were for Community Tree (Castleman House) and School Tree (Durweston Primary School), with the mayor choosing the Footprints Toddler Group (Blandford Evangelical Church) as his favourite tree.

Tina Stanley

Saturday Coffee

During 2023 Saturday Coffee resumed and was welcomed by the community. There are a small but growing group of regulars each week and it is a pleasure to develop and deepen our relationship with them. It is also a consistent time when the church is open outside of Sundays giving an opportunity for people to visit the church and find out not only what is happening in the building but also in the life of the church. The team of coffee makers and listening ears is relatively small. If you are interested in finding out how you can help please speak to Sara Loch or Tina.

Tina Stanley



**Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St
Peter**

& St Paul, Blandford Forum

For the year ended 31 December 2023

Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

Accounting Policies

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act, 2011 following procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, 2011. Under section 144(2) of this Act an audit is not required for this year.

The statements have been prepared also in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations on the accrual basis. They include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible by law. They do not include the accounts of any church groups that owe their affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members. Any income received which exceeds the requirements of the purpose for which it is raised or donated will be transferred to Church general funds (unrestricted).

We are currently using a software accountancy package called Expense Plus which has been specifically designed to provide a more accurate cloud based financial position in real time.

Financial Review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £719,210 of which £718,693 was unrestricted planned voluntary donations. This compared to £291,658 in the previous year. However, a large proportion of that relates to the sale proceeds of Anne Shire's house which raised £328,862. If this is deducted the total receipts on unrestricted funds is £390,348. The figure for 2022 was artificially higher because of the restoration of the roof project. The actual amount budgeted for donational income in 2023 was £61,950 and we achieved more than double this amount.

The proceeds of Anne Shire's house have been notionally allocated £100,000 towards the costs of providing a Children's Ministry Leader over the next five years and the balance towards the proposed re-ordering and restoration of the Church's interior.

In January 2022, the monthly donation through the Parish Giving Scheme was £1,386. By December 2022 this had risen to £2,206 per month and by December 2023 it had risen to £2,885. That is a 108% increase over a 24 month period and a 31% increase for 2023 alone. There are currently 28 members signed up for the PGS but only 10 have elected for annual inflationary increases.

There are currently 11 members who give monthly by standing order. This totals £792 per month.

We now have two fully operational contactless devices. One in the Parish Centre and one in the Church. The Church one has been less reliable as it is dependent on a broadband signal but now seems to be working a lot better. The amount collected varies from week to week. On average we

are receiving between £10-15 per week (£60 per month) from the Sunday/Thursday services at a cost of £21 per month. The hand held device costs £9.60 per month.

The average amount collected through all the contactless devices was £44.58 per month in 2022 and this has risen to £86.33 in 2023.

The legacies we received in 2023 were as follows:

- Pat Ellen - £20,612
- Mary Pope - £26,767
- Anne Shire - £328,837

In 2024 we should receive the balance from the estate of Heather Bracewell. This money is designated for the Heritage/Fabric Fund.

Both the costs of gas and electricity for the Church were up from 2022. This was partly due to the price per unit increasing but also overall we have used more units than previous years. However on analysis of the units used per month it was evident that it is more efficient to keep the church heated all week at a constant temperature rather than fluctuating when scheduled services were due.

General maintenance and running costs were also up from 2022. Some of the difference was due to the clock mechanism being updated including silencing of the bells at night. The rest related to church boiler repairs, woodwork in the church including giving station and door adjustments and organ repairs.

Total net assets was £425,529 as at 31 December 2023 compared to £168,079 as at 31 December 2022.

Assets

Consecrated and benefice property

In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of "charity" BY Section 10(2) (a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

Moveable church furnishings

These are capitalised at cost and depreciated over their useful economic life other than where insufficient cost information is available. In these cases, the item is not capitalised but are included within the Church's inventory.

Tangible Fixed Assets for use

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost.

A depreciation of 10% has been allocated for 2023 towards the PA and lighting system. Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalized cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives.

No depreciation is provided on buildings as currently estimated residual value of the properties is not less than their carrying value and the remaining useful life of these assets exceeds 50 years, so that any depreciation charges would be immaterial.

Funds

Endowment Funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from the investment may be used as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established. This fund was generated from the sale of Lesley House.

Restricted Funds relate to income received for a specific objective. These funds can only be spent on the specific purpose for which they are given. The PCC does not invest separately for each fund.

The Restricted Funds as at 31 December 2023 are :

Heritage/Fabric Fund	For specific Church Building Repairs and Maintenance	£42,963
Parish Centre	Relates to the running & upkeep of the Parish Centre	£972
Youth	Support for Youth Work	£416
Organ	Relates to specific work to the organ	£627
Mothers Union	For work relating to Mothers Union	£279
Hardship	For those in particular financial need	£97

Designated Funds relate to funds earmarked for a designated purpose such as the Parish Centre or Flowers but can also be used as unrestricted funds if required. The Community Kitchen Fund is a designated fund. The following are the designated funds held as at 31 December 2023:

Community Kitchen	£3,500
Heritage & Fabric Fund	£74,208
Flowers	£474
Friends	£695
Restore	(£71,388)
Parish Centre	(£214)
Youth	£989

General Unrestricted Fund is the fund used by the PCC for PCC ordinary purposes. Unrestricted funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use. The fund stood at £42,397 as at 31 December 2023.

Income Resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised and received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue. All income resources are accounted for gross.

Resources Used

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis and is accounted for gross. The diocesan parish contribution (Share) is accounted for when paid.

Related party transactions and council member's remuneration

No member of the council received any remuneration for their work as trustees.

No members of the PCC or other persons related to the PCC had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the PCC during the year.

Expenditure

75% of the Diocesan Parish Share amounting to £43,000 was paid and this was in line with the budget set at the start of the year. The intention of the PCC in 2024 is to pay 100% of the Parish Share which amounts to £58,826. The Parish Share is the sum that the Churches in the Deanery have to find and is shared between the Churches according to a formula that is based mainly on the numbers in our worshipping community. It is the cost of being part of the Salisbury Diocese.

No employees received emoluments of more than £60,000. The average number of employees during the year was two. Employees worked between 9 and 19 hours per week each.

Reserves policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds (if possible) which equates to approximately six months unrestricted payments to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. This has been archived for the first time in a number of years in 2023.

Parish Centre

The total income from the letting of the Parish Centre was £11,667 in 2023, down slightly from 2022 of £12,264. This is largely due to timing of payments rather than the Centre being less busy than 2022.

The electricity costs for the Parish Centre remain high. In 2023 it was £2,674 against a budgeted figure of £2,000. Both the usage and rate is higher than previous years. Maintenance and repairs were also higher than expected. Whilst the Centre has been regularly maintained over the years there are elements which will need to be replaced in the coming years. The first of these (the outside decking) was completed during 2023 but that has used up virtually all of the reserved funds.

A vast majority of the staffing costs have been met out of the general church funds rather than a proportion being allocated to the Parish Centre Fund.

Restore

The biggest item of expenditure and the one which has caused the most headaches has been the restoration of the roof project. The main issue has been cash flow and as at 31 December 2023 the fund was in deficit by £71,388. Effectively we have borrowed monies from other funds to pay for the work. The good news is that this shortfall has been met by a lottery grant however the balance of that grant will not be paid until September 2024 so cash flow will remain a challenge for the time being.

The total cost for the project amounted to just over £1.5m.

St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

Balance Sheet - All Funds (by Fund Type)

Financial Year: 2023 | Date: 31/12/2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Prior Year
Current Assets					
Cash	319,646.18	45,357.80	3,100.41	368,104.39	93,093.57
Accounts Receivable	10,093.38	0.00	0.00	10,093.38	5,428.24
Prepayments	1,481.08	0.00	0.00	1,481.08	1,123.10
Total	331,220.64	45,357.80	3,100.41	379,678.85	99,644.91
Non-Current Assets					
Fixed Assets	47,467.64	0.00	0.00	47,467.64	43,817.65
Investments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	26,488.77
Total	47,467.64	0.00	0.00	47,467.64	70,306.42
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	1,617.19	0.00	0.00	1,617.19	1,871.83
Deferred Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	1,617.19	0.00	0.00	1,617.19	1,871.83
Non-Current Liabilities					
Long Term Loan / Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Net Current Assets	329,603.45	45,357.80	3,100.41	378,061.66	97,773.08
Total Net Assets (Assets Minus Liabilities)	377,071.09	45,357.80	3,100.41	425,529.30	168,079.50
Represented By					
OPEX - General (Unrestricted)	42,397.59			42,397.59	17,534.05
Grow (Unrestricted)	-2,656.02			-2,656.02	0.00
Equip (Unrestricted)	8.13			8.13	0.00
Prayer & Worship (Unrestricted)	-2,661.87			-2,661.87	0.00
Vision & Leadership (Unrestricted)	-2,661.07			-2,661.07	0.00
Community Kitchen (Designated)	3,500.09			3,500.09	4,933.48
Heritage & Fabric Fund (Designated)	74,208.77			74,208.77	93,042.53
Flowers (Designated)	474.22			474.22	509.22
Friends (Designated)	695.31			695.31	5,805.31
Restore (Designated)	-71,388.86			-71,388.86	10,361.26
Parish Centre (Designated)	-214.25			-214.25	-10,656.79
Restricted Projects (Designated)	5,516.94			5,516.94	5,516.94
Tag a Tile (Designated)	0.00			0.00	0.00
Youth (Designated)	989.37			989.37	3,271.79
Blandford Cares - Restricted (Restricted)		0.21		0.21	63.21
Fabric Fund - Restricted (Restricted)		42,963.82		42,963.82	26,381.93
Organ - Restricted (Restricted)		627.40		627.40	527.40

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Prior Year
Parish Centre - Restricted (Restricted)		972.46		972.46	7,272.05
Youth - Restricted (Restricted)		416.71		416.71	416.71
Parish Centre - Endowment (Endowment)			3,100.41	3,100.41	3,100.41
Mothers Union (Restricted)		279.90		279.90	0.00
Hardship Fund (Restricted)		97.30		97.30	0.00
Children's Ministry Leader (Designated)	100,000.00			100,000.00	0.00
Church Re-Ordering (Designated)	228,862.74			228,862.74	0.00

Tag a Title (Designated)	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Prior Year
Youth (Designated)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Blandford Cares - Restricted (Restricted)	989.37	0.00	0.00	989.37	3,271.79
Fabric Fund - Restricted (Restricted)	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.21	63.21
Organ - Restricted (Restricted)	0.00	42,963.82	0.00	42,963.82	26,381.93
Parish Centre - Restricted (Restricted)	0.00	627.40	0.00	627.40	527.40
Youth - Restricted (Restricted)	0.00	972.46	0.00	972.46	7,272.05
Parish Centre - Endowment (Endowment)	0.00	416.71	0.00	416.71	416.71
Mothers Union (Restricted)	0.00	0.00	3,100.41	3,100.41	3,100.41
Hardship Fund (Restricted)	0.00	279.90	0.00	279.90	0.00
Children's Ministry Leader (Designated)	0.00	97.30	0.00	97.30	0.00
Church Re-Ordering (Designated)	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00	0.00
	228,862.74	0.00	0.00	228,862.74	0.00

St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

Statement of Financial Activities - Summary

Financial Year: 2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Prior Year
Incoming Resources					
Donations & Legacies	718,693.72	517.20	0.00	719,210.92	928,676.72
Charitable Activities	2,569.00	0.00	0.00	2,569.00	4,500.61
Investments	548.41	0.00	0.00	548.41	63.52
Trading Activities	12,319.25	0.00	0.00	12,319.25	12,314.82
Other	706.26	0.00	0.00	706.26	272.60
Total incoming resources	734,836.64	517.20	0.00	735,353.84	945,828.27
Resources Used					
Charitable Activities	432,369.47	103.00	0.00	432,472.47	996,023.12
Raising Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Governance Costs	43,000.00	0.00	0.00	43,000.00	28,000.00
Support	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total resources used	475,369.47	103.00	0.00	475,472.47	1,024,023.12
Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before transfers)	259,467.17	414.20	0.00	259,881.37	-78,194.85
Fund Transfers In	33,108.43	16,581.89	3,100.41	52,790.73	3,133.53
Fund Transfers Out	45,822.30	6,968.43	0.00	52,790.73	3,133.53
Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before gains/losses)	246,753.30	10,027.66	3,100.41	259,881.37	-78,194.85
Investment Gains (or Losses)	0.00	668.84	-3,100.41	-2,431.57	303.62
Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before Asset Revaluation)	246,753.30	10,696.50	0.00	257,449.80	-77,891.23
Asset Revaluation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Net Movement of Funds	246,753.30	10,696.50	0.00	257,449.80	-77,891.23
Total Funds Brought Forward	130,317.79	34,661.30	3,100.41	168,079.50	245,970.73
Total Funds Carried Forward	377,071.09	45,357.80	3,100.41	425,529.30	168,079.50
Represented By					
OPEX - General (Unrestricted)	42,397.59	0.00	0.00	42,397.59	17,534.05
Grow (Unrestricted)	-2,656.02	0.00	0.00	-2,656.02	0.00
Equip (Unrestricted)	8.13	0.00	0.00	8.13	0.00
Prayer & Worship (Unrestricted)	-2,661.87	0.00	0.00	-2,661.87	0.00
Vision & Leadership (Unrestricted)	-2,661.07	0.00	0.00	-2,661.07	0.00
Community Kitchen (Designated)	3,500.09	0.00	0.00	3,500.09	4,933.48
Heritage & Fabric Fund (Designated)	74,208.77	0.00	0.00	74,208.77	93,042.53
Flowers (Designated)	474.22	0.00	0.00	474.22	509.22
Friends (Designated)	695.31	0.00	0.00	695.31	5,805.31
Restore (Designated)	-71,388.86	0.00	0.00	-71,388.86	10,361.26
Parish Centre (Designated)	-214.25	0.00	0.00	-214.25	-10,656.79
Restricted Projects (Designated)	5,516.94	0.00	0.00	5,516.94	5,516.94

25th April 2025

Parochial Church Council of Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

Report to the PCC of Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

On accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and s.144 of the Charities Act 2011.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Act);

To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and

To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

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

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - a. proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
 - b. accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: ...*Sue Wintle*.....

Date: ...25th April 2025....

Sue Wintle FMAAT, ACIE

Accounting Technician, Association of Charity Independent Examiners

27 Bascott Road
Wallisdown
Bournemouth
Dorset
BH11 8RJ

25th April 2025

Parochial Church Council of Parish of St Peter & St Paul, Blandford Forum

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

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Signed: ...*Sue Wintle*.....

Date: ...25th April 2025....

Sue Wintle FMAAT, ACIE

Accounting Technician, Association of Charity Independent Examiners

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