THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales · Charity number 1132562

Details

Other names	SAWBRIDGEWORTH PCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2009-11-07
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	1 Vantorts Road Sawbridgeworth CM21 9AH
Phone	01279726629
Email	office@sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk
Website	www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Activities

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

Activities: The primary objective of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

Classification

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

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Geography

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

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£203,900	£228,261	-	-
2024-12-31	£198,548	£200,760	-	-
2023-12-31	£172,187	£226,905	-	-
2022-12-31	£156,394	£206,395	-	-
2021-12-31	£111,834	£147,752	-	-
2020-12-31	£205,909	£168,574	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Anthony Heard		2016-04-30
Deborah Cubitt		2019-04-30
Gillian Squire		2022-05-22
Jane Johnson		2024-05-12
Julie Patterson		2022-05-22
Kofi Otu		2021-05-23
PETER CLARK		2016-04-30
Rev ROBERT JAMES RILEY-BRALEY		2025-05-21
Rev Sara Louise Batts-Neale		2025-07-23
Valerie Bright		2019-04-30

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth

Passion for Christ - Compassion for all

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2025

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2025

Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the annual report for 2025. I arrived in post just over halfway through the year, joining a busy church with many dedicated volunteers and, of course, a slightly less newly arrived colleague in the Revd Canon Robert Riley-Braley. We're both grateful to everyone who provided cover during the vacancy, and to all church members who worked hard to keep the church going during what is always a difficult season. It has been a joy to begin to get to know the congregation and the wider community, but I am very aware that even as places begin to feel familiar, my few months here are a mere blink of an eye compared to the lives of people whose families have been here for decades. There is always more to learn about a parish.

Highlights of the year have included our visits from Spellbrook school, with Revd Robert leading the leavers' service on the day of my installation. I've also shared in Nativity plays at Spellbrook and Tiny Tots, and our own "scratch nativity" in church. I was so impressed, too, with the transformation of the church for the Festival of Light when our town Christmas lights were switched on. It has been good to add a second 8 o'clock Sunday service to the calendar, reintroducing provision once a month from the Book of Common Prayer.

Great St Mary's has big plans for the future of its estate, and the work of the Re-imagining Group has continued. Sarah Vickers stood down in the autumn as chair of the Group. We thank her for the work leading the re-imagining project over the past few years as we move to thinking about concrete steps for action. My arrival and subsequent questioning have slowed the process a little, but I am keen that we see progress next year and the report from the Group below is encouraging. The usual fabric repairs and problems have been faithfully addressed over the course of the year by Peter Clark and the Fabric & Churchyard committee. We saw the handover of churchyard maintenance to East Herts District Council; this has not been without difficulty and our own churchyard working parties have been necessary.

You will see reports from many other parts of life here – we are fortunate to have many active volunteers who contribute to the life of Great St Mary's. As well as the committee chairs and PCC members listed in this report there are faithful people carrying out the small, behind-the-scenes jobs that make a difference – you are all appreciated and you all have my thanks.

I do want to record grateful thanks to Anthony Heard and Gilly Squire, our churchwardens, for their support to Robert and me as their new clergy.

Yours in Christ,

Revd Sara

Aim and purpose

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Our church community

In May 2025 the Revd Canon Robert Riley-Braley was licensed as associate minister. He was joined by the Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale, our new Incumbent, who was licensed in July. At the beginning of Advent 2025, our Lay Reader, Diana Kitson announced that she would be retiring in early 2026 – more on this in next year's report.

As at the end of 2025, there were 87 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 13 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors. We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2025.

During 2025 we baptised four children and one adult and married two couples. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 12 funerals and eight interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love, and we keep their families in our prayers.

This beautiful kneeler was made and presented at our Harvest service by Hazel Mead, celebrating 300 years of the Rivers Nursey.

PCC and church members work in three key subcommittees – Outreach, Fabric & Churchyard, and Stewardship & Finance. Their work is recorded below and on page 11.

Safeguarding

The PCC complied with its duty to have due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016). There were no serious incidents during 2025.

Safeguarding is now a regular, separate item on the PCC agenda. We are meeting all our obligations re DBS checks and safeguarding training, including the new requirement from January 2025 for all bellringers to complete basic training. One-to-one and small group training has been facilitated for those unable to take online courses at home, which has enabled discussion about issues raised. We have overhauled our safer recruitment procedures and reviewed all our safeguarding documentation. As part of our endeavours to embed a culture of safeguarding we intend to share the Volunteer Code of Conduct and Responding to a Safeguarding Concern or Allegation with a much wider group of volunteers than previously.

Fabric & Churchyard Committee

Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and outbuildings. It held three full meetings during the year, with all urgent matters dealt with via emails.

2025 saw the transition of churchyard maintenance from the PCC and this Committee to East Herts District Council (EHDC). Understandable teething troubles have been encountered and addressed by the Churchwardens, and good working relationships with EHDC have developed. By the end of 2025 the remaining issues were largely the timeliness of work and how to address litter and bin management. The Churchyard Working Party still meets to complement work of the EHDC. A young Robinia tree was planted in May 2025 in memory of Joanna ("Jo") Pigram.

The church building remains in a good state of repair but there is outstanding work left over from the Quinquennial Report still awaited. This is due to a backlog of work built up by Lodge & Sons due to shortage of skilled heritage builders and the illness and sad death of their manager who was in charge of work here. The work involves lime mortar, so will now be done in the warmer months of 2026.

The Friends of Great St Mary's arranged for conservation of the large Viscount George Hewyt monument in the chancel. Skillington Workshop achieved very fine results. The work was entirely funded by The Friends,

Church Care/The Pilgrim Trust and the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme for reclaiming VAT. The Friends proposed similar conservation for the William and Elizabeth Hewyt Monument above the lectern. A faculty was obtained from the Diocesan Advisory Council (DAC) and work took place in January 2026.

A complication now affects all faculty applications, including the Re-imagining project (see page 6). Bats have re-appeared in the church, and we have a legal obligation to state what steps we are taking to protect them. A survey has been booked for 2026.

The gale-broken flagpole was repaired. Ecclesiastical Insurance paid for the temporary repair and for replacing the flagpole in 2026. In the autumn, rain leaked from the nave roof to near the organ console below. Lodges identified cracking in a fold under the overlapping lead roofing panels, which will need to wait for warmer weather to tackle. Routine maintenance has continued and included replacement of failed lights in some of the highest parts of the church and the restoration of spire lighting with LEDs. There were also repairs to the organ (see page 8).

The church noticeboard was wood-treated and updated, and unveiled during our new Incumbent's welcome. A firm, which had won by the competitive tender, serviced the car park bollards. The six-monthly service in October 2025 diagnosed problems which they claimed required both bollards and the controller to be replaced, at great cost. An alternative firm was identified in early 2026 and repair work is being undertaken at a much lower cost.

A new security camera system was installed in line with Deanery recommendation, to provide some level of protection for staff lone working in the Parish Office (see below). The Parish Hall had a serious macerator failure which was expensive to fix, and we had to re-locate regular bookings to Church House and cancel others. We will consider back-up options so that the hall can remain open at all times.

St Mary's Lodge is now occupied by the Associate Minister. A gale blew down a substantial tree branch, which was efficiently cleared early the next morning by a local tree surgeon. At the end of the year, planning permission was sought for further tree work in early 2026.

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party during the transition to EHDC, our church cleaners and our hard-working hall caretaker.

Health and Safety

This covers the physical environment and all church activities. Peter Clark continued as H&S Officer, with First Aid Officer Debbie Cubitt. There were no RIDDOR reportable incidents during the year. Two falls in church did not result in serious injuries but were carefully reviewed and steps taken to reduce the likelihood of happening again. Risk Assessments were either updated or put in place for new activities. These were a mix of generic templates, for schools' services for example, and specific assessments for one-off activities.

Regular inspections of the church for slip and trip hazards took place and there are programmes for gas, electrical, fire extinguisher and lightning conductor testing. A First Aid course was tailored for our parish volunteers, and the defibrillators and first aid boxes were regularly checked. Advice from the Deanery concerning lone working led to the installation of the video door entry system in Church House (see above).

Events: Outreach Committee

Chair: Gilly Squire

The Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community through outreach at social events. In 2025, we focused on building upon established successes.

This year we held a single, Frugal Lunch on Good Friday, offering a poignant time for communal reflection. The May Day Fayre saw the return of the Teddy Bear Zip Wire, which remains a firm family favourite, and it's

not only teddy bears that take the plunge. We also introduced a Fictional Ghost Walk around town, which proved a popular and imaginative new fundraiser during the summer months. To meet high demand, our Murder Mystery Night moved to a larger hall, proving to be a significant social highlight for the year.

We maintained our presence at the Festival of Lights and hosted a successful third Christmas Tree Festival. Refreshments were also provided following the All Souls and Christmas Carol services. Running from Advent 2025 to Ash Wednesday 2026, the spire was illuminated as a quiet witness to the town. Lights were sponsored in memory of loved ones or for celebrations, with proceeds put toward a new church flag.

Looking ahead, we hope to embrace several new initiatives for 2026.

Events: ad hoc

Other events in 2025 included a Remembrance themed evening of music, and a war graves tour. A concert featuring an accordion duo from Kyiv raised money for a charity supporting those affected by the war in Ukraine. And local choir, The Harmonaires, performed and raised money for Isobel Hospice.

Re-imagining Group

Co-chairs: Sarah Vickers (until 22 October 2025) and Nick Heslop

The Re-Imagining Group met nine times during 2025 and continued to work hard behind the scenes to clear the necessary hurdles for Phase 1 of work in the ***Church*** – opening the West Door. The arrival of our new Incumbent slowed progress a little as Revd Sara got up to speed with the project and its work to date. However, by the end of 2025 progress had been made in several areas, including:

- Our architect, Jeremy Lander, has been formally contracted and has completed the specific plans for the West Door opening.
- We have engaged an Archaeologist and a Quantity Surveyor; both have visited the site, and we are currently awaiting their formal reports.
- A heating engineer has provided initial recommendations. To ensure a sustainable future, we are currently conducting a long-term temperature and humidity survey using discrete monitors placed throughout the church building.
- The presence of bats was confirmed by a report from Natural England, and full surveys will be carried out in May and June 2026.
- "Clutter" in the west lobby and first floor storage room was removed.
- The extensive paperwork needed to support a DAC application were drafted and compiled.

Thanks to successful grant applications, all expert reports and fees paid to date for church re-imagining work have been fully covered by external funding. This means that up to the end of 2025, this vital preparatory work cost the PCC nothing.

Work also continued on plans for works to ***Church House*** to create flat access into and around the building, and to refurbish the top floor flat and first floor to create a two-bedroom dwelling, which can be rented as a source of income. It is expected that planning permission will be submitted in 2026.

There is still considerable work to do on both streams of the project. Sarah Vickers, who had chaired the project from its inception, stood down in the autumn of 2025 and as yet no permanent chair has been identified.

Parish activities

Children and Young People

Tiny Tots continued to meet in the Parish Hall. Sessions run weekly during term time on a Tuesday morning. Between 10-15 children with carers, parents and grandparents attend. The group is supported where

possible by Mothers' Union members, who offer refreshments. Two new volunteers joined in 2025 to help continue Kathy Steward's work. The year ended with a nativity play and Christmas party.

Sunday Club for younger children met most weeks during 2025. Sessions took place in the church, Church House or the churchyard, depending on the activities and the weather. Attendance ranged from one to 12 young persons aged between two and 13 years old. Three leaders, Gilly Squire, Becky Burton and Emily Groom take it in turns to prepare and lead each week. Highlights of the year included sailing boats in paddling pools, pancake races and air-dry silk clay craft activities.

Remembrance & St George's Day Parade services: Sawbridgeworth's uniformed groups were welcomed into church for two major events in 2025. The St George's Day parade service saw almost a hundred under 16s present. Young people were also very much in evidence for the Remembrance Day service in November.

School services: At Christmas, carol services for all local primary schools took place. Fawbert & Barnard, Reedings and Mandeville brought songs and readings to share the story of the nativity – as did Spellbrook, our CofE school.

Spellbrook Church of England School

Spellbrook School is our voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community.

Becky Burton was appointed as foundation governor in March 2025. The Vicar is ex-officio foundation governor and took up her role in the autumn. Mr Fisher left as headteacher in July, and Mrs Cousins joined the school in September. The Vicar and Associate Minister lead collective worship each week in school. The whole school attended church four times during the course of the year – at Easter, the end of the summer term, Harvest and Christmas. It continues to be a joy to welcome the school to their church.

Mothers' Union

Branch Leader: Debbie Dear

Our branch met on a third Tuesday of each month. During 2025 we had a variety of guest speakers. In January we were honoured to welcome The Deputy Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire. For our April meeting we had a speaker from Grove Cottage, a voluntary organisation which provides social and educational activities for people of all ages and learning disabilities and special needs. In May we had two speakers from the Land Sheriffs who gave a very enlightening presentation on their individual roles in providing a service which helps to keep our railways safe for travellers. In July the CEO of the Harlow Foodbank gave a very interesting and insightful talk on the wonderful work of this charity. And in September we welcomed an MU Speaker who talked about the unusual things that are in the MU archives. We held an afternoon tea in June for our 'Summer Fund Raiser' event where we raised £240 for the MU Summer of Hope Appeal, one of the Mothers' Union Worldwide Projects.

In 2025 we put together 21 toiletry bags from items donated by members for the Geriatric ward at Princes Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, and one of our members knitted two blankets for the Neonatal ward. We ended the year with an Advent service followed by seasonal refreshments in Church House, a lovely end to a blessed occasion enjoyed by all.

Music

Organist and Director of Music: Jonathan Palman

In January 2025, I was delighted to join as Director of Music. Our dedicated church choir continued to provide music at 9.30am Sunday Eucharists, a full Holy Week, St George's Day, the Civic Service and Remembrance Sunday. We also had our annual Advent and Christmas Carol Services, both with augmented

choirs and well attended by the Sawbridgeworth community. Very few parish churches maintain a tradition of both an Advent and Christmas carol service, much less with the calibre and variety of repertoire provided at Great St Mary's, so I give my most sincere thanks and appreciation to the choir – preparing for two major services so close together is no easy task. In addition, we had Revd Robert's licensing and Revd Sara's installation services.

The organ deteriorated further during the year, with the splits to the Swell soundboard and subsequent running worsening significantly. Approval was obtained and Andrew Stevens was commissioned to do a significant repair/partial rebuild in November, which was successfully completed in time for Remembrance Sunday. Also, the church baby grand piano was tuned and repaired. Unusually for church pianos, ours stably maintains concert pitch and is of a high quality, making it an asset to church services and groups from the wider community who use Great St Mary's as a rehearsal or concert venue.

We are extremely fortunate to have a small but very committed and experienced choir, meaning that for most Sundays we are able to field four parts and provide a wide range of anthems. As ever, our biggest challenge is that of numbers – new members are always very much welcome! I would like to thank our dedicated choir members and very appreciative congregation; everybody has made my first year at Great St Mary's incredibly enjoyable and rewarding.

Bellringers

Bell Tower Captain: Fred Bone

The bellringers rang for morning service on every Sunday but one, with attendance ranging from three to nine. Bells were also rung for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension, the Licensing of Revd Robert and the Induction of Revd Sara as Vicar. In addition, bells were rung for the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day and one wedding. Four quarter peals were rung: for the May Fayre, Licensing, Induction and Harvest Festival.

Practice nights have generally been well attended and busy, with up to 15 present. One new recruit and one experienced ringer have joined, and we have several regular visitors whose help is invaluable and much appreciated. On Monday 24 February, practice night was attended by a group of Ukrainians. The practice included a touch of 156 call changes, commemorating 3 years (156 weeks) since the invasion of Ukraine.

Volunteers

Great St Mary's runs on the faithful service of volunteers across many different areas, not just the PCC. The work and dedication of all volunteers is to be commended. There are volunteers who are on the coffee rota, or cleaners, part of the Churchyard Working Party, flower arrangers, sacristans, readers, intercessors, welcomers, Sunday Club leaders, and choir members. Many people have more than one role from this list.

There is capacity for additional volunteer help in all areas of church life. As congregation members' ability to commit to continuing duties wanes, activities may be scaled back or curtailed – this could have an effect not just on the social or liturgical life of the congregation but on our ability to impact the wider Sawbridgeworth community.

Future plans

Revd Sara will continue to consider ways in which we can extend the mission of Great St Mary's, building on existing activities, introducing new ones and widening our reach within the wider community. We have re-introduced monthly services on late Sunday afternoon and have an interesting mix of full choral evensongs and songs of praise services planned for 2026, and we will run Lent and Advent courses.

The Re-imagining Group will continue its work, and will submit the formal applications for Church Phase 1 and Church House. Skillingtons Conservators have already assessed the font to confirm that it can be safely moved, and the findings of the archaeologist, quantity surveyor, heating engineer, and bats surveys will be considered. When reliable estimates of the actual construction costs for the two projects have been

obtained, a robust funding strategy will be developed. This will involve a combination of grant applications, community fundraising, donations and other streams of financial support.

Financial matters

Mission and giving

It is PCC policy to give a percentage of regular committed stewardship (plus tax recoverable) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2025 from 7.5% of 2024 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. Charities supported in this way were Shiksha Rath, Friends of the Holy Land, Holy Trinity Night Shelter, Grove Cottage, and Red Kite Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Service. In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10.

In February 2026, the PCC reviewed its Mission Giving Policy and agreed that mission giving in 2027 will be 10% of 2026 planned giving plus tax recoverable.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2024: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity, The Friends of Great St Mary's and others.

Financial Review

In 2025, expenditure on the estate increased by over £20,000, but this was more than covered by a significant increase in grants received. There was a decrease across the board in regular income – notably, a fall of over £20,000 in hall hire income – and increases in some regular costs. The net decrease was partly offset by the receipt of over £15,000 in legacies and bequests. The overall net impact was ***a loss of £52,317 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** (excluding investment income) but ***a net inflow of £2,682*** to the restricted fund.

At the end of the year, due to ongoing uncertainty in the global financial markets, our investments with CCLA decreased in value by £25,672, and £20,000 was redeemed in December to meet expected invoices on estate works. Investment income was £25,274, up slightly on the previous year. Overall, therefore, there was ***a net decrease in our total funds of £50,033***.

The investment policy is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee (SFC) and the PCC. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments. In November 2025, the PCC agreed to retain its investments with CCLA but to rebalance the equities to bonds ratio within the portfolio. It delegated the process of rebalancing to SFC (see page 11).

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2026, it is possible that Re-imagining project works might begin later in the year (see page 6), but planning permissions are awaited and costs are not yet fully known. We have changed to more cost-efficient energy providers, we are considering how we might improve our regular stewardship and other income sources, and we intend to increase expenditure on mission (in addition to our annual mission giving to other charities). We predict ***a deficit of about £50,000***, excluding any capital gain or loss on our investments, and excluding re-imagining costs and grants/donations.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even with the ongoing deficit of income to expenditure. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £200,000 – approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes, and restoration of monuments (which will be fully covered by grants). As the unrestricted general fund stood at £295,082 on 31 December 2025 (see page 15; £362,824 at the end of 2024), there was an excess of just over £95,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds on 31 December 2025 stood at £15,562 (2024: £12,880).

Structure, governance and management

The PCC

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

The PCC met seven times in 2025, all meetings were conducted in person, and average attendance was 79%. In addition to routine business (which included regular Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Estate and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Appointing a new Incumbent and Associate Minister
- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2024 stewardship
- Agreeing faculty applications
- Receiving the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2024
- Ensuring the PCC's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to addressing wider environmental impacts was considered across all activities, on an ongoing basis

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC, and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to its committees. Their terms of reference were reviewed by the PCC in May 2025. The committees' work is outlined on pages 4-6 and below.

Standing Committee

In September 2025, the PCC reviewed the membership of the Standing Committee with reference to the Church Representation Rules. The Committee now comprises the Vicar, Churchwardens, Chair of the Fabric & Churchyard Committee, Treasurer and Parish Safeguarding Officer. It has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings and to approve new expenditure items in accordance with the PCC's Financial Controls Policy. The Committee did not meet in 2025, but it agreed via email correspondence to sign a contract with the architect for the Re-imagining project.

Stewardship & Finance Committee

Chair: Julie Patterson

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer, who reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances.

The Committee met five times via Zoom in 2025. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. It reviewed the draft Annual Report & Financial Statements 2024, monitored actual income and expenditure against the 2025 forecast approved by the PCC in December 2024, considered whether and when a significant drawdown from investments was needed, and agreed to rebalance the PCC's investment portfolio by making monthly switches of £30,000 from the Investment Fund (equities) to the Fixed Interest Securities Fund. In November, it considered the provisional outturn for 2025 and a draft forecast for 2026, which were presented to the PCC in December.

The Committee also reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on relevant PCC policies and procedures, the due diligence undertaken on Charities of the Year nominations (for mission giving), and on discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2026.

Risk Management

The PCC recognises that in areas relating to health and safety, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection, there is always a potential threat. We reviewed all our risk management and related policies during 2025, introduced a church hire policy and made further enhancements to our IT security.

Data Protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation*. We reviewed our Data Protection and Records Management Policy and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1 Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: The Reverend Dr Sara Batts-Neale, The Vicarage, Sheering Mill Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9ND, from 22 July 2025.

Ministry team: The Reverend Canon Robert Riley-Braley, Associate Priest, from 21 May 2025, and Diana Kitson, Lay Reader, until 1 February 2026.

Office staff: Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator and PCC Secretary.

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2025 until the date this report was approved are:

Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale	*Incumbent (Chair) from 22 July 2025*
Gilly Squire	*PCC Chair until 22 July 2025; Churchwarden, Chair of Outreach Committee*
Valerie Bright	
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer, Chair of Fabric & Churchyard Committee*
Deborah Cubitt	*First Aid Officer*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden*
Jane Johnson	*Parish Safeguarding Officer*
Diana Kitson	*Reader until 1 February 2026, Deanery Synod Representative*
Kofi Otu	
Julie Patterson	*Treasurer, Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee, Deanery Synod Representative; Diocesan Synod Representative from 15 March 2026*
Revd Canon Robert Riley-Braley	*Associate Priest from 21 May 2025*
Sarah Vickers	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group until 22 October 2025*

Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Becky Burton	*Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor from March 2025*
Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer*
Nick Heslop	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*

Architect/surveyor: Jeremy Lander, 77 North Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0BB

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 88-89 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM21 1DX and until 27 October 2023 Barclays Bank plc, 10 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LU

Independent Examiners: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

S Batts-Neale 21.4.2026

Signed **Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale** *Dated*
Vicar of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

M. Cooper-Davis

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Date: 24 April 2026

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2025 Total	2024 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		35,251		35,251	39,703
Other donations	2	7,333	1,554	8,887	11,340
Collections for other charities	3		3,006	3,006	4,850
Tax received/claimed	4	9,889	1,187	11,076	13,043
Grants	5		51,211	51,211	22,783
Legacies	6	15,027	-	15,027	2,912
		67,500	56,958	124,458	94,631
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	9,315		9,315	12,606
Property lettings	8	38,284		38,284	58,761
Fundraising & sponsorship			6,510	6,510	7,720
Other		59		59	425
		47,658	6,510	54,168	79,512
Investment income	9	25,274		25,274	24,405
Total income		**140,432**	**63,468**	**203,900**	**198,548**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	5,300	3,144	8,444	9,390
Ministry	11	73,506		73,506	72,052
Regular church services	12	12,632		12,632	9,717
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	4,971		4,971	7,161
Properties	14	38,114	55,909	94,023	71,452
Fundraising costs			1,733	1,733	2,381
Administration	15	25,528		25,528	21,464
Other	16	5,024		5,024	4,821
		165,075	60,786	225,861	198,438
Governance					
Independent examination fee		2,400		2,400	2,322
Total expenditure		**167,475**	**60,786**	**228,261**	**200,760**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(27,043)**	**2,682**	**(24,361)**	**(2,212)**
Divestment proceeds		**20,000**		**20,000**	**30,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	(45,672)		(45,672)	(8,296)
Fund transfers	14&22	-	-		
Net movement in funds		**(52,715)**	**2,682**	**(50,033)**	**19,492**
Funds brought forward		1,398,353	12,880	1,411,233	1,391,741
Funds carried forward		**1,345,638**	**15,562**	**1,361,200**	**1,411,233**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	819,398	865,070
		1,309,398	1,355,070
Current assets			
Debtors	19	11,051	16,563
Short term deposits	20	6,434	6,161
Cash at bank and in hand		41,179	37,908
		58,664	60,632
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(6,862)	(4,469)
Net current assets		51,802	56,163
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,361,200**	**1,411,233**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		560,556	545,529
General		295,082	362,824
		1,345,638	1,398,353
Restricted		15,562	12,880
		1,361,200	**1,411,233**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 21 April 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

S Batts-Neale

Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale – Vicar

Anthony Heard – Churchwarden

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 9.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.
- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.
- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties, the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010 (17). Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2025	2024
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid (unrestricted)	1,452	2,267
Other donations (unrestricted)	3,531	3,321
Collections in church services (unrestricted)	2,350	2,492
Donations towards restricted expenditure	1,554	3,260
	8,887	11,340

In 2025, there were no large donations towards restricted expenditure (2024: two large donations totalling £2,500 including tax recoverable). Unrestricted donations totalled £7,333 (2024: £8,080) and restricted £1,554 (2024: £3,260).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £3,006 (2024: £4,850) comprised £551 (2024: £1,769) of giving under Gift Aid and £2,455 (2024: £3,081) of other giving. (See also note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2025 is estimated at £9,022 (2024: £10,941 estimated; £10,995 received). £2,000 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2024/25 (2023/24: £2,000), all of which was recognised as claimable in 2024, and a further £2,000 has been recognised as claimable in 2025. Of total tax received or claimed, £9,889 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2024: £11,160) and £1,187 restricted (2024: £1,883).

5. Grants (restricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:		
- Church insurance	5,263	5,082
- Church costs	12,665	12,390
Ecclesiastical Insurance	4,400	1,010
The Friends of Great St Mary's	16,575	-
Archbishops' Council	5,000	-
Francis Coales Charitable Foundation	-	2,000
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme (VAT claim)	7,308	2,301
	51,211	22,783

6. Legacies

In 2025, legacies were received from Miss Frances Lane for Spellbrook Church & School charity (£27), and from the estates of Roy Ward (£5,000) and Betty Taylor (£10,000) (2024: £2,912 from Miss Frances Lane for Spellbrook Church & School charity).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

In accordance with normal church accounting practice, fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Church House	6,396	15,080
Parish Hall	14,488	13,156
Car park	12,300	11,825
The Lodge	5,100	18,700
	38,284	58,761

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	352	394
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	4,352	3,130
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	20,570	20,881
	25,274	24,405

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2025	2024
	£	£
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted		
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	1,225	1,105
Friends of the Holy Land – *overseas mission giving*	1,225	-
Tools with a Mission – *overseas mission giving*		1,105
Holy Trinity Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	816	1,472
Grove Cottage – *UK mission giving*	817	-
Red Kite rape and Sexual Abuse Support Service – *UK mission giving*	817	-
World Vision	300	300
St Luke's Clergy Wellbeing Centre	100	-
	5,300	3,982
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted		
Women's World Day of Prayer	185	191
Sawbridgeworth Scouts and Girl Guides (St George's Day Service)	114	115
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches and Licencing service)	523	98
Diocesan Ordination Fund (Installation & Licencing service)	114	-
Christian Aid (collection tins and fundraising)	141	462
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's charities (Annual Town Civic Service)	115	161
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	61	470
The Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal (Remembrance Day Service)	379	259
The Children's Society (Advent Lunches, Christingle and Crib Service)	393	1,124
Crisis UK (Christmas collections)	771	1,023
DEC Myanmar	216	-
Hurricane Beryl	-	158
DEC Middle East Appeal	-	1,164
Funeral collections (local charities)	132	183
	3,144	5,408

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	67,882	69,920
Clergy expenses	5,040	1,596
Outreach	584	536
	73,506	72,052

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Organists	9,452	7,085
Other costs	3,180	2,632
	12,632	9,717

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Diocesan fees	2,793	5,123
Fees paid to service assistants	2,178	2,038
	4,971	7,161

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Church	45,239	12,706
Churchyard	1,670	9,463
Church House	5,277	6,859
Parish Hall	6,510	1,834
The Lodge	2,323	7,304
Car park	794	397
Utilities	23,358	25,208
Insurances	8,852	7,681
	94,023	71,452

£55,909 was in relation to restricted funds (2024: £19,985) and £38,114 unrestricted (2024: £51,467). Restricted costs comprised £42,823 for the church (2024: £9,119), £714 for the churchyard (2024: £2,892), £1,611 for Church House (2024: £3,162), £4,380 for the Parish Hall (2024: nil), £1,118 for The Lodge (2024: nil), and £5,263 for church insurances (2024: £4,812).

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	16,758	16,189
Bookkeeping	1,594	1,699
Committee expenses	29	105
Telephone	1,389	1,422
Equipment	3,368	48
Printing	1,265	1,121
Office supplies	1,125	880
	25,528	21,464

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

The figure for staff costs in 2025 comprises £16,257 for salaries and wages (2024: £15,595), £500 for payroll administration (2024: £569) and training costs nil (2024: £25). The figure for salaries and wages in 2025 included pension costs of £1,094 (2024: £1,057). The figure for office supplies now includes an annual website hosting fee of £263 (2024: nil)

The average number of employees during the year was one in 2025 (2024: one). The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2024: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2024: nil).

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2025 of £5,024 included £412 on website re-design (2024: £1,500), £240 on IT systems changes (2024: £432), £1,265 on recruitment (2024: £1,331), £2,180 on licencing receptions and £89 on gifts (2024: £200).

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899
Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	865,070	873,366
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(20,000)	(30,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	(25,672)	21,704
Market value at end of year	819,398	865,070
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA CBF Church of England Fixed Interest Securities Fund	218,014	124,779
CCLA CBF Church of England Investment Fund	601,384	740,291
	819,398	865,070

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Francis Coales Charitable Foundation	-	2,000
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme	-	926
Tax recoverable (of which £1,187 restricted (2024: £1,820) – see note 4)	11,022	12,941
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	-	696
Uncleared cheque/unbanked cash charitable donations (restricted)	29	-
	11,051	**16,563**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	300	-
Diocese – Parish Fees (unrestricted)	247	-
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	1,273	2,147
Lodge & Sons (restricted)	331	-
Corona Energy (unrestricted)	1,615	-
Ecclesiastical insurance – The Lodge (unrestricted)	696	-
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	2,400	2,322
	6,862	4,469

22. Funds

	Balances end-2024 £	Income in 2025 £	Expenditure in 2025 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2025 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	545,529	15,027	-	-	560,556
General	362,824	125,405	(193,147)	-	295,082
	1,398,353	140,432	(193,147)	-	1,345,638
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	-	3,144	(3,144)	-	-
Specific grants & fundraising	12,880	60,324	(57,642)	-	15,562
	12,880	63,468	(60,786)	-	15,562
Total	1,411,233	203,900	(253,933)	-	1,361,200

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16. See notes 3 and 10 second part for restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes and £138 in reclaimable tax (2023: £519). The end-year balance comprises nil for other charities (2024: nil). See notes 2, 5 and 14 for restricted donations, grants and expenditure. In addition, there was £1,052 in reclaimable tax (2024: £1,364), restricted fundraising of £6,510 (2024: £7,720) and fundraising costs of £1,733 (2024: £2,381).

Prior year funds	Balances end-2023 £	Income in 2024	Expenditure in 2024 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2024 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	2,912	-	-	545,529
General	358,966	176,844	(172,986)	-	362,824
	1,391,583	179,756	(172,986)	-	1,398,353
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	38	5,370	(5,408)	-	-
Specific grants & fundraising	120	35,126	(22,366)	-	12,880
	158	40,496	(27,774)	-	12,880
Total	1,391,741	220,252	(200,760)	-	1,411,233

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2025 (continued)

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £1,766 (2024: £1,088) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, of which restricted costs were £320 (2024: £817), and paid £600 (2024: £1,020) for verger and chorister services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2024: nil).

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth

Passion for Christ - Compassion for all

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2024

Aurora over Great St Mary's, May 2024

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2024

Introduction from the Churchwardens

This report is written at the end of an unexpectedly challenging year at Great St Mary's. Father Simon Vivian announced his resignation in the summer and was licensed at All Saints Hockerill, Bishop's Stortford in September 2024, leaving us without a Vicar since the start of the summer holidays. Despite this, we have managed to hold at least one Eucharist each week, with our Lay Reader, Diana Kitson leading a Service of the Word on the three Sundays when a Eucharist was not possible. We continued our monthly Mustard Seed services until autumn, and held well-attended services on St George's Day, the annual Civic service and on Remembrance Sunday. During February and March, Father Simon led a thought-provoking Lent course.

The post of Associate Minister (House for Duty) has been vacant since Revd Debbie Hore left in 2023. We are, therefore, delighted to announce that Revd Canon Robert Riley-Braley will be joining us in the spring of 2025. He is currently Vicar of St Oswald's, Croxley Green. Another successful recruitment story is the appointment of our new Musical Director and Organist, Jonathan Palman, who officially started in the post in January in 2025, but accompanied the choir at rehearsals since November, so is already part of the team.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jane, Bishop of Hertford, Archdeacon Janet and all the visiting clergy who have supported us since Father Simon's departure and officiated at services, some traveling great distances. We also thank the freelance organists who have played at our services and accompanied choir rehearsals since our previous Musical Director left us in July 2022.

The church calendar during 2024 was extremely busy with various events, including the May Day fair featuring a Teddy Bear Zip Wire from the top of the church tower, a Quiz night and a Murder Mystery night (which, due to its popularity, has already been booked for next year at a larger venue). The Flower Festival at the start of the summer holidays, on the theme of children's books, was well attended. We held our usual Patronal lunch, and we celebrated Diana's 30 years as Lay Reader with a special service presided over by Bishop Jane.

During the vacancy, Diana was a consistent presence at services, supporting the visiting priests and maintaining the midweek and Sunday 8am congregations with a Service of the Word. Simply put, these additional services would not have happened if it were not for Diana's continued commitment and devotion to Great St Mary's, for which everyone is thankful.

The Advent and Christmas period was a busy time, with the Festival of Light attracting around 2,000 visitors. All church services saw increased attendance, particularly the candlelit services of Advent and Christmas Carols. The Advent lunch featured the year's biggest raffle, raising over £700 for The Children's Society. The second annual Christmas Tree Festival was well attended, with almost 40 trees on display. The winners were the Ukrainian Group with their traditional Ukrainian decorated baubles, with the Red Squirrels of the 1st Sawbridgeworth Scouts and Spellbrook School coming second and third.

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Music has always been important at Great St Mary's. Our small choir was led by Rosemary Harrison, who stepped up following Father Simon's resignation, ably assisted by Jane Johnson in sorting out the music for services. We extend a huge thank you to both. We also thank Fred Bone in his first year as Tower Captain and all the bellringers who call us to worship every Sunday and at all major events. And a huge thanks to Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator, who has helped to keep us going during the vacancy.

Special thanks go to Shirley Dodgshon, who stepped down as Head Sacristan at the end of the year after an impressive 43 years of service. We were delighted to receive and bless a new glass cruet that Shirley gave to the church as a parting gift. Sandie Abery is now our Head Sacristan.

Our thanks go to the entire church community for their ongoing support, particularly those who quietly contribute so much time to keep things going: the flower arrangers, cleaners, churchyard working party, oil lamp fillers, hymn number changers, sacristans, helpers at Sunday Club and Mustard Seed, candle preparers, altar cloth changers, and many more. We deeply appreciate your efforts.

A special thanks to those who sit on the PCC and the sub-committees, appointed officials and all who give their time to the church in any way at all. Our work on re-imaging the church building and Church House continues, with discussions with our architect and the Diocese now well-advanced and shared with the congregation in February 2025.

While the vacancy has been challenging, with the Parish profile finalised and the advert going live at the end of 2024, we are praying and looking forward to 2025 with great optimism and hope.

Gilly Squire and Anthony Heard

Aim and purpose

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as a separate charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

Our church community

As at the end of 2024, there were 114 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 18 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors. We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2024.

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During 2024 we baptised six children and married one couple. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 28 funerals (22 in the church) and seven interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love, and we keep their families in our prayers. They include Mick Steward who, with Kathy, led Tiny Tots for many years, Barry Ings, previously hall caretaker and Roy Ward, chorister.

A big thank you to our Pastoral volunteers and others who support people in times of need.

In May 2024, Angela Alder was given the Freedom of Sawbridgeworth, in recognition of the many ways she has represented the town and church, and over many decades. A fitting way of honouring a diligent and loyal servant.

Mission and giving

It is PCC policy to give a percentage of regular committed stewardship plus tax recoverable (in 2024, unchanged at 10% - see page 6 for future periods) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2024 from 2023 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. Charities supported in this way were Shiksha Rath, Tools with a Mission and the Holy Trinity Night Shelter Bishop's Stortford.

In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10.

Shiksha Rath runs a Christian Outreach project in New Delhi to help children from deprived areas access education as a route out of poverty.

Outreach

As well as our large outreach events, the Friday Email offers thoughts, prayers, information on our week's services, and notices. This, like the Great St Mary's Facebook group, is read both by members within our worshipping community and others who live in Sawbridgeworth and beyond.

Volunteers continued to do a splendid job organising collections of food to support the Harlow Foodbank, whose existing and new customers needed their services more than ever. These collections were enhanced at harvest time with donations from Spellbrook Primary School - our church school - who brought their offerings to their own harvest service.

We held Christmas services for our three primary schools – Mandeville, Reedings and Spellbrook – at which the church was packed.

Spellbrook CofE Primary School

Spellbrook School is our voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community.

Great St Mary's Church is represented on its governing body and fosters links between the school, the church and the local community.

The Incumbent is, *ex officio*, a foundation governor and the Diocese, in liaison with the PCC, appoints a second foundation governor. Fay Clark stepped down after 15 years of service, for which we to express our considerable thanks. Becky Burton took on the post from March 2025.

Of equal importance is the regular connection between the church and the school, with the leading of collective worship in school and classes on religious or ethical topics, attending school events, and writing a pause for thought for the school newsletter. In May 2024, the school received an excellent report from the SIAMS inspectors and capped off the year by taking third place at our Christmas Tree festival.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2023: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity and others.

Plans for future periods

We look forward to a positive outcome to our search for a new Incumbent and to welcoming our new Associate Priest. We shall continue to build all aspects of our activities, seeking to provide for all generations and needs. The Outreach Committee has even more ambitious plans for 2025.

The Re-imagining 2025 Project Group will pursue the proposals for work on and around the church's West door, as phase 1 of the project, and improvements to Church House. We will commission a report on the current state of the church organ and refurbishment options. We will finalise the process of handing over the maintenance of the churchyard to the local authority. In all our activities, we will seek to reduce our carbon emissions and consider other environmental impacts, with reference to the "Eco Church framework".

The marked shift from ad hoc to planned giving (see page 16), while providing welcome certainty of income, gives rise to a 33% increase in the amount of mission giving for 2025. Given continued loss-making (see below), the PCC agreed in February 2025 that the calculation of mission giving in 2026 (from 2025 planned giving) will revert to a previous level of 7.5%. The actual amount given will then be in line with the amount given in 2024.

Financial Review

Rental income from The Lodge net of rental agent and maintenance costs increased our income by over £11,000, and fundraising net of costs yielded over £5,000. Across all four properties, we spent £71,452, £30,000 less than in 2023, of which £7,400 was due to a fall in energy costs.

There was ***a loss of £39,339 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** (excluding investment income) but ***a net inflow of £12,722*** to the restricted fund. The position would have been worse had it not been for the commitment of our church community and generosity of other donors and grant-making bodies.

At the end of the year, our investments with CCLA would have increased in value by £21,704, but £30,000 was redeemed in December to meet the deficit and expected invoices on estate works. Investment income was £24,405, up slightly on the previous year. Overall, therefore, there was ***a small net increase in our total funds of £19,492***.

The investment policy is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee and the PCC. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments.

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2025, predicted work on the estate is expected to be lower than in recent years (ahead of major works planned as part of the Re-imagining 2025 project – see page 11), there has been a fall in regular hall hirers and there will be a loss of rental income from The Lodge. Therefore, regular income versus expenditure is predicted to result in ***a deficit of about £50,000***. Depending on the findings of the report on the church organ, this figure could be substantially higher. The figure excludes any capital gain or loss on investment, noting that when investments are redeemed to help fund expenditure, not only is capital reduced but also income from those investments.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even if there is significant expenditure on the estate. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £192,000 – this amounts to approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes. As the unrestricted general fund stood at £362,824 at 31 December 2024 (see page 15; £358,966 at the end of 2023), there was an excess of just over £170,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds at 31 December 2024 stood at £12,880 (2022: £158).

Risk Management

The PCC recognises that in areas relating to health and safety, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection, there is always a potential threat. We reviewed all our risk management and related policies during 2024.

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC met seven times in 2024, all meetings were conducted in person, and average attendance was 72%. In addition to routine business (which included regular Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Estate and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2023 stewardship
- Receiving the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2023
- Holding a section 11 meeting to begin the process of advertising for a new Incumbent, and approving an updated Parish Profile document
- Agreeing a phased approach to the re-imagining of the church building and that phase 1 should focus on accessibility and opening of the West door
- Appointing a new Organist and Director of Music
- Ensuring the PCC's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to addressing wider environmental impacts was considered across all its activities and through its committees, on an ongoing basis

Safeguarding

At the end of 2024, Hazel Mead stood down as our Assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer. We are very grateful to Hazel for her many years of service.

The PCC complied with its duty under section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. During 2024, we reviewed our Safeguarding Policy, Action Plan, Volunteer Code of Conduct, safeguarding information on the church website and use of social media. We reviewed our training and reporting in line with new Church of England National Safeguarding Standards and issued new materials to volunteers.

Data protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation*. We undertook a full refresh of our consent forms, and reviewed our Data Protection and Records Management Policy and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

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The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC, and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

PCC Committees

The Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Churchwardens, Associate Priest, main Committee Chairs and the Treasurer. It has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings. No such matters arose in 2024.

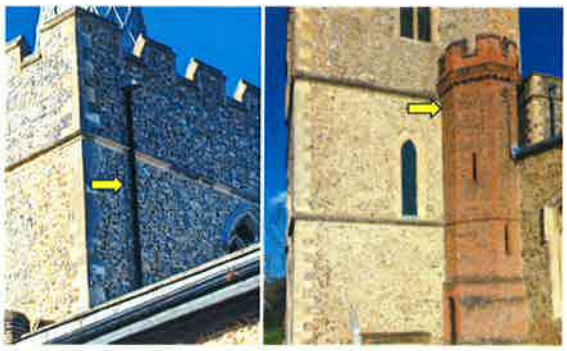
Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to the following committees, whose terms of reference were reviewed by the PCC in May 2024.

Fabric & Churchyard Committee
Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and the other church-owned land and buildings. It oversees the activities of the monthly Churchyard Working Party, which maintains the churchyard and associated grounds. It met three times in 2024, but its members were in regular contact.

Whilst much useful work has been done and the church has been kept in a generally good state of repair, 2024 was characterised by the scarcity of skilled staff at the heritage contractors and shortage of volunteers available. A major achievement at the start of the year was the completion of the conservation of the 1479 Chauncy Brass and its move from the South Aisle to a more appropriate position in the Chancel. This project was supervised by Martin Stuchfield, Hon. President of the Monumental Brass Society and carried out by the UK's top brasses conservator, Simon Nadin of Skillington Lack. Stemming from an initial report in 2023 by Dr David Carrington, specialist conservator, the Friends of Great St Mary's decided to fund a full conservation of the George, Viscount Hewytt d.1689 Monument. Work started in January 2025.

The lightning conductor on the tower was upgraded to include a second down conductor. This was expertly achieved by specialists Rodells, working with Lodge & Sons electrical engineers, to bring us fully up to the latest safety standards. The new conductor had to be installed on the south of the tower but, remarkably, is barely visible.



A winter storm snapped the flagpole at the point where it entered the tower roof. Fortunately, the roof damage seems to be minor, and nobody was hurt. This will be an insurance claim in 2025.

After the retirement of our long-serving organ tuner, Peter de Ville, a new tuner, Andrew Stevens was found. He identified cracks and twisting in some of the Oboe and Cornopean pipes which he removed, had rebuilt and replaced in time for the Advent Carol Service. However, in January 2025 our new organist reported that the organ is failing fast (see page 6).

The Parish Hall remains in good condition. A structural engineering survey was conducted on the roof beams of Church House and an internal supporting frame built around one of the dormer windows to give added support until such time as the beams are renewed. (See also page 11).

At the Court at Buckingham Palace

THE 2nd DAY OF OCTOBER 2024

PRESENT,

THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL

The major achievement of the year was undoubtedly obtaining an order from the Court of the Privy Council in October for the closure of Great St. Mary's churchyard for burials. This will lead to the Local Authority taking over the maintenance of the churchyard, its lawns and the safety of the gravestones, and its walls, paths, gate, hedges and trees. It is expected that the transfer of maintenance will take place in April 2025. The closure means that new burials are not permitted, but interment of ashes into the Memorial Garden or into an immediate relative's plot will not be affected.

As part of preparing for this, EHDC contracted a gravestone safety check in May by specialists Memsafe. The survey found only seven out of 704 gravestones needed work to stabilise them. Where possible, families of owners were contacted and, where not, the PCC decided to fund making them safe with new bases rather than laying them flat. Some of the work was covered by an insurance claim.

A Robinia tree near the South Door developed a severe lean and the tree surgeons concluded that it was a danger to life and to the headstones under it, so required urgent felling before the next storm. EHDC Planning, which protects trees in the Sawbridgeworth Conservation Area agreed. On this occasion, retrospective permission was given by the Diocesan Registrar via the DAC. The felled tree will be replaced with a young one of the same species.

Another hardwood memorial bench was donated by a family in memory of a loved one and installed in the churchyard during the year.

The work on renovating The Lodge was completed in January 2024 and the house was let out for a short-term tenancy awaiting the appointment of a new Assistant Minister. The long overdue removal of the huge leylandii trees to the west side of the plot followed shortly afterwards and then shrub removal near the carpark, which vastly improved the garden.

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party and our hard-working hall caretaker.

Outreach Committee
Chair: Gilly Squire

This Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community at local, diocesan and national levels. It co-ordinates a program of outreach and social events.

In 2024, the Committee was exceptionally busy, with meetings occurring at least monthly. Highlights included a challenging quiz night hosted by Rev. Simon Vivian, the introduction of a Teddy Bear Zip Wire at the May Day Fair, a Flower Festival, a Murder Mystery Night performed by Quinnessece Theatre Group, and a Festival

of Lights with a mulled wine and hot chocolate stall. We also provided refreshments after the All Souls and Christmas Carol services, held our second Christmas Tree Festival, and organised well-attended Lent and Advent lunches, among many other events. Plans are already underway to build on the successes of 2024 for an even more exciting 2025.

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Chair: Julie Patterson

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer, who reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances. We were delighted to welcome Paul Bard back to the Committee in September 2024.

The Committee met four times via Zoom in 2024. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. It also reviewed the draft Annual Report & Financial Statements 2023, monitored actual income and expenditure against the 2024 forecast approved by the PCC in December 2023, reviewed income versus expenditure on the halls, and considered whether and when a significant drawdown from investments was needed. At the end of the year, it considered the provisional outcome for 2024 and a draft forecast for 2025, which were presented to the PCC in December 2024.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on relevant PCC policies, including the Mission Giving Policy, and on discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2025. It also finalised a legacy information document.

With considerable thanks to the Treasurer and the Stewardship Recorder.

Re-imagining 2025 Project Group
Co-Chairs: Sarah Vickers & Nick Heslop

The aim of "Re-imagining 2025" is to make Great St Mary's fit for purpose for our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry and mission in the 21st Century, across all worship, nurturing, pastoral, outreach and social activities, ensuring accessibility and inclusion, and providing a Christian strong presence at the heart of the local community.

The Group met six times in 2024; the fourth year of working as a group to 're-imagine' our church and its buildings. During 2024, the Group continued to work with the church architect, Jeremy Lander on further development of plans for two building projects: re-imaging our church building and the potential upgrading of Church House, to ensure they are accessible and provide facilities which are fit for purpose.

A phased approach to the works needed to re-imagine our church building was agreed by the PCC, with work on and around the West door being the starting point. The Diocesan Advisory Council (DAC) was provided with revised draft plans, and some DAC members and others visited the church again and provided feedback, which we discussed with the architect in January 2025.

Work on exploring how to achieve step-free access to Church House and to re-establish an apartment in the upper part of the building continued. A fire consultant was commissioned to work with the Architect on fire safety plans. Consultations are now taking place with the EHDC Planning Authority on this Grade 2 Listed building.

The Group is actively progressing discussions with the relevant bodies, and will commission further reports and provide more detailed plans for DAC approval. The Group is determined that both projects will come to fruition in the short term.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
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Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1 Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: No one at present, Rev Simon Vivian having moved parish in September 2024.

Ministry team: Diana Kitson, Reader.

Office staff: Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator and PCC Secretary.

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2024 until the date this report was approved are:

Father Simon Vivian	*Incumbent (Chair) until July 2024*
Gilly Squire	*PCC Chair from September 2024; Outreach Committee Chair; Churchwarden*
Valerie Bright	
Becky Burton	*Until 12 May 2024*
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer; Fabric & Churchyard Committee Chair*
Deborah Cubitt	*First Aid Officer*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden*
Jane Johnson	*Appointed 12 May 2024; Parish Safeguarding Officer*
Diana Kitson	*Lay Reader; Deanery Synod Representative*
Kofi Otu	
Julie Patterson	*Treasurer; Stewardship & Finance Committee Chair; Deanery Synod Representative*
Sarah Vickers	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*

Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer; Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor until December 2024*
Nick Heslop	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*
Hazel Mead	*Assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer until December 2024*

Architect/surveyor: Jeremy Lander, 77 North Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0BB

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 88-89 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM21 1DX

Independent Examiner: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Signed Gillian Squire **Gillian Squire**
Churchwarden of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth and PCC Chair

Dated 8/4/25.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

M. Cooper-Davis

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Date: 11 April 2025

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2024 Total	2023 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		39,703		39,703	30,685
Other donations	2	8,080	3,260	11,340	21,553
Collections for other charities	3		4,850	4,850	5,245
Tax received/claimed	4	11,160	1,883	13,043	12,931
Grants	5		22,783	22,783	24,732
Legacies	6	2,912	-	2,912	-
		61,855	32,776	94,631	95,146
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	12,606		12,606	10,839
Property lettings	8	58,761		58,761	39,727
Fundraising & sponsorship			7,720	7,720	2,162
Other		425		425	200
		71,792	7,720	79,512	52,928
Investment income	9	24,405		24,405	24,113
Total income		**158,052**	**40,496**	**198,548**	**172,187**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	3,982	5,408	9,390	9,703
Ministry	11	72,052		72,052	75,363
Regular church services	12	9,717		9,717	7,988
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	7,161		7,161	6,040
Properties	14	51,467	19,985	71,452	101,731
Fundraising costs			2,381	2,381	1,005
Administration	15	21,464		21,464	21,414
Other	16	4,821		4,821	1,507
		170,664	27,774	198,438	224,751
Governance					
Independent examination fee		2,322		2,322	2,154
Total expenditure		**172,986**	**27,774**	**200,760**	**226,905**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(14,934)**	**12,722**	**(2,212)**	**(54,718)**
Divestment proceeds		**30,000**		**30,000**	**40,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	(8,296)		(8,296)	31,752
Fund transfers	14&22	-	-		
Net movement in funds		**6,770**	**12,722**	**19,492**	**17,034**
Funds brought forward		1,391,583	158	1,391,741	1,374,707
Funds carried forward		**1,398,353**	**12,880**	**1,411,233**	**1,391,741**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	865,070	873,366
		1,355,070	1,363,366
Current assets			
Debtors	19	16,563	15,006
Short term deposits	20	6,161	6,256
Cash at bank and in hand		37,908	12,070
		60,632	33,332
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(4,469)	(4,957)
Net current assets		56,163	28,375
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,411,233**	**1,391,741**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		545,529	542,617
General		362,824	358,966
		1,398,353	1,391,583
Restricted		12,880	158
		1,411,233	**1,391,741**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 8 April 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Gillian Squire – Churchwarden

Sarah Vickers – PCC member

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 7.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.
- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.
- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties, the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010 (17). Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid (unrestricted)	2,267	1,710
Other donations (unrestricted)	3,321	2,917
Collections in church services (unrestricted)	2,492	2,354
Donations towards specified expenditure (unrestricted)	-	1,537
Donations towards restricted expenditure	3,260	13,035
	11,340	21,553

There were two large donations towards restricted expenditure, totalling £2,500 including tax recoverable (2023: five large donations totalling £12,750 including tax recoverable). Unrestricted donations totalled £8,080 (2023: £8,518) and restricted £3,260 (2023: £13,035).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £4,850 (2023: £5,245) comprised £1,769 (2023: £736) of giving under Gift Aid and £3,081 (2023: £4,509) of other giving. (See also note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2024 is estimated at £10,941 (2023: £10,279 estimated; £10,318 received). £2,000 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2023/24 (2022/23: £2,000), of which £1,937 was recognised as claimable in 2023, and a further £2,000 has been recognised as claimable in 2024. Of total tax received or claimed, £11,160 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2023: £9,377) and £1,883 restricted (2023: £3,554).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

5. Grants (restricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:		
- Church insurance	5,082	4,346
- Church costs	12,390	11,528
Ecclesiastical Insurance	1,010	1,450
The Friends of Great St Mary's	-	2,300
ChurchCare	-	2,500
Francis Coales Charitable Foundation	2,000	-
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme (VAT claim)	2,301	2,580
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	-	28
	22,783	24,732

6. Legacies

A legacy of £2,912 was received in 2024 from Miss Frances Lane for Spellbrook Church & School charity (2023: nil).

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

In accordance with normal church accounting practice, fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Church House	15,080	18,047
Parish Hall	13,156	11,593
Car park	11,825	10,087
The Lodge	18,700	-
	58,761	39,727

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	394	269
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	3,130	3,282
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	20,881	20,562
	24,405	24,113

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2024	2023
	£	£
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted		
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	1,105	1,002
Tools with a Mission – *overseas mission giving*	1,105	1,002
Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	1,472	668
The Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neurological Centres – *UK mission giving*	-	668
World Vision	300	300
	3,982	3,640

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

10. Mission & charitable giving continued

	2024	2023
	£	£
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted		
Women's World Day of Prayer	191	212
Sawbridgeworth Scouts and Girl Guides (St George's Day Service)	115	144
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches)	98	360
Christian Aid (collection tins and fundraising)	462	523
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's charities (Annual Town Civic Service)	161	200
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	470	584
The Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal (Remembrance Day Service)	259	382
The Children's Society (Advent Lunches, Christingle and Crib Service)	1,124	1,627
Crisis UK (Christmas collections)	1,023	991
Hurricane Beryl	158	-
DEC Middle East Appeal	1,164	-
DEC Turkey & Syria Appeal	-	924
Air Ambulance (funeral services)	120	-
Brain Tumour Trust (funeral service)	63	-
Holiday Homes Trust (funeral service)	-	116
	5,408	6,063

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	69,920	73,035
Clergy expenses	1,596	1,857
Outreach	536	471
	72,052	75,363

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Organists	7,085	5,530
Other costs	2,632	2,458
	9,717	7,988

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Diocesan fees	5,123	4,580
Fees paid to service assistants	2,038	1,460
	7,161	6,040

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Church	12,706	25,802
Churchyard	9,463	8,560
Church House	6,859	12,663
Parish Hall	1,834	5,778
The Lodge	7,304	9,899
Car park	397	-
Utilities	25,208	32,608
Insurances	7,681	6,421
	71,452	101,731

£19,985 was in relation to restricted funds (2023: £40,059) and £51,467 unrestricted (2023: £61,672). Restricted costs comprised £9,119 (2023: £23,810) for the church, £2,892 (2023: £5,980) for the churchyard, £3,162 (2023: £4,982) for Church House, nil for The Lodge (2023: £941), and £4,812 (2023: £4,346) for church insurances.

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs	16,189	15,595
Bookkeeping	1,699	2,031
Committee expenses	105	69
Telephone	1,422	1,299
Equipment	48	-
Printing	1,121	1,267
Office supplies	880	1,153
	21,464	21,414

The figure for staff costs in 2024 comprises £15,595 for salaries and wages (2023: £15,068), £569 for payroll administration (2023: £482) and £25 of training costs (2023: £45). The figure for salaries and wages in 2024 included pension costs of £1,057 (2023: £1,013).

The average number of employees during the year was one in 2024 (2023: one). The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2023: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2023: nil).

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2024 of £4,821 included £1,500 on website re-design (2023: nil), £432 on IT systems changes (2023: nil), £1,331 on recruitment (2023: nil), gifts totalling £200 (2023: £630) and net bank charges of nil (2023: £88).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899
Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	873,366	841,614
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(30,000)	(40,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	21,704	71,752
Market value at end of year	865,070	873,366
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA CBF Church of England Fixed Interest Securities Fund	124,779	121,123
CCLA CBF Church of England Investment Fund	740,291	752,243
	865,070	873,366

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2024	2023
	£	£
ChurchCare grant	-	2,500
Francis Coales Charitable Foundation	2,000	-
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme	926	-
Tax recoverable (of which £1,820 restricted (2023: £2,853) – see note 4)	12,941	12,216
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	696	73
Undertakers (unrestricted)	-	217
	16,563	**15,006**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	-	100
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	2,147	2,618
Nest (pension provider)	-	85
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	2,322	2,154
	4,469	4,957

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2024 (continued)

22. Funds

	Balances end-2023 £	Income in 2024 £	Expenditure in 2024 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2024 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	2,912	-	-	545,529
General	358,966	176,844	(172,986)	-	362,824
	1,391,583	179,756	(172,986)	-	1,398,353
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	38	5,370	(5,408)	-	-
Specific grants & fundraising	120	35,126	(22,366)	-	12,880
	158	40,496	(27,774)	-	12,880
Total	1,391,741	220,252	(200,760)	-	1,411,233

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16.

See notes 3 and 10 second part for restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes and £519 in reclaimable tax (2023: £841). The end-year balance comprises nil for other charities (2023: £38).

See notes 2, 5 and 14 for restricted donations, grants and expenditure. In addition, there was £1,364 in reclaimable tax (2023: £2,713), restricted fundraising of £7,720 (2023: £2,162) and fundraising costs of £2,381 (2023: £1,005).

Prior year funds

	Balances end-2022 £	Income in 2023	Expenditure in 2023 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2023 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	342,033	195,211	(179,778)	1,500	358,966
	1,374,650	195,211	(179,778)	1,500	1,391,583
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	15	6,086	(6,063)	-	38
Specific grants & fundraising	42	42,642	(41,064)	(1,500)	120
	57	48,728	(47,127)	(1,500)	158
Total	1,374,707	243,939	(226,905)	-	1,391,741

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £1,088 (2023: £1,799) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, of which restricted costs were £817 (2023: nil), and paid £1,020 (2023: £660) for verger services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2023: nil).

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

Great St Mary's
Sawbridgeworth

Passion for Christ - Compassion for all

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2023

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2023

Introduction from the Vicar, Father Simon Vivian

Welcome to this report on the life and ministry in 2023 of Great St Mary's Church, Sawbridgeworth.

As we turn the page on 2023, we ended the year on a high with a number of very well-attended services and events which also raised wonderful sums of money for charity, all run or supported by our active Outreach Committee. As well as our Festival of Light, which has become an established part of the town's switching on of the Christmas lights, and a splendid Advent Lunch with very attractive raffle prizes, this year we also held our very first Christmas Tree Festival, visited by Father Christmas no less! It featured over 30 imaginatively decorated Christmas creations submitted by many of the town's schools, organisations, groups and businesses. The winning 'tree' - a conical staircase of wood - was cleverly built by members of 1st Sawbridgeworth Mohawk Cubs.

If that was an excellent seasonal celebration of our wider town community, the year began with a gathering of our church community: a parish awayday to Windsor where, as well as lunch and shopping in the town, we were treated to a tour of St George's Chapel within the Castle, before ending the day with choral evensong sung by the chapel choir.

Only a day later, we said a fond farewell to a dear friend. Revd Debbie Hore whose time as our Associate Minister came to an end with a buffet lunch. Such has been Revd Debbie's impact on people's lives over her six years with us - not least during the difficult days of the pandemic - that a whole array of people from the church and beyond attended. After the speeches and the cutting of a splendid retirement cake, Revd Debbie and Richard her husband were presented with various presents, including a beautiful, framed photograph of the church at sunset. In consultation with Archdeacon Janet, who paid our church and parish a visit in early summer, the position of Associate Minister is, as I type, being advertised and we hope to be able to fill the position soon.

Also vacant is the position of Organist and Director of Music. Despite months of advertising and a couple of expressions of interest, we're currently still seeking a musician to lead our choir and develop our music ministry. In the meantime, we've been relying on a rota of freelance organists to play for our services, while I've been enjoying leading our Friday evening choir practices and conducting the music for our major choral services, leaving our ever faithful, ever willing Lay Reader Diana Kitson to lead those services. Particularly since Revd Debbie's departure and my becoming both a diocesan vocations adviser and Assistant Area Dean, Di has been an incredible support to me. I don't know where she gets her energy and enthusiasm from (probably I should answer that it's from the Lord!), but I thank and salute her for it.

There are so many people - not least the members of our PCC and committees - who do so much to keep the wheels of Great St Mary's turning. I'm reluctant to highlight any other individuals for fear of offending others. However, I should mention Gilly Squire who, much to everybody's delight, has become our second churchwarden. Alongside our other wonderful churchwarden, Anthony Heard I couldn't imagine a better, happier, more productive, and more willing partnership.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Gilly was elected our second churchwarden with Easter still ringing in our ears. Once again, the choir was busy with a performance of John Stainer's '*The Crucifixion*', and, at the end of our Easter morning eucharist, it thrilled us once again with another newly established tradition: a rendition of Handel's '*Hallelujah Chorus*'.

But it's not just been the choir which has played its part in church life. The church would never look and smell so fresh if it weren't for our committed band of cleaners, it wouldn't look so radiant if it weren't for our creative group of flower arrangers, and it wouldn't sound so resplendent if it wasn't for our enthusiastic band of bellringers. This year saw the retirement of our tower captain, Clive Moore, after an incredible 46 years of service. His successor, Fred Bone, doesn't intend to break that record!

Our church re-ordering committee - 'Re-Imagining 2025' - continues to consider how our church buildings might be adapted to create more flexible spaces, not only for church use but for use by the wider community. Discussions with our quinquennial architect, Jeremy Lander, are well under way.

We continue to do our bit for the town. We once again hosted our mayor's civic service, the St George's Day Parade service, and the town's Remembrance Sunday service. We also welcomed the planting of a tree in the churchyard to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Sawbridgeworth Town Twinning Association. Meanwhile, the guest speaker at our patronal festival eucharist in early September was PC Gary Bentley, the chair of the Hertfordshire Christian Police Association.

That patronal festival Sunday featured our usual festival lunch before we reassembled for choral evensong. We saw a similar pattern over the weekend in May to celebrate the King's coronation. Our church hall - Church House - was packed for a joyful bring-your-own lunch, before the town assembled in church for a splendid civic service of thanksgiving for the coronation. It was a pleasure to bless a new commemorative kneeler, stitched by Hazel Mead. Also blessed for everybody's pleasure was a coloured glass image of the Holy Spirit, made and given to us by retiring PCC member, Mark Hemsley.

More widely, as well as my ministry as collective worship leader and governor to our local church school of Spellbrook, we've seen the number of visits to the church for services and tours from other schools and badged organisations rise to a level not seen since before the pandemic. Whilst numbers at our Sunday morning 'Sunday Club' remain relatively low (half a dozen on average) our ministry to the younger members of our community through our monthly gathering 'Mustard Seed' also continues to remain healthy.

Whilst general congregation numbers have remained steady, it's sad that some members of our church family are no longer able to gather with us because of infirmity, because they've moved away, or, in the case of dear David Mead, have passed away. As well as praying for our world and local community, we continue to remember and pray for all our church family, whether near, far, or for those who now live in a greater light.

And it's for our church family that I'm for ever grateful; not least all those who so devotedly give of their time and talents to lend a hand - particularly those who serve on our committees and PCC. It's been a joy to be your vicar this past year and to be able to minister, alongside our Lay Reader Di, to a church family with such love and enthusiasm in its heart. Therefore, I commend to you the following document in which you can find further details about our church and its activities, truly living out its strapline: 'Passion for Christ - Compassion for all'.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Simon

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Aim and purpose

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as a separate charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

Our church community

As at the end of 2023, there were 113 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 19 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors. We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2023.

During 2023 we baptised five children and married two couples. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 22 funerals (14 in the church) and eight interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love and we continue to keep their families in our prayers.

A big thank you to our Ministry team for their pastoral work, to our Pastoral volunteers and others who support people in times of need.

Mission and giving

It is PCC policy to give 10% of regular committed stewardship (plus tax recoverable) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2023 from 2022 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. Charities supported in this way were Shiksha Rath, Tools with a Mission, the Holy Trinity Night Shelter Bishop's Stortford, and the Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neurological Centres.

In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10

Shiksha Rath runs a Christian Outreach project in New Delhi to help children from derived areas access education as a route out of poverty

Outreach

In addition to our large outreach events, the Friday Email offers thoughts, prayers, information on our week's services, and notices. This, like the Great St Mary's Facebook group, is read both by members within our worshipping community and others who live in Sawbridgeworth and beyond. Also, we have a regular full-page article in the Sawbridgeworth Flyer.

Volunteers continued to do a splendid job organising collections of food to support the Harlow Foodbank, whose existing and new customers needed their services more than ever. These collections were enhanced at harvest time with donations from Spellbrook Primary School - our church school - who brought their offerings to their own harvest service.

Spellbrook CofE Primary School

Talking about baptism

Spellbrook School is our voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community. Great St Mary's Church is represented on its governing body and fosters links between the school, the church and the local community. The Incumbent is, *ex officio*, a foundation governor and the Diocese, in liaison with the PCC, appoints a second foundation governor.

However, of just as great an importance is the week-by-week connection between the church and the school, with the ministry team leading a weekly collective worship in school, frequently leading classes on religious or ethical topics, attending school events such as remembrance ceremonies, concerts and nativity plays, and writing a pause for thought for the weekly school newsletter.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2022: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity, ChurchCare and others.

Plans for future periods

We shall continue to build all aspects of our activities, seeking to provide for all generations and needs. The Outreach Committee has ambitious plans for even more outreach and fundraising events during 2024. The Re-imagining 2025 Project Group will share proposals for our church building, to make it fit for purpose for the 21st century and accessible for all, and for improvements to Church House. The Friends of Great St Mary's are reviewing the recommendations of a report on restoration work needed on church monuments, and we shall undertake important repair and refurbishment work to our other buildings. We also expect to finalise the process of handing over the maintenance of the churchyard to the local authority. In all our activities, we will seek to reduce our carbon emissions and consider other environmental impacts, with reference to the "Eco Church framework".

Financial Review

In 2023, donations, grants, fundraising and hall hire income improved from the previous year, but the PCC's finances were impacted by significant expenditure on the estate and high energy costs. Despite ongoing efforts to cut costs and delays to other planned project work on the estate, there was ***a loss of £78,932 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** (excluding investment income but after a transfer from the restricted fund relating to certain 2022 expenditure) and ***a net inflow of £101*** to the restricted fund. The position would have been worse had it not been for the commitment of our church community and generosity of other donors and grant-making bodies.

At the end of the year, our investments with CCLA would have increased in value by £71,752, but £40,000 was redeemed in July to meet the deficit and outstanding expected works. Investment income was £24,113. Overall, therefore, there was ***a small net increase in our total funds of £17,034***.

The investment policy is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee and the PCC. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments. During 2023, the PCC undertook a thorough review of CCLA's investment process, with specific regard to environmental and social issues. It concluded that CCLA's process was fully in line with the PCC's environmental commitments and that investment performance remained strong. The PCC therefore concluded that no change to its investment policy or investments was necessary.

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2024, the relationship between income and expenditure continues to be a major concern, with ***a predicted deficit of about £110,000***, about 40% of which relates to necessary expenditure on Church House roof. The figure excludes any capital gain or loss on investment, noting that when investments are redeemed to help fund expenditure, not only is capital reduced but also income from those investments.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even with the ongoing pressure of significant expenditure needed on the estate. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs, and for the repair and maintenance of certain graves.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £225,000 – this amounts to approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes. As the unrestricted general fund stood at £358,974 at 31 December 2023 (see page 15; £342,033 at the end of 2022), there was an excess of just under £134,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds at 31 December 2023 stood at £150 (2022: £57).

Risk Management

The PCC recognises that in areas relating to health and safety, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection, there is always a potential threat. We reviewed all our risk management and related policies during 2023.

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC met seven times in 2023, all meetings were conducted in person, and average attendance was 75%. In addition to routine business (which included regular Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Estate and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2022 stewardship
- Receiving the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2022
- Ensuring the PCC's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to addressing wider environmental impacts was considered across all its activities and through its committees, on an ongoing basis
- Agreeing to close its account with Barclays Bank due to ongoing poor customer service
- Ongoing work of the Re-imagining 2025 Project Group
- Signing up to the "Eco Church framework"

Safeguarding

In July, Jane Johnson succeeded Hazel Mead as our Parish Safeguarding Officer. We are very grateful to Jane for stepping into Hazel's shoes and to Hazel, not only for her many years of service, but for being willing to remain on as our Assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The PCC complied with its duty under section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. At the beginning of 2023, one PCC member was overdue a DBS check and two PCC members needed to complete new Diocesan training requirements. These matters were addressed. In July and November, we reviewed our Safeguarding Policy, Action Plan, safeguarding information on the church website and use of social media.

Data protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation*. In July 2023, we reviewed our Data Protection and Records Management Policy, and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC, and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC

members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

PCC Committees

The Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Churchwarden(s), Associate Priest, main Committee Chairs and the Treasurer. It has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings. No such matters arose in 2023.

Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to the following committees, whose terms of reference were reviewed by the PCC in May 2023.

Fabric & Churchyard Committee
Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and the other church-owned land and buildings. It oversees the activities of the monthly Churchyard Working Party, which maintains the churchyard and associated grounds. It met four times in 2023 but its members were in regular contact. At the beginning of 2023, we were sorry to lose Richard Hore when he and Revd Debbie moved away, but were happy to gain the new Churchwarden, Gilly Squire as a member a few months later.

2023 was a good year in terms of getting things done. The church architect, Jeremy Lander performed his first Quinquennial Inspection of the church building and churchyard in April and presented his report in May. He summarised, "Generally the church is in good condition. There are a very few persistent but minor roof leaks and the west end suffers from rain run-off down the slope where ground levels are high". He identified no repairs needed urgently and a number of small works to be done in the next five years, which the PCC has agreed to commission in one go at a fairly low sum. For an eight-hundred-year old, Grade 1 Listed building this was indeed good news. Also good news is that the flooding problem by the West Door has apparently been solved by a new drain gulley.

Dr David Carrington, the conservator completed a detailed study of the Sir William & Elizabeth Hewyt (c.1646) and the Viscount Hewyt (d.1689) monuments and a canopied tomb chest, as a sponsored project by The Friends of Great St Mary's. Conservation and remounting of the Chauncy Brass continued and re-installation in the chancel took place in early 2024.

The organ was out of action for nearly a month in the autumn, following an electrical short in the blower motor. It looked as though an expensive new one would be needed, but instead it was repaired by a specialist recommended by our organ tuner in time for the Remembrance Sunday Service. The church marginally failed its quinquennial Electrical Fixed Wiring Inspection due to a change in the rules that now require the earth inside to be electrically bonded to that of the lightning conductor. The lightning conductor itself needed an upgrade to current standards at the same time and this has been arranged for early 2024. On environmental grounds, the PCC agreed to replace the four 400 watt external floodlights with two 100 watt LEDs (a saving of 1,400 watts).

The Churchyard Working Party, sometimes helped by the Ministry of Justice Community Payback Team, have continued to keep the churchyard area in relatively good order, fighting back plentiful natural growth. The Payback Team also re-chained the Memorial Garden fence to meet safety/visibility requirements.

The submission formally to close the churchyard was sent to the Ministry of Justice in August 2023. EHDC had initially objected to closure on the grounds that the churchyard was not full. Evidence to refute this was provided prior to the formal submission being issued. The EHDC team subsequently had a constructive guided tour around the churchyard and things are now moving forwards. The target for closure and transfer to the local authority remains April 2024.

On the departure of Revd Debbie, it was decided to bring The Lodge up to a good rentable standard, taking advice from Wrights letting agents. The property has had numerous carpentry fixes, a complete re-emulsion, new carpets, boiler checked, new window blinds throughout, window cleaning and a spring clean. Further work is scheduled for the garden in early 2024. The Lodge was rented for six months from February 2024.

The car park bollards have now been in operation for just over a year. Whilst there have been some mechanical issues, the system seems to be working well for parishioners and local businesses who hire spaces. A new boiler was installed in the Parish Hall, but the work on Church House roof is on hold while the Re-imagining Group considers potential improvements (see below)

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party and our hard-working hall caretaker.

Outreach Committee
Chair: Val Bright

This Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community at local, diocesan and national levels. It develops and has oversight of a policy of nurture for all ages of the church family. It has general oversight of the Ministry of welcome within Great St Mary's.

The Committee met six times in 2023 and co-ordinated a large program of outreach and social events, including decorating the church for the May Fair, a lunch to celebrate the Coronation, the patronal festival lunch, the Festival of Light, mince pies and mulled wine at the Christmas Carol service, and for the first time, the Christmas Tree Festival, which included a visit from Father Christmas, tombola stalls and refreshments.

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Chair: Julie Patterson

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer, who reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances. We were sorry to lose Mark Hemsley in the autumn, as he moved on to pastures new.

The Committee met seven times via Zoom in 2023. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. It also reviewed the draft Annual Report & Financial Statements 2022, monitored actual income and expenditure against the 2023 forecast approved by the PCC in December 2022, and considered whether and when a significant drawdown from investments was needed. At the end of the year, it considered the provisional outcome for 2023 and a draft forecast for 2024, which were presented to the PCC in December 2023.

The Committee discussed the ongoing poor customer service provided by Barclays Bank, recommended to the PCC that the account be closed, and oversaw the work of the Treasurer and Parish Administrator in contacting all donors and recipients paid by direct debit or standing order, enabling a transfer to the PCC's account with TSB. The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on the hall hire

agreement, relevant PCC policies, discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2024, and bank signatories. It also considered possibilities to increase stewardship and monitored the results of Fr Simon's stewardship call in October 2023.

With considerable thanks to the Treasurer and the Stewardship Recorder.

Re-imagining 2025 Project Group
Co-Chairs: Sarah Vickers & Nick Heslop

The aim of "Re-imagining 2025" is to make Great St Mary's fit for purpose for our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry and mission in the 21st Century, across all worship, nurturing, pastoral, outreach and social activities, ensuring accessibility and inclusion, and providing a Christian strong presence at the heart of the local community.

The Group met eight times in 2023; the third year of working as a group to 're-imagine' our church and its buildings. During 2023, the Group mainly worked with the church architect, Jeremy Lander on two building projects. First, we explained to him our 'wish' list for re-imaging our church building to ensure that it is accessible to all members of the community and can provide the amenities expected by parishioners and visitors in the 21st century, as well as being a valuable additional community space. We provided Jeremy with documents explaining how we have reached our suggestions, including community and congregation feedback. He recommended a full CAD survey of the building and then produced several proposal drawings and sketches, which we discussed in great depth, suggesting amendments. After an iterative process, in November we submitted provisional outline plans to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) for its comments and feedback, which will be reviewed before sharing the proposals with the congregation and our local community.

Our second project has been the potential upgrading of Church House to ensure it is accessible and provides facilities which are fit for purpose, and to consider whether additional income can be generated by renting the upstairs space. Following a CAD survey, Jeremy has again come up with a number of ideas, and we are currently looking at one of his proposals in more depth to ascertain whether it is viable and what costs would be involved.

The Group will continue to meet regularly and provide a cross-section of parishioner's views as to the best way to move forward. Forming concrete plans is taking time due to the many constraints of dealing with historic buildings and the detailed procedures that must be followed, but the Group is determined that the project will come to fruition; all good things come to those who wait!

Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1 Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: The Reverend Simon Vivian, The Vicarage, Sheering Mill Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9ND.

Ministry team: Diana Kitson, Reader.

Office staff: Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator and PCC Secretary.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2023 until the date this report was approved are:

Father Simon Vivian	*Incumbent (Chair)*
Valerie Bright	*Chair of Outreach Committee*
Becky Burton	
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer; Chair of Fabric & Churchyard Committee*
Deborah Cubitt	*First Aid Officer*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden*
Mark Hemsley	*Until 7 November 2023*
Revd Debbie Hore	*Associate Minister, until 24 January 2023*
Diana Kitson	*Reader; Deanery Synod Representative*
Kofi Otu	
Julie Patterson	*Treasurer; Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee;, Deanery Synod Representative from 4 July 2023*
Gilly Squire	*Appointed 7 May 2023; Churchwarden*
Sarah Vickers	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*

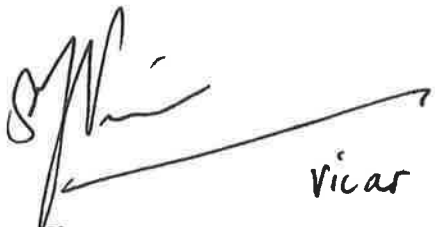
Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer; Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor until 21 July 2023*
Nick Heslop	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*
Jane Johnson	*Parish Safeguarding Officer from 4 July 2023*
Hazel Mead	*Assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer from 4 July 2023 (Parish Safeguarding Office until 7 July 2023)*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*

Architect/surveyor: Jeremy Lander, 77 North Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0BB

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 88-89 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM21 1DX and until 27 October 2023 Barclays Bank plc, 10 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LU

Independent Examiners: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT



Signed **Fr. Simon Vivian**
Vicar of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Dated 9th April 2024

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

M. Cooper-Di

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Date: 12 April 2024

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total	2022 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		30,685		30,685	26,731
Other donations	2	8,518	13,035	21,553	19,375
Collections for other charities	3		5,245	5,245	5,107
Tax received/claimed	4	9,377	3,554	12,931	10,368
Grants	5		24,732	24,732	20,483
Legacies	6				
		48,580	46,566	95,146	82,064
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	10,839		10,839	6,834
Property lettings	8	39,727		39,727	36,070
Fundraising & sponsorship			2,162	2,162	5,215
Other		200		200	60
		50,766	2,162	52,928	48,179
Investment income	9	24,113		24,113	26,151
Total income		**123,459**	**48,728**	**172,187**	**156,394**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	3,640	6,063	9,703	10,117
Ministry	11	75,363		75,363	75,912
Regular church services	12	7,988		7,988	9,107
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	6,040		6,040	4,647
Properties	14	61,672	40,059	101,731	78,739
Fundraising costs			1,005	1,005	1,726
Administration	15	21,414		21,414	22,724
Other	16	1,507		1,507	1,461
		177,624	47,127	224,751	204,433
Governance					
Independent examination fee		2,154		2,154	1,962
Total expenditure		**179,778**	**47,127**	**226,905**	**206,395**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(56,319)**	**1,601**	**(54,718)**	**(50,001)**
Divestment proceeds		**40,000**		**40,000**	**40,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	31,752		31,752	(160,153)
Fund transfers	14&22	1,500	(1,500)		
Net movement in funds		**16,933**	**101**	**17,034**	**(170,154)**
Funds brought forward		1,374,650	57	1,374,707	1,544,861
Funds carried forward		**1,391,583**	**158**	**1,391,741**	**1,374,707**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	873,366	841,614
		1,363,366	1,331,614
Current assets			
Debtors	19	15,006	11,331
Short term deposits	20	6,256	13,143
Cash at bank and in hand		12,070	23,768
		33,332	48,242
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(4,957)	(5,149)
Net current assets		28,375	43,093
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,391,741**	**1,374,707**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		542,617	542,617
General		358,966	342,033
		1,391,583	1,374,650
Restricted		158	57
		1,391,741	**1,374,707**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 9 April 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Fr. Simon Vivian – Vicar

Anthony Heard – Churchwarden

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 7.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.
- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.
- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties, the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010 (17). Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid (unrestricted)	1,710	3,221
Other donations (unrestricted)	2,917	2,609
Collections in church services (unrestricted)	2,354	1,813
Donations towards specified expenditure (unrestricted)	1,537	6,912
Donations towards restricted expenditure	13,035	4,820
	21,553	19,375

There were five large donations towards restricted expenditure, totalling £12,750 including tax recoverable (2022: two donations totalling £4,375 including tax recoverable), of which £1,500 was from local estate agent Wright & Co towards the expenditure in 2022 on car park bollards (see note 22 for corresponding fund transfer). Unrestricted donations totalled £8,518 (2022: £14,555) and restricted £13,035 (2022: £4,820).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £5,245 (2022: £5,107) comprised £736 (2022: £1,033) of giving under Gift Aid and £4,509 (2022: £4,074) of other giving. (See also note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2023 is estimated at £10,279 (2022: £8,369 estimated; £8,384 received). £2,000 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2022/23 (2021/22: £1,592), of which £1,299 was recognised as claimable in 2022, and a further £1,937 has been recognised as claimable in 2023. Of total tax received or claimed, £9,377 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2022: £8,786) and £3,554 restricted (2022: £1,582).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

5. Grants (restricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:		
- Church insurance	4,346	4,569
- Church costs	11,528	7,371
Ecclesiastical Insurance	1,450	-
The Friends of Great St Mary's	2,300	-
ChurchCare	2,500	-
Church Commissioners	-	2,191
The Forebury Estate	-	3,000
Diocese of St Albans – energy grant	-	1,280
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme (VAT claim)	2,580	2,044
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	28	28
	24,732	20,483

6. Legacies

No legacies were received in 2023 (2022: nil).

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

In accordance with normal church accounting practice, fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Church House	18,047	15,109
Parish Hall	11,593	10,671
Car park	10,087	10,290
	39,727	36,070

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	269	106
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	3,282	4,427
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	20,562	21,618
	24,113	26,151

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2023	2022
	£	£
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted		
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	1,002	974
Tools with a Mission – *overseas mission giving*	1,002	-
Five Talents – *overseas mission giving*	-	974
Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	668	650
The Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neurological Centres – *UK mission giving*	668	-
Streets2Home – *UK mission giving*	-	650
World Vision	300	300
	3,640	3,548
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted		
Women's World Day of Prayer	212	320
Sawbridgeworth Scouts and Girl Guides (St George's Day Service)	144	121
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches)	360	311
Bishop's Ordinands Fund (Confirmation Service)	-	158
Christian Aid (collection tins and fundraising)	523	1,022
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's charities:		
- HRH Duke of Edinburgh Civic Memorial Service	-	-
- Jubilee Thanksgiving Civic Service	-	209
- HRH Queen Elizabeth II Civic Memorial Service	-	439
- Annual Town Civic Service	200	121
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	584	374
The Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal (Remembrance Day Service)	382	407
The Children's Society (Advent Lunches, Christingle and Crib Service)	1,627	692
Crisis UK (Christmas collections)	991	743
DEC Ukraine Appeal	-	1,083
DEC Pakistan Appeal	-	569
DEC Turley & Syria Appeal	924	-
Holiday Homes Trust (funeral service)	116	-
	6,063	6,569

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	73,035	72,164
Clergy expenses	1,857	3,124
Outreach	471	624
	75,363	75,912

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Organists	5,530	6,318
Other costs	2,458	2,789
	7,988	9,107

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Diocesan fees	4,580	3,430
Fees paid to service assistants	1,460	1,217
	6,040	4,647

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Church	25,802	15,005
Churchyard	8,560	12,806
Church House	12,663	12,133
Parish Hall	5,778	2,756
The Lodge	9,899	294
Car park	-	11,165
Utilities	32,608	17,496
Insurances	6,421	7,084
	101,731	78,739

£40,059 was in relation to restricted funds (2022: £36,638) and £61,672 unrestricted (2022: £42,101). Restricted costs comprised £23,810 (2022: £10,751) for the church, £5,980 (2022: £3,650) for the churchyard, £4,982 (2022: £7,704) for Church House, nil (2022: nil) for the Parish Hall, £941 for The Lodge (2022: nil), nil (2022: £8,684) for the car park, £4,346 (2022: £4,569) for church insurances, and nil for energy costs (2022: £1,280).

In 2022, the second stage payment of £2,101 for the car park bollards could not be allocated to the restricted fund as there were insufficient monies in the fund, but in 2023, £1,500 of restricted donations were received (see note 2, and note 22 for corresponding fund transfer).

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff costs	15,595	13,953
Bookkeeping	2,031	2,121
Committee expenses	69	-
Telephone	1,299	1,129
Equipment	-	3,063
Printing	1,267	1,314
Office supplies	1,153	1,144
	21,414	22,724

The figure for staff costs in 2023 comprises £15,068 for salaries and wages (2022: £13,282), £482 for payroll administration (2022: £477) and £45 of training costs (2022: £194). The figure for salaries and wages in 2023 included pension costs of £1,013 (2022: £885).

The average number of employees during the year was one in 2023 (2022: one). The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2022: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2022: nil).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2023 of £1,507 included gifts totalling £630 (2022: £480) and net bank charges of £88 (2022: £102).

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899
Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	841,614	1,001,767
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(40,000)	(40,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	71,752	(120,153)
Market value at end of year	873,366	841,614
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA CBF Church of England Fixed Interest Securities Fund	121,123	154,059
CCLA CBF Church of England Investment Fund	752,243	687,555
	873,366	841,614

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2023	2022
	£	£
ChurchCare grant	2,500	-
Tax recoverable (of which £2,853 restricted (2022: £893) – see note 4)	12,216	9,668
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	73	-
Undertakers (unrestricted)	217	1,473
Charitable donations (not banked in 2021 but included in charitable giving)	-	190
	15,006	**11,331**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	100	200
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	2,618	1,957
Clergy expenses (unrestricted)	-	1,030
Nest (pension provider)	85	-
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	2,154	1,962
	4,957	5,149

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

22. Funds

	Balances end-2022 £	Income in 2023 £	Expenditure in 2023 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2023 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	342,033	195,211	(179,778)	1,500	358,966
	1,374,650	195,211	(179,778)	1,500	1,391,583
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	15	6,086	(6,063)	-	38
Specific grants & fundraising	42	42,642	(41,064)	(1,500)	120
	57	48,728	(47,127)	(1,500)	158
Total	1,374,707	243,939	(226,905)	-	1,391,741

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16.

See notes 3 and 10 second part for restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes and £841 in reclaimable tax (2022: £969). The end-year balance comprises £38 for other charities (2022: £15).

See notes 2, 5 and 14 for restricted donations, grants and expenditure. In addition, there was restricted fundraising of £2,162 (2022: £5,215) and fundraising costs of £1,005 (2022: £1,726). See Notes 2 and 14 regarding the £1,500 transfer from the restricted to the general fund.

Prior year funds

	Balances end-2021 £	Income in 2022	Expenditure in 2022 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2022 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	504,461	119,187	(281,615)	-	342,033
	1,537,078	119,187	(281,615)	-	1,374,650
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	508	6,076	(6,569)	-	15
Specific grants & fundraising	7,275	31,131	(38,364)	-	42
	7,783	37,207	(44,933)	-	57
Total	1,544,861	156,394	(326,548)	-	1,374,707

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £1,799 (2022: £2,473) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, (unrestricted in both years), and paid £660 (2022: £420) for verger services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2022: nil).

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2022

Her Majesty
QUEEN ELIZABETH II
1926 - 2022

Eternal God, our heavenly Father,
we bless your holy name
for all that you have given us
in and through the life of your servant Queen Elizabeth.

We give you thanks:
for her love of family and her gift of friendship;
for her devotion to this nation
and the nations of the Commonwealth;
for her grace, dignity and courtesy;
and for her generosity and love of life.

We praise you for:
the courage that she showed in testing times;
the depth of her Christian faith;
and the witness she bore to it in word and deed.
Accept our thanks and praise, we pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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The Rainbow Garden

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2022

Introduction from the Vicar, Fr Simon Vivian

Welcome to this report on the life and ministry in 2022 of Great St Mary's Church, Sawbridgeworth.

Whilst the last few months of 2021 saw so many organisations - including Great St Mary's - begin to find their feet again after the depths of the Covid-19 pandemic and its successive lockdowns, 2022 has been a year in which, in most areas of our church life - as this report testifies - we've been able to worship, live, and play far more freely again at Great St Mary's. As a result, the church's commitment to God, to one another, and to the wider community of Sawbridgeworth has been evident once again.

As well as our regular services, for which congregation numbers have remained steady, highlights for me must include the newly-established monthly Mustard Seed gathering and tea for younger members of our community, the St George's Parade and service attended by the town's many uniformed organisations and brigades, a confirmation course followed by a confirmation service presided over by Bishop Alan of St Albans, a parish weekend to the Anglican Shrine in Walsingham, a civic service in honour of our town's mayor, a parish lunch and service to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, our patronal service and lunch to which we welcomed Bev Jullien - Chief Executive of Mothers' Union - as our guest speaker, the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade and service, and the good attendance at our various Advent and Christmas services by young and old alike. During Lent, we also held a series of Wednesday evening presentations exploring the history and structure of the Eucharist.

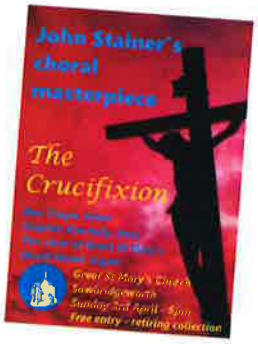
These were joyful services and events. However, 2022 also saw the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. The church played a key role in marking the moment: tolling its bells at the appropriate times, ensuring the community had the opportunity to spend time in the church mourning The Queen's death (several hundred candles were lit in prayer by individuals), and holding a civic service of remembrance and thanksgiving for the long life and reign of Her Late Majesty. (It was a coincidence that the annual parish away day was going to be a visit to Windsor Castle with a guided tour of St George's Chapel. The date fell within the nine days of national mourning, so had to be postponed until January 2023, when we had the privilege of seeing Her Late Majesty's gravestone in the Chapel.)

More widely than our worship, the church's life and fellowship increased dramatically through 2022 from the situation during the pandemic. In addition to the parish lunches already mentioned and our monthly Mothers' Union talks, the church's Outreach Committee has been very active. It organised a wonderful flower, bridal, and sculpture festival in early July, which saw hundreds pass through the church and its grounds to admire the various displays of flowers, beautiful wedding dresses (one from each decade of the 20th century), and, outside in the churchyard and of particular interest to the younger members of our community, sculptures made from naturally occurring materials such as stone and wood, much of which was gathered from around the churchyard.

This was also the moment when the new Rainbow Garden was coming into full bloom (see page 2). Planted by children attending one of the Mustard Seed gatherings earlier in the year, the bow-shaped bed in the churchyard, reflecting on the pandemic emblem and reminding of the beauty of God's earth, has brought joy to so many passing through the churchyard, and satisfaction to those who have so diligently tended to it.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

The Outreach Committee was also at the heart of our beetle drive evening ('Beetles and Bubbly') in October and our Festival of Light in early December. This, on the day of the town's switching on of the Christmas lights, saw the church filled with candlelight. Having liaised with our local schools and uniformed organisations, we also received hundreds of creatively-made lanterns crafted by the children specially for the event. Around 1,300 people passed through the church doors to take in the magical scene.



But joy in 2022 wasn't only to be found in the stillness of candlelight. It was also to be found in the beauty of the many imaginative flower arrangements, the sound of the church bells frequently ringing out across the town, and in the sound of our church choir. All demand our thanks for bringing colour and emotion to our worship and church this past year. In addition to their regular music-making, highlights for the choir must include their performance, in the run up to Holy Week and Easter, of John Stainer's oratorio 'The Crucifixion', and their sweet serenading of our congregations during our Advent and Christmas carol services.

Whilst it would be wrong to highlight specific names, a number of people have been key to keeping the church moving forward this past year. They know who they are, and our thanks goes out to each one of them - not least to those who oversee the general maintenance of our buildings, brought about the church car park's new automatic entry bollard system, have been negotiating the handing over the maintenance of the churchyard to the town council, and overseeing the selection of our Charities of the Year. However, it's worth noting by name our new Parish Administrator - Angela Kenny - who has, in her first year with us, made such a difference to the smooth running of the church - not least in terms of the hire bookings for our two church halls. Angela also became our PCC Secretary.

Sadly, however, we bid a fond farewell in July to another one of those key people. After 12 faithful and committed years, our organist David Wood retired. With presentations from the PCC and community, we wished him and his wife Kathy every blessing as they moved to the east coast. Meanwhile, at the end of the year, we appointed a new quinquennial inspector - architect Jeremy Lander. We look forward to working with Jeremy - not least on the Re-Imagining 2025 project which is beginning to draw up plans for the reordering of our resources so as to improve our facilities, making them more flexible and user-friendly for the 21st century.

Further detail about some of these projects may be found in the following report which I, along with our wonderful churchwarden Anthony, commend to you. Even so, such a report can still only sketch out a broad outline of our church's activities. Even less can it give you a sense of what it means to belong to the Great St Mary's community. It's been a joy to be the Vicar of Sawbridgeworth this past year and to be able to minister, alongside our Associate Minister Revd Debbie Hore and Lay Minister Diana Kitson, to a church family with such great depths of care and concern. Long may it continue to live out its strapline: 'Passion for Christ - Compassion for all'.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Simon

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Aim and purpose

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as a separate charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

Our church community

As at the end of 2022, there were 112 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 20 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors. We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2022.

During 2022 we baptised 14 children and married two couples. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 16 funerals (11 in the church) and five interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love and we continue to keep their families in our prayers.

A big thank you to our Ministry team for their pastoral work, to our Pastoral volunteers and others who support people in times of need.

Mission and giving

It is PCC policy to give 10% of regular committed stewardship (plus tax recoverable) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2022 from 2021 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. Charities supported in this way were Shiksha Rath, Five Talents, the Holy Trinity Night Shelter Bishop's Stortford and Streets2Homes.

In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10.

Shiksha Rath runs a Christian Outreach project in New Delhi to help children from deprived areas access education as a route out of poverty.

Outreach

A regular Friday email offers thoughts, prayers, information on our week's services, and notices. The Great St Mary's Facebook group includes both members of our worshipping community and others who live in Sawbridgeworth and beyond. Also, we have a regular full-page article in the Sawbridgeworth Flyer.

Volunteers continued to do a splendid job organising collections of food to support the Harlow Foodbank, whose existing and new customers needed their services more than ever. These collections were enhanced at harvest time with donations from Spellbrook Primary School - our church school - who brought their offerings to their own harvest service.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
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Spellbrook CofE Primary School

Pupils and staff from Spellbrook School attending their Christmas service at Great St Mary's

Spellbrook School is our voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community. Great St Mary's Church is represented on its governing body and fosters links between the school, the church and the local community. The Incumbent is, *ex officio*, a foundation governor and the Diocese, in liaison with the PCC, appoints a second foundation governor. However, of just as great an importance is the week-by-week connection between the church and the school, with the ministry team leading a weekly collective worship in school, frequently leading classes on religious or ethical topics, attending school events such as remembrance ceremonies, concerts and nativity plays, and writing a pause for thought for the weekly school newsletter.

First Aid

In March, our First Aid Officer, Debbie Cubitt arranged for members of Great St Mary's congregation, together with others from the local community, to have First Aid training.

Both Church House and the Parish Hall now have defibrillators, which also provide cover for activities in the church – with thanks to generous donors.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2021: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity, the Church Commissioners, the Forebury Estate, the Diocese of St Albans and others.

Plans for future periods

We shall continue to build our worship, faith, pastoral, outreach and social activities, seeking to provide for all generations and needs. Working with our newly-appointed church architect, the Re-imagining 2025 Project Group will develop proposals for our church building, to make it fit for purpose for the 21st century and accessible for all. The Friends of Great St Mary's have commissioned a report on restoration work needed on church monuments, and we shall undertake important repair and refurbishment work to our other buildings. In all our activities, we will seek to reduce our carbon emissions and consider other environmental impacts.

Financial Review

In 2022, donations, grants, fundraising and hall hire income improved from the previous year, but the PCC's finances were impacted by significant expenditure on the estate, increases in energy costs and the filling of a staff vacancy. Despite ongoing efforts to cut costs and delays to other planned project work on the estate, there was ***a loss of £68,426 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** and ***a net outflow of £7,726*** from the restricted fund, largely due to relevant expenditure on the estate. The position would have been worse had it not been for the commitment of our church community and generosity of other donors and grant-making bodies.

Also, at the end of the year, our investments with CCLA had fallen in value by £160,153, of which £40,000 was due to a redemption in early December to meet the deficit and outstanding expected works. Investment income held up well at £26,151. Overall. therefore, there was ***a net decrease in our total funds of £170,154***.

The investment policy is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee and the PCC. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments. The PCC did not consider necessary any change in investment policy or investments during 2022.

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2023, the relationship between income and expenditure continues to be a major concern, with ***a predicted deficit of over £100,000*** excluding any capital gain or loss. Moreover, when investments are redeemed to help fund expenditure, not only is capital reduced but also income from those investments.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even with the ongoing pressure of significant expenditure needed on the estate. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs, and for the repair and maintenance of certain graves.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £200,000 – this amounts to approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes. As the unrestricted general fund stood at £342,033 at 31 December 2022 (see page 15; £504,461 at the end of 2021), there was an excess of just over £140,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds at 31 December 2022 had fallen to £57 (2021: £7,783).

Risk Management

The PCC recognises that in areas relating to health and safety, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection, there is always a potential threat. We reviewed all our risk management and related policies during 2022.

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC met seven times in 2022, all meetings were conducted in person, and average attendance was 70%. In addition to routine business (which included regular Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Work of the Re-imagining 2025 Project Group
- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2021 stewardship
- Receiving the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021
- Adopting resolutions confirming the PCC's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, and to identifying and addressing wider environmental impacts across all its activities and through its committees, on an ongoing basis
- Formalising the closure of the churchyard for burials by applying for representations to be made by the Ministry of Justice for an Order in Council to discontinue burials in Church of England churchyards (Section 1 Burial Act 1853) and handing over maintenance to the Town or County Council
- Installation and commissioning of new car park controls
- A code of conduct for volunteers regarding safeguarding and other matters

Safeguarding

The PCC complied with its duty under section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. In July 2022, we reviewed our Safeguarding Policy and safeguarding information on the church website.

Data protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation*. In July 2022, we reviewed our Data Protection and Records Management Policy, and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC, and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC

members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

PCC Committees

The Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Churchwarden(s), Associate Priest, main Committee Chairs and the Treasurer. It has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings. It did not meet in 2022.

Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to the following committees, whose terms of reference were reviewed by the PCC in June 2022:

Fabric & Churchyard Committee
Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and the other church-owned land and buildings. It oversees the activities of the monthly Churchyard Working Party, which maintains the churchyard and associated grounds.

Delays caused by the pandemic continued in 2022 to frustrate, as contractors had backlogs of work, and specialist heritage experts and materials were in short supply. However, progress was made in all areas of maintenance of the church buildings and churchyard. The church building had minor works done, including a minor refurbishment of the organ. A number of incidents of vandalism occurred and damage repaired. Dr David Carrington, one of the UK's leading experts, inspected all the church monuments and provided the Friends of Great St Mary's with a prioritised list of work. The Friends proposed, and the PCC accepted, funding investigation of three monuments. Skillworks has been contracted to do the work in 2023.

A major project during the year was the installation and commissioning of car parking controls using automatic bollards for entry and exit. Church House had a dishwasher and a sound system installed. Following discovery of rotten timbers in its roof in 2021, further work was done in 2022 to scope exactly what is needed to be done to this Grade II Listed Building. Work is expected to commence in 2023.

The magnificent mature beech tree between the Churchyard and the Old Vicarage was rescued from being felled. After considerable research and ultrasound scans, the tree was judiciously re-shaped, which should allow many more years of life. Sadly, a large weeping willow seems to have succumbed to the very hot summer drought, and a small cedar was badly damaged by a gale and had to be felled and replaced.

Four fine hardwood memorial benches, donated by families, were installed around the churchyard and are enjoyed by many passers-by.

The churchyard, although closed for burials, had not been through the formality of applying to the Ministry of Justice for closure. After taking advice from the Diocese, the application process was agreed, the decision to close was confirmed by the PCC and the paperwork submission is under way. It is expected that handover

of responsibility for maintenance of the churchyard to the Town Council will take place in 2024. Interments and burials in family plots will still be permitted, and the PCC and the Faculty processes will protect the quiet enjoyment of the churchyard and respect for those buried there.

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party and our hard-working hall caretaker.

Outreach Committee
Chair: Val Bright

This Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community at local, diocesan and national levels. It develops and has oversight of a policy of nurture for all ages of the church family. It has general oversight of the Ministry of welcome within Great St Mary's.

The Committee met six times in 2022 and co-ordinated a large program of outreach and social events, including a pancake parish breakfast, Beetle Drive, Platinum Jubilee Thanksgiving party, patronal festival lunch party, the flower, bridal, and sculpture festival, and the Festival of Light.

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Chair: Paul Bard until 22 May 2022; Julie Patterson from 26 September 2022

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer, who reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances.

The Committee met three times via Zoom in 2022. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. It also reviewed the draft Annual Report & Financial Statements 2021, monitored actual income and expenditure against the 2022 forecast approved by the PCC in December 2021, and considered whether and when a significant drawdown from investments was needed. At the end of the year, it considered the provisional outcome for 2022 and a draft forecast for 2023, which were presented to the PCC in December 2022.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on property valuations, the hall hire agreement, discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2023, and on revisions to bank signatories. It also reviewed relevant PCC policies, and noted that the Treasurer had compiled a financial procedures manual.

With considerable thanks to the outgoing Chair, the Treasurer and the Stewardship Recorder.

Re-imagining 2025 Project Group ("RI25PG")
Co-Chairs: Sarah Vickers & Nick Heslop

RI25PG met eight times in 2022. Initially, it drew up a "should/would/could" list of things Great St. Mary's requires to meet the needs of parishioners and local community, including accessibility, toilets, catering facilities, improved vestry and storage, and space specifically for children. The list was reviewed throughout the year and a draft vision report was prepared for the PCC. The group also adopted the PCC's commitment to aim to meet the Church of England's net zero carbon policy by 2030.

Members of St Albans' Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and a Bristol church architect visited the church on separate occasions, and answered questions from group members about re-ordering and re-imagining church buildings. The DAC members were very positive about the work Peter Clark has been leading to maintain the building, and about changes possible within the current church footprint. Sarah and some other

group members visited numerous churches that have added facilities and made other improvements. All these visits provided very useful input to the Group's discussions.

To ascertain parishioner and local community views on how the church building and churchyard might be used and developed, we carried out an online and paper survey, with the help of the Town Council. We had over 240 responses and it was pleasing to note the majority of respondents believe that the church is an important part of our community, even though, 40% of respondents had not been inside the church building in the past year. 85% of respondents said the church building could be used for community events and over 50% of respondents wanted the church to be used for art/craft activities, historical talks or exhibitions and plays or performances.

In September 2022, two members left and two members joined the group, and Phase 2 of the project began. This phase is looking more closely at the other PCC-owned buildings and their viability, as well as carrying forward discussions with about the church building with the newly-appointed church architect.

Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1 Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: The Reverend Simon Vivian, The Vicarage, Sheering Mill Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9ND.

Ministry team: The Reverend Debbie Hore, Associate Minister and Mrs Diana Kitson, Reader.

Office staff: Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator; PCC Secretary from 14 June 2022.

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2022 until the date this report was approved are:

Father Simon Vivian	*Incumbent (Chair)*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden*
Angela Alder	*Until 22 May 2022; PCC Secretary until 22 May 2022*
Paul Bard	*Until 22 May 2022; Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee until 22 May 2022*
Valerie Bright	*Chair of Outreach Committee*
Becky Burton	
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer; Chair of Fabric & Churchyard Committee*
Deborah Cubitt	*First Aid Officer*
Mark Hemsley	
Revd Debbie Hore	*Associate Minister*
Diana Kitson	*Reader, Deanery Synod Representative*
Kofi Otu	
Julie Patterson	*Appointed 22 May 2022; Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee from 26 September 2022; Treasurer*
Gilly Squire	*Appointed 22 May 2022*
Sarah Vickers	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*

Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer and Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor*

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Nick Heslop	*Co-Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*
Hazel Mead	*Safeguarding Officer*

Architect/surveyor: Jeremy Lander, 77 North Street, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0BB – appointed December 2022

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 88-89 High Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM21 1DX and Barclays Bank plc, 10 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LU

Independent Examiners: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Signed **Fr. Simon Vivian**
Vicar of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Dated 28-III-23

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022 which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

M. Cooper-Di

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Date: 4 April 2023

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total	2021 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		26,731		26,731	25,984
Other donations	2	14,555	4,820	19,375	8,748
Collections for other charities	3		5,107	5,107	2,407
Tax received/claimed	4	8,786	1,582	10,368	8,932
Grants	5		20,483	20,483	8,768
Legacies	6				
		50,072	31,992	82,064	54,839
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	6,834		6,834	9,138
Property lettings	8	36,070		36,070	20,250
Fundraising & sponsorship			5,215	5,215	347
Other		60		60	70
		42,964	5,215	48,179	29,805
Investment income	9	26,151		26,151	27,190
Total income		**119,187**	**37,207**	**156,394**	**111,834**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	3,548	6,569	10,117	6,861
Ministry	11	75,912		75,912	77,109
Regular church services	12	9,107		9,107	8,033
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	4,647		4,647	6,293
Properties	14	42,101	36,638	78,739	42,331
Fundraising costs			1,726	1,726	0
Administration	15	22,724		22,724	4,897
Other	16	1,461		1,461	518
		159,500	44,933	204,433	146,042
Governance					
Independent examination fee		1,962		1,962	1,710
Total expenditure		**161,462**	**44,933**	**206,395**	**147,752**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(42,275)**	**(7,726)**	**(50,001)**	**(35,918)**
Divestment proceeds		**40,000**		**40,000**	**50,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	(160,153)		(160,153)	46,472
Net movement in funds		**(162,428)**	**(7,726)**	**(170,154)**	**60,554**
Funds brought forward		1,537,078	7,783	1,544,861	1,484,307
Funds carried forward		**1,374,650**	**57**	**1,374,707**	**1,544,861**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	841,614	1,001,767
		1,331,614	1,491,767
Current assets			
Debtors	19	11,331	10,773
Short term deposits	20	13,143	6,992
Cash at bank and in hand		23,768	45,752
		48,242	63,517
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(5,149)	(10,423)
Net current assets		43,093	53,094
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,374,707**	**1,544,861**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		542,617	542,617
General		342,033	504,461
		1,374,650	1,537,078
Restricted		57	7,783
		1,374,707	**1,544,861**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 28 March 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Fr. Simon Vivian – Vicar

Anthony Heard – Churchwarden

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 7.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.
- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.

- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.
- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties, the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010 (note 17). Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2022	2021
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid (unrestricted)	3,221	5,350
Other donations (unrestricted)	2,609	1,046
Collections in church services (unrestricted)	1,813	1,602
Donations towards specified expenditure (unrestricted)	6,912	500
Donations towards restricted expenditure	4,820	250
	19,375	8,748

There were no large donations under Gift Aid (unrestricted) (2021: two donations of £1,250 each including tax recoverable). There were two large donations towards restricted expenditure, totalling £4,375 including tax recoverable (2021: nil). Unrestricted donations totalled £14,555 (2021: £8,499) and restricted £4,820 (2021: £250).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £5,107 (2021: £2,407) comprised £1,033 (2021: £720) of giving under Gift Aid and £4,074 (2021: £1,687) of other giving. (See also Note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2022 is estimated at £8,369 (2021: £8,114 estimated; £8,124 received). £1,592 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2021/22 (2020/21: £517), of which £690 was recognised as claimable in 2021, and a further £1,299 has been recognised as claimable in 2022. Of total tax received or claimed, £8,786 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2021: £8,500) and £1,582 restricted (2021: £432).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

5. Grants (restricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:		
- Church insurance	4,569	3,456
- Church costs	7,371	4,305
Church Commissioners	2,191	-
The Forebury Estate	3,000	-
Sawbridgeworth Town Council	-	440
Diocese of St Albans – energy grant	1,280	-
DCMS Listed Places of Worship Scheme (VAT claim)	2,044	539
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	28	28
	20,483	8,768

6. Legacies

No legacies were received in 2022 (2021: nil).

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

In accordance with normal church accounting practice, fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Church House	15,109	6,916
Parish Hall	10,671	2,566
Car park	10,290	10,768
	36,070	20,250

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	106	8
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	4,427	5,000
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	21,618	22,182
	26,151	27,190

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2022	2021
	£	£
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted		
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	974	1,078
Five Talents – *overseas mission giving*	974	-
Friends of the Holy Land – *overseas mission giving*	-	1,078
Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	650	1,000
Srreets2Home – *UK mission giving*	650	-
Afghanistan & Central Asian Association UK – *UK mission giving*	-	438
World Vision	300	300
Street Pastors	-	150
	3,548	4,044

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

10. Mission & charitable giving (continued)

	2022	2021
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted		
Women's World Day of Prayer	320	-
Sawbridgeworth Scouts and Girl Guides (St George's Day Service)	121	-
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches)	311	-
Bishop's Ordinands Fund (Confirmation Service)	158	-
Christian Aid (collection tins and fundraising)	1,022	315
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's charities:		
- HRH Duke of Edinburgh Civic Memorial Service	-	156
- Jubilee Thanksgiving Civic Service	209	-
- HRH Queen Elizabeth II Civic Memorial Service	439	-
- Annual Town Civic Service	121	259
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	374	549
The Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal (Remembrance Day Service)	407	286
The Children's Society (Advent Lunches, Christingle and Crib Service)	692	582
Crisis UK (Christmas collections)	743	534
DEC Ukraine Appeal	1,083	-
DEC Pakistan Appeal	569	-
Cancer Research (two funerals in 2021)	-	136
	6,569	2,817

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	72,164	72,975
Clergy expenses	3,124	3,718
Outreach	624	416
	75,912	77,109

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Organists	6,318	6,108
Other costs	2,789	1,925
	9,107	8,033

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Diocesan fees	3,430	4,024
Fees paid to service assistants	1,217	2,269
	4,647	6,293

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Church	15,005	6,818
Churchyard	12,806	6,358
Church House	12,133	3,498
Parish Hall	2,756	1,010
The Lodge	294	8,914
Car park	11,165	552
Utilities	17,496	11,280
Insurances	7,084	3,901
	78,739	42,331

£36,638 was in relation to restricted funds (2021: £10,897) and £42,101 unrestricted (2021: £31,434). Restricted costs comprised £10,751 (2021: £5,628) for the church, £3,650 (2021: £278) for the churchyard, £7,704 (2021: £1,316) for Church House, nil (2021: nil) for the Parish Hall, 8,684 (2021: nil) for the car park, £4,569 (2021: £3,675) for church insurances, and £1,280 for energy costs (2021: nil). The second stage payment of £2,101 for the car park bollards could not be allocated to the restricted fund as there were insufficient monies in the fund. (Our insurance policies were combined in 2021, resulting in a one-off reimbursement from the insurance provider towards the cost of insuring the two halls.)

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	13,953	88
Bookkeeping	2,121	1,035
Committee expenses	-	38
Telephone	1,129	932
Equipment	3,063	2,002
Printing	1,314	410
Office supplies	1,144	392
	22,724	4,897

The figure for staff costs in 2022 comprises £13,282 for salaries and wages (2021: nil), £477 for payroll administration (2021: nil) and £194 of training costs (2021: £88). The figure for salaries and wages in 2022 included pension costs of £885 (2021: nil).

The average number of employees during the year was one in 2022 (2021: nil). The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see pages 11 and 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2021: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2021: nil).

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2022 of £1,461 included gifts totalling £480 (2021: £59) and net bank charges of £102 (2021: £88).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899
Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	1,001,767	955,295
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(40,000)	(50,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	(120,153)	96,472
Market value at end of year	841,614	1,001,767
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA CBF Church of England Fixed Interest Securities Fund	154,059	177,937
CCLA CBF Church of England Investment Fund	687,555	823,830
	841,614	1,001,767

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Tax recoverable (of which £893 restricted (2021: £432) – see note 4)	9,668	9,016
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	-	203
Undertakers (unrestricted)	1,473	1,327
Charitable donations (not banked in 2021 but included in charitable giving)	190	227
	11,331	**10,773**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	200	100
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	1,957	1,235
Diocesan fees (unrestricted)	-	664
Clergy expenses (unrestricted)	1,030	-
P R Newson Ltd (unrestricted)	-	4,920
Deposits for churchyard benches (unrestricted)	-	1,794
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	1,962	1,710
	5,149	10,423

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

22. Funds

	Balances end-2021 £	Income in 2022 £	Expenditure in 2022 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2022 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	504,461	119,187	(281,615)	-	342,033
	1,537,078	119,187	(281,615)	-	1,374,650
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	508	6,076	(6,569)	-	15
Specific grants & fundraising	7,275	31,131	(38,364)	-	42
	7,783	37,207	(44,933)	-	57
Total	1,544,861	156,394	(326,548)	-	1,374,707

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16.

See notes 3 and 10 second part for restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes, which included some creditors due to uncleared cheques (see note 21) and £969 in reclaimable tax (2021: £432). The end-year balance comprises £15 for other charities (2021: £508).

See notes 5 and 14 for restricted grants and restricted expenditure. In addition, there was restricted fundraising of £5,215 (2021: £401) and fundraising costs of £1,726 (2021: nil).

Prior year funds

	Balances end-2020 £	Income in 2021	Expenditure in 2021 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2021 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	442,397	196,102	(134,038)	-	504,461
	1,475,014	196,102	(134,038)	-	1,537,078
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	486	2,839	(2,817)	-	508
Specific grants & fundraising	8,807	9,365	(10,897)	-	7,275
	9,293	12,204	(13,714)	-	7,783
Total	1,484,307	208,306	(147,752)	-	1,544,861

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £2,473 (2021: £2,225) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, including nil restricted costs (2021: £345), and paid £420 (2021: £360) for verger services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2021: nil).

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2021

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2021

Introduction from the Vicar

As I write this introduction at the beginning of 2022, I've completed my first full year as your Vicar. What a privilege it's been. Whilst we've been experiencing yet another year of disruption and frustration due to the ongoing pandemic, I've been able to witness first-hand the true resilient spirit of the Great St Mary's congregation; its devotion to God, to one another, and, through its outreach – even in difficult circumstances - its devotion to the wider community.

As well as our regular services, for which congregation numbers have remained steady, highlights must include the outdoor parish lunch held in beautiful late summer weather as part of our patronal festival, the Festival of Light for which, on the afternoon when the town switched on its Christmas lights, Great St Mary's was filled with candle light and welcomed several hundred visitors through its doors to appreciate the scene and to soak up the atmosphere, and our choir's involvement in Sawbridgeworth Rotary's Carols on Fair Green, once again leading a thousand or so people in Christmas song on Christmas Eve.

But it's not all high-profile events. Much work has been done behind the scenes to consolidate our current situation during these restricted times so that, looking to the future, we have resources in place on which to rebuild our various ministries and activities. We've seen this – to take just two examples – in the creative development of our live-streaming ministry, broadcasting our Sunday worship to all those who are still unable to attend in person, and in the reopening of our church halls in a Covid-secure fashion. In these and in so many other areas, much energy, time and organisation have been voluntarily given by a number of people working tirelessly. My thanks go out to them and to all who have, yet again, given so much to our community over the past year.

My hope is that we've now turned a corner in the state of this pandemic and we can start planning and working boldly for the future of Great St Mary's. To that end, we were delighted to welcome the Revd Harry Steele – the St Albans Diocese Church Growth Officer – to a parish Vision Day in September at which a good proportion of our congregation were able to explore how we might revitalise our future work and ministry with a 'passion for Christ and a compassion for all'. That has already led on to a small group attending a 'Leading Your Church Into Growth' conference, and the formation of the Re-Imagining 2025 Project Group. Reporting to the PCC, the Group is exploring the resources we currently have at our disposal, what we as a church community will need in the coming decades, and how we might better engage with and support the local community. The Group will make recommendations to the PCC and to the church congregation. Then some tough but necessary decisions will have to be made so as to ensure we are passing onto the next generation a church which is fit for our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry and mission in the 21st Century, ensuring accessibility and inclusion, and providing a strong Christian presence at the heart of the local community.

In January 2022 we warmly welcomed our new parish administrator, Angela Kenny. Angela will no doubt be at the centre of things over the next few months as we begin to increase the number and scope of our activities. Challenges will of course come. We will need to appoint a new director of music when our current talented organist, David Wood retires at the end of June after over a decade of wonderful music-making. His talents and sunny disposition will be sorely missed. We also need to address our stewardship situation. Over the past couple of years we've lost a certain level of income, and some fundraising activity was cancelled. However, our weekly outgoing would still have been greater than our weekly income. That situation of living in the red cannot continue.

However, there's also much to look forward to in the coming year. Highlights, I've no doubt, will include the launch of a new monthly service with activities and food for younger members of our community, a number of church events which are already planned for the extended bank holiday weekend in June celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen, and the first weekend in July which is going to be one of great joy and creativity as we simultaneously host a flower festival and concert in church, a bridal gown display in Church House, and a sculpture event in the churchyard – truly something for everybody!

Of course, any annual report about a church community is still only ever going to be a snapshot of that community's activities, and, even whilst chronicling the most memorable events and group activities of the past year, it's easy to forget the number of hours of thought, imagination, preparation and energy which have gone into making them – and so many other things – happen. Furthermore, such a report rarely captures the spirit of a community.

That spirit is one of care and concern. Care and concern about our worship, and care and concern about each other and the town to which we minister. I'm therefore confident that, as restrictions are eased further in the year to come, the community of Great St Mary's will only flourish as we continue to make God's name known in our town.

And so it's my pleasure, along with that of our wonderful Churchwarden Anthony, to commend this report to you.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Simon

Aim and purposes

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as a separate charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

Vision, priorities and goals

The Mission Action Plan 2018-2023 described our visions as "Walking in humility with God, loving one another and sharing God's love with the wider community". Our five-year priorities and goals set in 2018 were severely impacted by the vacancy and pandemic lockdown measures. As indicated in the Vicar's introduction though, during parts of 2021 we were able to begin to reinvigorate our vision and priorities.

Our church community

As at the end of 2021, there were 107 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 17 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors.

We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2020.

We continue to give special thanks for all health workers and carers – particularly those who work locally – who tirelessly nurse and care for others. And we hold in our prayers the families and friends of those in our community who have passed away due to the coronavirus or for other reasons. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Activities

Worship and thanksgiving

With COVID-19 cases rising towards the end of 2020, the guidance from government was to stay home, and churches across the country were notified not to hold communal acts of worship. Instead, a Sunday morning Said Eucharist was live-streamed, with Father Simon or Revd Debbie presiding.

Public worship in church resumed during March, in time for Easter. Services were subject to strict requirements on social distancing, sanitising and the wearing of face masks. After Easter, we kept communal worship solely to the Sunday morning Parish Eucharist, which continued to be recorded and live-streamed to enable those who were shielding to worship with us. By September, most services had returned to their regular pattern, including a Said Eucharist on Sunday at 8am and Wednesday at 10am, and a monthly service of Evensong. Exceptionally, funerals and even a wedding were livestreamed when close relatives were unable to travel from other countries due to restrictions.

The church remained open daily for private prayer throughout 2021. With the bellringers finally allowed to return to the bell tower in late autumn, the bells of Great St Mary's once again rang out across the town. We were able to hold our usual service on Remembrance Sunday, with wreaths laid at the War Memorial by the Mayor, representatives of the Town Council and organisations, and the British Legion, and standards carried by the uniformed organisations.

During Advent and Christmas, a full array of traditional services resumed, including Advent carol, Christingle, Christmas carol, and crib services, along with Midnight Mass and our Christmas Day Family Eucharist. The church building continued to stay open for private prayer, where visitors could see the Nativity Crib and decorate and put messages on our Community Christmas Tree.

Special thanks to our Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer, who unstintingly ensured that all appropriate measures were taken to enable the church to open whenever guidelines permitted.

Pastoral

Much of the pastoral work usually comes through the 'occasional offices' – namely baptisms, weddings and funerals – together with home and care home visits to the sick and housebound. The ongoing pandemic meant that we had to continue to do things differently in 2021. We were able to undertake some of our pre-

pandemic pastoral work, but between January and March we were not able to provide visits to those unable to attend church, except in extreme circumstances. Hospital and care home visiting was still not allowed throughout most of 2021.

Although government guidelines were relaxed by the summer, we remained cautious over home visits, and most of our pastoral encounters were made over the telephone or through doorstep visits, keeping those who are most vulnerable in touch with news from the church and identifying those who might need the support of a minister. This was a great help to the Ministry team throughout 2021 and continues to have a caring impact on our worshipping community. We continue to miss all those who are still self-isolating at home. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

During 2021 we baptised nine children and married three couples. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 18 funerals (eight in the church when permitted) and nine interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love and we continue to keep their families in our prayers.

A big thank you to our Ministry team for their pastoral work, to our Pastoral volunteers and others who support people in times of need.

Mission and giving

Shiksha Rath runs a Christian Outreach project in New Delhi to help children from deprived areas access education as a route out of poverty.

It is PCC policy to give 10% of regular committed stewardship (plus tax recoverable) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2021 from 2020 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. Charities supported in this way were Shiksha Rath, the Friends of the Holy Land, the Holy Trinity Night Shelter Bishop's Stortford, and the Afghanistan & Central Asian Association UK.

In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10.

Outreach

Our wider links with children and young people are very important. Sadly, our usual schools Harvest and Christmas services, and our regular engagement with the uniformed organisations were again restricted, but the Ministry team maintained contact through assemblies, services and church visits. However, the visit by Father Christmas and also the Crib service were very popular.

Volunteers continued to do a splendid job organising collections of food to support the Harlow Foodbank, whose existing and new customers needed their services more than ever.

The Great St Mary's Facebook group, set up in 2020, continues to thrive. It includes both members of our worshipping community and others who live in Sawbridgeworth and beyond. Also, a regular Friday email offers thoughts, prayers, information on our week's services, and notices.

Spellbrook CoE Primary School

Spellbrook School is our voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community. Great St Mary's Church is represented on its governing body and fosters links between the school, the church and the local community. The Incumbent is, *ex officio*, a foundation governor and the Diocese, in liaison with the PCC, appoints a second foundation governor.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2020: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from the Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity, the Town Council and others.

Plans for future periods

As indicated in the Vicar's Introduction, we shall continue to reinvigorate our worship, faith, pastoral, outreach and social activities, seeking to provide for all generations and needs. We shall seek to increase stewardship levels, and consider and begin to take forward the recommendations of the Re-imagining 2025 Project Group. In all our activities, we will seek to reduce our carbon emissions and consider other environmental impacts.

Financial Review

In 2021, the PCC's finances were again heavily impacted by loss of hall hire and other income. Despite considerable efforts to continue to cut costs and the postponement of planned project work on the estate, there was ***a loss of £61,598 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** and ***a net outflow of £1,510*** from the restricted fund for relevant expenditure on the estate. The position would have been worse had it not been for the commitment of our church community and generosity of other donors.

However, at the end of the year, our investments with CCLA had risen by £96,472, of which £50,000 was redeemed in December to meet the deficit and some planned works (which were subsequently postponed again due to lockdown). Investment income also held up well at £27,190. Overall. therefore, there was ***a net increase in our total funds of £60,554***.

The investment policy is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee and the PCC. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments. The PCC did not consider necessary any change in investment policy or investments during 2021.

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2022, the relationship between income and expenditure continues to be a major concern, with ***a predicted deficit of up to £100,000*** excluding any capital gain or loss. Moreover, when we redeem investments to help fund expenditure, we reduce not only our capital but our income from those investments.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even with the ongoing pressures of the pandemic. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Risk Management

The PCC recognises that in areas relating to health and safety, the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and the security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection, there is always a potential threat. We reviewed all our risk management and related policies during 2021.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs, and for the repair and maintenance of certain graves.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £175,000 – this amounts to approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes, when lockdown measures do not apply. As the unrestricted general fund stood at £504,461 at 31 December 2021 (see page 15; £442,397 at the end of 2020), there was an excess of just over £329,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds at 31 December 2021 were £7,783 (2020: £9,293).

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC met seven times in 2021 (five of which took place via Zoom due to restrictions) and average attendance was 80%. In addition to routine business (which included regular Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Establishing the Re-imagining 2025 Project Group
- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2020 stewardship
- Receiving the Financial Report and Accounts for 2020
- Appointing a First Aid Officer

Safeguarding

The PCC complied with its duty under section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. In June 2021, we reviewed our Safeguarding Policy and safeguarding information on the church website.

Data protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation.* In June 2021, we reviewed our Data Protection and Records Management Policy, and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC, and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

PCC Committees

The Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Associate Priest, main Committee Chairs and the Treasurer. It has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings and to act as a sounding board for the Vicar. It did not meet in 2021.

Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to the following committees, whose terms of reference were reviewed by the PCC in June 2021:

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Fabric & Churchyard Committee
Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and the other church-owned land and buildings. It oversees the activities of the monthly Churchyard Working Party, which maintains the churchyard and associated grounds.

Delays to remedial work following on from the 2017 Quinquennial Report continued to frustrate in 2021. Contractors had backlogs of work after furloughing staff, with others working from home or self-isolating, compounded by serious illness and injury among key specialists.

Nevertheless, good progress was made on filling the cracks for monitoring purposes in the spiral staircase up the tower, re-glazing of the ringing chamber door, external re-pointing, and clearing and maintenance of the roofing, gutters and drains. Work on the chancel walls inside and out has been agreed with the Church Commissioners and will be undertaken in 2022.

The main gates of the church were discovered to have a gatepost that was rotten below ground and have been refurbished. The tree surgeons completed their scheduled work, including the removal of one pine tree near the eastern wall, which had been struck by lightning and was dying. Tests show that the large beech tree in the wall of the Old Vicarage is hollow and may need to be felled.

A major alert was raised when asbestos was identified lining the blower box of the organ, which is situated in the tower. A military-style operation was performed for its licenced safe removal, with thorough cleansing and air and surface particle monitoring leading to an "all clear" certificate, followed by restoring the blower with fire-rated sound insulation. A passing schoolboy, when he saw the operatives' decontamination trailer, commented that it was the coolest trailer he had ever seen.

The other major alert was when a rainstorm caused flooding in Sawbridgeworth and water poured in under the West door, soaked the carpet and other materials in the choir vestry, and seeped under the choir platform into the back of the nave. Fortunately the water was uncontaminated, so a couple of weeks were spent with the doors open to dry it out gently, following English Heritage best practice.

Work on refurbishment of the bathroom and toilets at St Mary's Lodge was completed. The church and halls were gradually opened up whilst preserving some level of protection through social distancing, ventilation and one-way systems, and a defibrillator was installed in Church House. Exploratory work revealed rotten timbers in the Church House roof, alongside the dormer windows at the front of the building. Further work will be undertaken in 2022 to scope what is needed to be done to this Grade II Listed Building.

In 2021, the churchyard again saw verdant growth. The Churchyard Working Party went above and beyond the call of duty to maintain it for all to enjoy. An exciting new development was preparing the ground for the new Rainbow Garden near the Alms Houses, which is envisaged will provide an opportunity to engage children in its planting. The PCC has also agreed that three more wooden benches be provided.

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party and our hard-working hall caretaker.

Outreach Committee
Chair: Val Bright

This Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community at local, diocesan and national levels. It develops and has oversight of a policy of nurture for all ages of the church family. It has general oversight of the Ministry of welcome within Great St Mary's.

Due to ongoing restrictions, only a few meetings were able to take place in 2021, but the Committee, together with its very welcome and necessary supporters, was able to put on a number of well-attended events later in the year, including the Festival of Light, the visit of Father Christmas, and welcoming at the Crib service.

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Chair: Paul Bard

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer and reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances.

The Committee met five times in 2021. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. It also monitored actual income and expenditure against the 2021 forecast approved by the PCC in January 2021, and considered whether and when a significant drawdown from investments was needed. At the end of the year, it considered the provisional outcome for 2021 and a draft forecast for 2022, which were presented to the PCC for approval in December 2021.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on the hire rates, discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2022, and on revisions to bank signatories. It also discussed other giving channels, the re-instating of the money counting rota and the need for new property valuations.

With considerable thanks to the Treasurer and Stewardship Recorder.

Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1, Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: The Reverend Simon Vivian, The Vicarage, Sheering Mill Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9ND.

Ministry team: The Reverend Debbie Hore, Associate Minister and Mrs Diana Kitson, Reader.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Office staff: Angela Kenny, Parish Administrator from 18 January 2022.

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2021 until the date this report was approved are:

Father Simon Vivian	*Incumbent (Chair)*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden*
Angela Alder	*PCC Secretary*
Paul Bard	*Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee*
Valerie Bright	*Chair of Outreach Committee*
Becky Burton	*Appointed 23 May 2021*
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer, Chair of Fabric & Churchyard Committee*
Deborah Cubitt	*First Aid Officer*
Mark Hemsley	
Revd Debbie Hore	*Associate Minister*
Diana Kitson	*Reader, Deanery Synod Representative*
Marian Newby	*Until 23 May 2021*
Kofi Otu	*Appointed 23 May 2021*
Sarah Vickers	*Chair of Re-imagining 2025 Project Group*

Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer and Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*
Hazel Mead	*Safeguarding Officer*
Julie Patterson	*Treasurer*

Architect/surveyor: Tony Redman of Whitworth Co Partnership.

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 3 The Corn Exchange, Market Square, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire M23 3UU and Barclays Bank plc, 10 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LU.

Independent Examiners: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT.

Signed **Fr. Simon Vivian**
Vicar of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Dated 29 · III · 22

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2021 which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

M. Cooper-Davis

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

Date: 3 May 2022

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total	2020 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		25,984		25,984	28,803
Other donations	2	8,498	250	8,748	10,169
Collections for other charities	3		2,407	2,407	2,098
Tax received/claimed	4	8,500	432	8,932	11,005
Grants	5		8,768	8,768	36,214
Legacies	6				2,000
		42,982	11,857	54,839	90,289
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	9,138		9,138	9,474
Property lettings	8	20,250		20,250	16,506
Advertising income					4,539
Fundraising & sponsorship			347	347	108
Other		70		70	121
		29,458	347	29,805	30,748
Investment income	9	27,190		27,190	28,355
Total income		**99,630**	**12,204**	**111,834**	**149,392**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	4,044	2,817	6,861	6,793
Ministry	11	77,109		77,109	71,900
Regular church services	12	8,033		8,033	5,841
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	6,293		6,293	5,710
Properties	14	31,434	10,897	42,331	60,530
Magazine					2,301
Administration	15	4,897		4,897	12,589
Other	16	518		518	1,290
		132,328	13,714	146,042	166,954
Governance					
Independent examination fee		1,710		1,710	1,620
Total expenditure		**134,038**	**13,714**	**147,752**	**168,574**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(34,408)**	**(1,510)**	**(35,918)**	**(19,182)**
Divestment proceeds		**50,000**		**50,000**	**30,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	46,472		46,472	26,517
Net movement in funds		**62,064**	**(1,510)**	**60,554**	**37,335**
Funds brought forward		1,475,014	9,293	1,484,307	1,446,972
Funds carried forward		**1,537,078**	**7,783**	**1,544,861**	**1,484,307**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	1,001,767	955,295
		1,491,767	1,445,295
Current assets			
Debtors	19	10,773	9,911
Short term deposits	20	6,992	14,801
Cash at bank and in hand		45,752	19,144
		63,517	43,856
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(10,423)	(4,844)
Net current assets		53,094	39,012
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,544,861**	**1,484,307**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		542,617	542,617
General		504,461	442,397
		1,537,078	1,475,014
Restricted		7,783	9,293
		1,544,861	**1,484,307**

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 29 March 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

29.III.22

Fr. Simon Vivian – Vicar

Angela Alder – PCC Secretary

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 8.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.
- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

- *Advertising income*
  Income is recognised following the publication of a magazine.
- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.
- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties (note 17), the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010. Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2021	2020
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid	5,350	6,430
Other donations	1,046	2,457
Collections in church services	1,602	1,232
Donations towards specified unrestricted expenditure	500	50
Donations towards restricted expenditure	250	-
	8,748	10,169

Donations under Gift Aid included two donations of £1,250 each including tax recoverable (2020: one donation of £1,250 including tax recoverable) and no other large donations (2020: £1,000). Unrestricted donations totalled £8,499 (2020: £10,169) and restricted £250 (2020: nil).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £2,407 (2020: £2,098) comprised £720 (2020: £1,174) of giving under Gift Aid and £1,687 (2020: £924) of other giving. (See also Note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2021 is estimated at £8,114 (2020: £9,020 estimated; £9,023 received). £517 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2020/21 (2019/20: £1,437), of which £431 was recognised as claimable in 2020, and a further £816 has been recognised as claimable in 2021. Of total tax received or claimed, £8,500 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2020: £10,574) and £432 restricted (2020: £431).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

5. Grants

	2021	2020
	£	£
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (unrestricted)	-	3,155
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:		
- Church insurance	3,456	3,052
- Church costs	4,305	7,077
Friends of Great St Mary's	-	10,890
Archbishop's Council (Church Care & The Radcliff Trust)	-	5,000
Hertfordshire County Council (sanitiser etc)	-	750
Sawbridgeworth Town Council	440	-
DCMS Scheme (VAT claim)	539	4,232
Ecclesiastical Insurance (claim for weathervane)	-	2,030
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	28	28
	8,768	36,214

£8,768 was in relation to restricted funds (2020: £33,059) and nil unrestricted (2020: £3,155).

6. Legacies

No legacies were received in 2021 (2020: £2,000).

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

Fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy which, in accordance with normal church accounting practice, are not included. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Church House	6,916	3,579
Parish Hall	2,566	3,452
Car park	10,768	9,475
	20,250	16,506

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	8	27
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	5,000	6,387
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	22,182	21,941
	27,190	28,355

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2020 (continued)

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2021	2020
	£	£
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted		
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	1,078	1,179
Friends of the Holy Land – *overseas mission giving*	1,078	-
CMS – South Sudan Diocese – *overseas mission giving*	-	1,179
Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	1,000	1,572
Afghanistan & Central Asian Association UK – *UK mission giving*	438	-
World Vision	300	300
Street Pastors	150	-
Annual subscriptions (previously described as charitable giving)	-	50
	4,044	4,280
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted		
Women's World Day of Prayer	-	239
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches and Induction Service in 2020)	-	345
Christian Aid (collection tins)	315	-
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's charities:		
- HRH Duke of Edinburgh Memorial Service	156	-
- Civic Service	259	-
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	549	534
The Royal British Legion (Poppy Appeal)	286	-
The Children's Society (Christingle, and Crib service in 2021)	582	291
Crisis UK (Christmas collections, excluding Crib service in 2021)	534	1,104
Cancer Research (two funerals)	136	-
	2,817	2,513

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	72,975	70,333
Clergy expenses	3,718	1,360
Outreach	416	207
	77,109	71,900

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Organists	6,108	4,546
Other costs	1,925	1,295
	8,033	5,841

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Diocesan fees	4,024	4,097
Fees paid to service assistants	2,269	1,613
	6,293	5,710

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Church	6,818	32,596
Churchyard	6,358	3,830
Church House	3,498	3,186
Parish Hall	1,010	1,036
The Lodge	8,914	276
Car park	552	-
Utilities	11,280	12,270
Insurances	3,901	7,336
	42,331	60,530

£10,897 was in relation to restricted funds (2020: £37,465) and £31,434 unrestricted (2020: £23,065). The restricted costs comprised £5,628 (2020: £30,822) for the church, £278 (2020: £2,518) for the churchyard, £1,316 (2020: £974) for Church House, nil (2020: £99) for the Parish Hall, nil (2020: nil) for the car park and £3,675 (2020: £3,052) for church insurances. Our insurance policies were combined in 2021, resulting in a one-off reimbursement from the insurance provider towards the cost of insuring the two halls.

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs	88	8,196
Bookkeeping	1,035	1,675
Committee expenses	38	-
Telephone	932	678
Equipment	2,002	1,224
Printing	410	351
Office Supplies	392	465
	4,897	12,589

The figure for staff costs in 2021 comprises nil for salaries and wages (2020: £7,849), nil for payroll administration (2020: £315) and £88 of training costs (2020: £32). The figure for salaries and wages in 2021 included pension costs of nil (2020: £318). Nil was received towards salaries and wages from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (2020: £3,155) – see note 5.

The average number of employees during the year was nil in 2021 (2020: one). The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2020: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2020: nil).

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2021 of £518 included gifts totalling £59 (2020: £537) and net bank charges of £88 (2020: £121).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899
Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	955,295	928,778
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(50,000)	(30,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	96,472	56,517
Market value at end of year	1,001,767	955,295
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA Fixed Interest Fund	177,937	190,601
CCLA Investment Fund	823,830	764,694
	1,001,767	955,295

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Tax recoverable (of which £432 restricted (2020: £431) – see note 4)	9,016	9,624
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	203	174
Undertakers (unrestricted)	1,327	-
Diocese (Vicarage maintenance costs) (unrestricted)	-	113
Advent lunch monies not banked in 2021 but included in charitable giving	227	-
	10,773	**9,911**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	100	100
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	1,235	1,395
Diocesan fees (unrestricted)	664	1,200
Clergy expenses (unrestricted)	-	529
P R Newson Ltd (unrestricted)	4,920	-
Deposits for churchyard benches (unrestricted)	1,794	-
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	1,710	1,620
	10,423	4,844

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2021 (continued)

22. Funds

	Balances end-2020 £	Income in 2021 £	Expenditure in 2021 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2021 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	542,617	-	-	-	542,617
General	442,397	196,102	(134,038)	-	504,461
	1,475,014	196,102	(134,038)	-	1,537,078
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	486	2,839	(2,817)	-	508
Specific grants & fundraising	8,807	9,365	(10,897)	-	7,275
	9,293	12,204	(13,714)	-	7,783
Total	1,484,307	208,306	(147,752)	-	1,544,861

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16. For restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes, see notes 3 and 10, which included some creditors (see note 20) and £432 in reclaimable tax (2020: £431). The end-year balance comprises £468 of fundraising for the 2022 "Big Breakfast" event for Christian Aid (2020: £468 and a general donation of £2) and £40 for other charities (2020: £16). See notes 5 and 14 for restricted grants and restricted expenditure. In addition, there was restricted fundraising of £401 (2020: £108).

Prior year funds

	Balances end-2019 £	Income in 2020	Expenditure in 2019 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2019 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	540,617	2,000	-	-	542,617
General	402,780	165,058	(125,441)	-	442,397
	1,433,397	167,058	(125,441)	-	1,475,014
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	470	2,529	(2,513)	-	486
Specific grants & fundraising	13,105	33,167	(37,465)	-	8,807
	13,575	35,696	(39,978)	-	9,293
Total	1,446,972	202,754	(165,419)	-	1,484,307

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £2,225 (2020: £2,463) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, including restricted costs of £345 (2020: £765), and paid £360 (2020: £300) for verger services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2020: nil).

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

England & Wales - Charity number 1132562

Accounts

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Registered Charity 1132562

Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2020

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

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THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
Registered Charity 1132562

Annual Report for 2020

Aim and purposes

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth ("the PCC") is registered as a separate charity, number 1132562. The members of the PCC have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The primary object of the PCC is to promote the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The 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. It fulfils this responsibility through periodic meetings and a range of other activities.

Vision, priorities and goals

On 12 April 2018, the PCC adopted the Mission Action Plan 2018-2023 (the MAP). ***Our vision*** for how we want to be described in five years' time, in terms of faith and discipleship, nurture of new disciples and service to our community is:

Walking in humility with God, loving one another and sharing God's love with the wider community.

Our five-year priorities defined in 2018 were:

- **Growing in personal faith, spirituality and loving relationships**
- **Welcoming and providing for all generations and needs**
- **Sharing God's love in service and healing within the church family and wider community**

Our ***three key goals*** as of April 2018 were:

1. To achieve good participation in three activities designed to grow commitment to faith, by 2020
2. To pilot "Messy Church" and assess its long-term sustainability, by 2019
3. To greet new residents to Sawbridgeworth by taking Welcome Packs to their homes, by 2019

Due to the many issues that arose due to the pandemic and lockdown measures, coupled with the vacancy period, the PCC was not able to devote its energies to achieving these three key goals or undertaking many of its planned activities and projects. It focused its attention on providing support

to the vulnerable, recording a service of morning prayer or the Eucharist each Sunday, opening the church daily for private prayer when permitted to do so and making arrangements for the arrival of the new Incumbent. It adhered to the latest health, safety, social distancing and sanitising requirements, and ensured continued good governance and sound finances.

Our church community

In September 2020, we were delighted to welcome our new Incumbent, Revd Simon Vivian and family, whose arrival was delayed due to lockdown measures. We look forward to many years of Simon's ministry among us and within the wider community.

As at the end of 2020, there were 110 people entered on the church Electoral Roll, 18 of whom were not resident within the parish. We were pleased to welcome new regular worshippers and visitors.

We hold in our prayers those who no longer worship with us regularly or who moved away during 2020.

We give special thanks for all health workers and carers, who tirelessly and bravely nursed and cared for others during the pandemic. And we hold in our prayers the families and friends of those who have passed away due to the coronavirus or for other reasons. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Activities

With many thanks to so many for so much, during a difficult year for all.

Worship and thanksgiving

Prior to the end of March 2020, the normal Sunday services were a said Eucharist at 8.00am, a sung Eucharist at 9.30am and an evening service at 6.30pm. Morning Prayer was said daily on Monday to Thursday, and there was a Eucharist each Thursday at 9.30am. In early March, we helped to organise (with other churches in Sawbridgeworth) the World Day of Prayer, which was held at Great St Mary's church. Sadly, thereafter we were not able to provide our usual programme of regular or special services for events in the church calendar.

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With rising cases of the coronavirus towards the end of March 2020, and the advice from government to stay home, protect the NHS and save lives, churches across the country were requested to close their church buildings. Although public worship was temporarily on hold, home worship and private prayer continued. Revd Debbie Hore recorded a weekly podcast of morning prayer, which was broadcast every Sunday, including a service of Stations of the Cross during Easter week. From May, the videos included recorded contributions, readings and prayers from our lay reader, Mrs Diana Kitson and others, as well as music, hymns and photographs.

Orders of service were available on the website and copies delivered to those without internet access, so that worshippers at home could participate fully in the service. A weekly pastoral letter included a short reflection on the gospel reading and an email each Sunday enabled us to direct our thoughts and prayers.

Public worship in church resumed during August, subject to strict requirements on social distancing, sanitising and the wearing of face masks. With the help of a very generous donation of equipment and expertise, the Sunday morning service of the Eucharist was recorded and streamed live. Our bellringers welcomed worshippers by playing hand bells in the churchyard. Also, the church was open daily for private prayer

The induction of Revd Simon took place on 20 September 2020, with the Bishop of St Albans presiding and preaching. We were delighted to welcome the Archdeacon of Hertford, the Rural Dean, the Mayor of Sawbridgeworth, other visiting clergy and officials, and members of Revd Simon's family.

Instead of scores of people attending a parade and Town's Remembrance Service, over a few days either side of Remembrance Sunday, wreathes were quietly laid at the War Memorial by the Mayor, representatives of the Town Council and organisations, and the British Legion. Later in November, we were able to welcome Sunday Club back into church.

On 13 December we joined the Evangelical Congregational church's online community carol service, and ahead of the second lockdown, our Director of Music, the choir and guest singers recorded Christmas Carols, which were broadcast on Christmas Eve. In the days running up to Christmas, the church was open for private prayer. Visitors could see the Nativity Crib and decorate and put messages on the Christmas Tree. Our one act of public worship

was on Christmas morning, with appropriate distancing measures.

Thanks to all those involved in ensuring our worship runs smoothly and is so enriched.
And Special thanks to our Churchwardens and Health & Safety Officer, who unstintingly ensured that all appropriate measures were taken to enable the church to open whenever government and Church of England guidelines permitted.

Pastoral

Much of the pastoral work usually comes through the occasional offices of baptisms, weddings and funerals, together with home visits to the sick and housebound. Coronavirus and lockdown measures meant that we had to do things differently in 2020. From March, we were no longer able to provide home visits to those unable to attend church, except in extreme circumstances, and hospital visiting was not allowed. We continue to miss those who are self-isolating at home. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

At the beginning of the first lockdown we realised that the pastoral care of so many could become difficult to manage. From April, several volunteers provided pastoral support via telephone call to small groups of people, keeping them in touch with news from the church and identifying those who might need extra support. The volunteers were a great help to the Ministry team throughout 2020 and continue to have a caring impact on our worshipping community.

During 2020 we baptised two children and married two couples. We wish them joy and love on life's journey. We conducted 24 funerals (10 in the church when permitted) and eight interments. Our dear friends are remembered with love and we continue to keep their families in our prayers.

A big thank you to our Ministry team for their pastoral work, to our Pastoral volunteers and others who support people in times of need.

Mission and giving

It is PCC policy to give 10% of regular committed stewardship (plus tax recoverable) to other charitable causes, of which 60% is allocated to overseas causes and 40% to U.K. causes. Details of the amounts given in 2020 from 2019 stewardship income are detailed in note 10 to the financial statements. In addition, whenever possible throughout the year, the PCC made collections and undertook fundraising for specific causes. Details of payments made are also detailed in note 10.

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A heartfelt thank you for the hard work of our Outreach Committee and the many others who organise or help at events when we raise funds for other charities.

Outreach

Our wider links with children and young people are very important. Ahead of visiting restrictions, the Ministry team maintained contact with all the Sawbridgeworth primary schools through assemblies, services and church visits. Revd Simon is a foundation governor of Spellbrook Primary School and Revd Debbie was co-opted onto the chair of governors of Fawbert and Barnard Primary School.

Sadly, our usual Schools' Harvest Festival Service with pupils from four local schools, and the Christmas services for Reedings Junior School and Spellbrook Primary School, could not take place this year. Our regular engagement with the uniformed organisations through the Scouts AGM, the Scouts & Guides St George's Day Service and Remembrance Sunday was curtailed. And the Christian Aid "Big Breakfast", our popular "All Age" events and participation in Town activities such as Fun on the Fair and the turning on of the Christmas lights did not happen.

However, volunteers continued to do a splendid job organising collections of food to support the Harlow Foodbank, whose existing and new customers needed their services more than ever.

Also, we joined with other churches in Sawbridgeworth and High Wych in a Churches Together Action Group, whose aim was to provide help, support, advice and guidance to those living in the wider area of the town. Teams of volunteers shopped and picked up prescriptions for vulnerable residents. And we joined an initiative to provide "Christmas in a Bag" to local residents who may not otherwise have had festive treats. It was a great accomplishment to have all our local churches working in partnership, caring for the community and loving our neighbours.

To maintain contact when the church was closed, the Churchwardens initiated a weekly "Churchwardens Calling" email. Within a week of lockdown, Revd Debbie set up a Great St Mary's Facebook group, to stay in touch with our worshipping community and to reach out to those who live in Sawbridgeworth and beyond. The group published daily prayers, news from Great St. Mary's, the Church of England and Harlow Foodbank, plus links to our online services. It started with about a dozen invited members and had over 130 members by the end of 2020, more than half of whom do not usually worship with us – a remarkable form of outreach.

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Spellbrook CoE Primary School

Spellbrook School is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. It is legally owned by the trustees of its Church of England foundation, but is controlled by Hertfordshire Local Education Authority, which has full financial responsibility for its maintenance. The school's mission is to provide the best education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community

Great St Mary's church is represented on its governing body and fosters links between the school, the church and the local community. The Incumbent is, *ex officio*, a foundation governor and the Diocese, in liaison with the PCC, appoints a second foundation governor. Revd Simon is liaising with the new head teacher on collective worship and on re-instating visits to the school and other activities as soon as restrictions are lifted.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. We confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators, professional fundraisers or third parties. The day-to-day management of all income generation is delegated to the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). Although the Charity is not required to be bound by any regulatory scheme, the Charity complies with the relevant codes of practice. We have received no complaints in relation to fundraising activities (2019: none).

Additional financial support was received, with thanks, from the Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity, the Friends of Great St. Mary's and others.

Surprise gift

After the first lockdown, we received a surprise gift in the shape of a model of the church made of 12,000 matchsticks, built by Chris Mockford over 12 weeks in the evenings. Even its base uses matchsticks and in the drawers are photos of its construction and the finished model. An engraved plaque is a permanent reminder of the 2020 pandemic. Like the church during the first lockdown, the model does not have a weathercock at the top of its spire. The cockerel has since been restored, but the model church will remain without a weathercock, accurately capturing when it was made.

Plans for future periods

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The PCC is committed to resuming full activities as soon as it is safe to do so, in line with government guidance. We will introduce new ways of communicating and engaging with our church members and the wider community. We will reinvigorate our worship, faith, pastoral, outreach and social activities, seeking to provide for all generations and needs.

In addition to completing projects on the estate that could not be actioned during 2020, we will take forward work on implementing the Statement of Needs and take necessary actions to move our finances towards a sustainable position.

Financial Review

In 2020, the PCC's finances were heavily impacted by loss of hall hire and other income. Despite considerable efforts to cut costs and the postponement of planned project work on the estate, there was ***a loss of £43,255 on day-to-day income and expenditure*** and ***a net outflow of £4,282*** from the restricted fund for relevant expenditure on the estate. The position would have been worse had it not been for the commitment and generosity of our church community and other donors.

At the end of the year, our investments with CCLA had risen by £56,517 – a very welcome increase, given they had fallen by about £95,000 as at March 2020. Together with investment income of £28,355, there was ***a net increase in our total funds of £37,335***. £30,000 was redeemed from our investments in the autumn to meet the deficit and some planned works (which were subsequently postponed again due to lockdown).

The ***investment policy*** is considered at regular intervals by the Stewardship & Finance Committee and the PCC. Information was provided by CCLA, which was considered by the PCC at its February 2020 meeting. Both investment funds are actively managed, allowing CCLA to anticipate or respond to market developments. The PCC concluded that there should be no change in investment policy or investments at that time but noted that CCLA advised that the return on investments in the CCLA Fixed Interest Fund would fall in 2020.

Going Concern

Looking forward to 2021, the relationship between income and expenditure, which has not been healthy for several years, is now a ***major concern***, with ***a predicted deficit of over £60,000*** excluding any capital gain or loss. Moreover, when we redeem investments to help fund expenditure, we reduce not only our capital but our income from those investments.

The PCC believes it is financially viable for the next 12 months, even with the pressures of the current pandemic. The general unrestricted reserves balance remains above the appropriate level of reserves and is sufficient for activities to be maintained for 12 months.

Risk Management

The PCC believes that significant potential risks relate to health and safety, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, security of physical and financial assets, IT systems and data protection. We reviewed and updated all bar two of our risk management and related policies during autumn 2020, and the remaining two in February 2021. In September 2020, the finance computer was replaced and the software, protection and back-up functionality upgraded on both office computers.

Reserves policy

The accounting rules under which the financial statements are prepared require funds to be analysed between those that, on the one hand, are restricted to specific purposes and those that, on the other hand, are unrestricted. Restricted funds comprise special collections and other fundraising activity for specific causes, together with fundraising and grants for certain fabric and insurance costs, and for the repair and maintenance of certain graves.

Unrestricted funds comprise all other funds, which may be designated for various purposes. The PCC has designated three unrestricted funds:

- a property capital fund, which at all times equals the balance sheet value of the properties
- a legacy capital fund, being the accumulation of legacies received
- a general fund containing the balance

The PCC considers that the amount of reserves necessary to ensure the work of the church continues at present levels is around £175,000 - this amounts to approximately 12 months of recurring expenditure, excluding mission giving and payments to specific causes. As the unrestricted general fund stood at £442,397 at 31 December 2020 (see page 15; £402,780 at the end of 2019), there was an excess of over £267,000, which is held to finance working capital and capital projects. Restricted funds at 31 December 2020 were £9,293 (2019: £13,575).

Structure, governance and management

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

The PCC met nine times in 2020 and average attendance was 84%. Due to restrictions, the PCC agreed that meetings could take place via an online

facility. Zoom was chosen as it was accessible to most members. Six of the nine meetings took place via Zoom. Attendance at some meetings was impacted by IT connectivity issues for some PCC members.

In addition to routine business (which included regular Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Financial reports), major items of business included:

- Agreeing to establish a working group to draw up recommendations to the PCC on implementing the Statement of Needs, with specific focus on the church building
- Agreeing recipients of mission giving from 2019 stewardship
- Receiving the Financial Report and Accounts for 2019
- Agreeing operating protocols for the church and halls as lockdown restrictions evolved
- Implementing cost reductions

Safeguarding

The PCC complied with its duty under section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* to have due regard to the House of Bishop's Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. It reviewed and updated its Safeguarding Policy and safeguarding information on the church website.

Data protection

The PCC complied with the requirements of the *General Data Protection Regulation*. It reviewed and updated its Data Protection and Records Management Policy and the Data Privacy Notice on the church website.

The PCC's responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The PCC is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the PCC and of the financial activities of the PCC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the PCC members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation.

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The PCC is responsible for keeping proper books and accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the PCC and that enable it to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. It is 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.

The PCC members confirm that, so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the PCC's independent examiners are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as PCC members to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the PCC's independent examiners are aware of that information.

PCC Committees

Much of the PCC's business is achieved by delegating certain responsibilities to the following committees, whose terms of reference were reviewed and updated by the PCC in October 2020:

Standing Committee

Chair: Revd Simon Vivian from October 2020

The Standing Committee did not meet for much of the year due to the vacancy and lockdown measures. In October 2020, the PCC agreed that the Committee has the power to act on behalf of the PCC for issues that need urgent attention between PCC meetings and that it can conduct such discussions via email.

Fabric & Churchyard Committee

Chair: Peter Clark

This Committee, in collaboration with the Vicar and Churchwardens, has oversight of the maintenance, repair and improvement of the church building, St Mary's Lodge, the Parish Hall, Church House, and the other church-owned land and buildings. It oversees the activities of the monthly Churchyard Working Party, which maintains the churchyard and associated grounds.

A major project was successfully completed at the start of the year. The conservation of the Leventhorpe Monument was funded largely by the Friends of Great St Mary's and a grant from Church Care and the Radcliffe Trust (via the Archbishop's Council). Other major expenses were the design and fitting of security grilles on three north-side windows and boiler roof repairs, for which we received grants from the Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity. Otherwise, much of the Committee's planned work was severely curtailed in 2020, initially due to financial constraints and then due to the pandemic. Necessary annual

check and maintenance activities and the most urgent tree work took place, along with a few more urgent projects, but other projects had to be put on hold for 2020.

The 2017 Quinquennial Report showed that the church was generally in a good state. Contractors were engaged to do work in 2020, but this was delayed due to access constraints during lockdowns. Before the first lockdown, a storm blew down the metal weathercock. A five-man team of steeplejacks replaced the magnificently re-gilded and repaired the weathercock in the summer, videoed from their drone and watched by local passers-by (see page 2). This expense was largely covered by the church's insurance policy.

When the pandemic intervened, the workload switched to keeping the buildings safe for whatever use was possible. They were equipped with all the necessary sanitising stations, signage and social distancing measures and risk assessments were prepared.

The church was similarly made COVID-safe, initially with complete closure, then by opening for public worship and private prayer and the safe return of the choir and bellringers. The largest challenge of hosting the Induction of Revd Simon, while ensuring social distances, ventilation and a one-way system, was met. Similar arrangements were put in place for regular Sunday services after the first lockdown and for Christmas Day. The NHS Track & Trace system was set up.

The Parish Hall is in a good state of repair, but there has been a slow deterioration of Church House, which needs work on the upper floors and stairways to bring them into line with current health and safety requirements and to stop them deteriorating further. The roof and the exterior paintwork also need attention.

Volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party met regularly except at the height of the first wave of the pandemic, when the churchyard was left to nature. On their return, shortly before the Induction, they excelled in bringing the churchyard back to order and tidiness. However, work on trees identified for urgent attention could not be done.

With special thanks to the dedicated team of volunteers in the Churchyard Working Party and fond memories of Committee member, Nick Bright RIP.

Outreach Committee

Chair: Anthony Heard until 5 March 2020; Val Bright from 5 March 2020

This Committee promotes the engagement of the church with the community at local, diocesan and national levels. It develops and has oversight of a policy of nurture for all ages of the church family. It has general oversight

(with the Churchwardens during the Vacancy) of the Ministry of welcome within Great St Mary's.

The Committee also works to increase awareness of the mission work of the wider church outside the parish. It recommends to the PCC the recipients of the amount the PCC sets aside for mission giving and it seeks to promote awareness of work undertaken by the recipients of the mission giving.

The Committee was able to meet only once in 2020, but outreach continued and in new ways (see page 6).

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Chair: Paul Bard

This Committee has oversight of the PCC's finances and stewardship activities. To fulfil this responsibility, it monitors both incoming and outgoing resources, as well as monitoring the deployment of the net assets, including investment policy and performance. It provides advice and support to the Treasurer and reports regularly to the PCC on the financial position, financial controls and all matters impacting the PCC's finances.

The Committee met three times in 2020. At each meeting, the Committee received a report from the Treasurer on the PCC's financial position. At the beginning of the year, it considered a draft forecast for 2020, against which actual income and expenditure were monitored throughout 2020. At the end of the year, it considered the provisional outcome for 2020 and a draft forecast for 2021, which will be presented to the PCC for approval at its first meeting in 2021.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the PCC on the hire rates, discretionary fees and other rates to be applied in 2021. It reviewed the PCC's Financial Controls Policy, for approval by the PCC at its first meeting in 2021. It reviewed and initiated new forms of online channels via which donations are received, including Easyfundraising.

With Considerable thanks to the Treasurer, the Stewardship Recorder, the Money Counters and the organiser of Church & Town for his work in securing and administering payments for advertisements.

Administrative information

Address: The PCC oversees the activities of Great St Mary's church, which is situated in Church Street, Sawbridgeworth. It is part of the Diocese of St Albans within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Church House, 1, Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AH.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

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Data privacy: Contact the Parish Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/.

Incumbent: From 20 September 2020, The Reverend Simon Vivian, The Vicarage, Sheering Mill Lane, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9ND.

Ministry team: The Reverend Debbie Hore, Associate Minister and Mrs Diana Kitson, Reader.

Office staff: Until 17 July 2020, Mrs Christina Goan, Parish Administrator.

The ***members of the PCC*** who served from 1 January 2020 until the date this report was approved are:

Revd Simon Vivian	*Incumbent (Chair), from 20 September 2020*
Anthony Heard	*Churchwarden; Chair of Outreach Committee until 5 March 2020*
Shona Passfield	*Churchwarden (Chair), until 16 August 2020*
Angela Alder	*PCC Secretary*
Paul Bard	*Chair of Stewardship & Finance Committee*
Nicholas Bright	*Until 17 May 2020. May he rest in peace and rise in glory*
Valerie Bright	*Chair of Outreach Committee from 5 March 2020*
Peter Clark	*Health & Safety Officer, Chair of Fabric & Churchyard Committee*
Deborah Cubitt	
Mark Hemsley	
Revd Debbie Hore	*Associate Minister*
Diana Kitson	*Reader, Deanery Synod Representative*
Marian Newby	
Anne Smith	*Until 18 October 2020*
Sarah Vickers	*Appointed 18 October 2020*

Among others that contribute considerable time and resources to the work of Great St Mary's, there are officers who are not members of the PCC:

Fay Clark	*Electoral Roll Officer and Spellbrook CoE School Foundation Governor*
Huw Lewis	*Stewardship Recorder*
Hazel Mead	*Safeguarding Officer*
Julie Patterson	*Treasurer*

Architect/surveyor: Tony Redman of Whitworth Co Partnership.

Bankers: TSB Bank plc, 37 Bell Street Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AR and Barclays Bank plc, 10 North Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2LU.

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Independent Examiners: Price Bailey LLP, Causeway House, 1 Dane Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3BT.

Signed **Anthony Heard**
Churchwarden of Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Dated

Independent Examiner's Report to the members of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sawbridgeworth

I report to the members of the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on pages 15 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Michael Cooper-Davis FCCA ACA
Date:
For and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire CM23 3BT

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2020 Total	2019 Total
INCOME					
Voluntary income					
Planned giving		28,803		28,803	31,447
Other donations	2	10,169		10,169	14,040
Collections for other charities	3		2,098	2,098	6,477
Tax received/claimed	4	10,574	431	11,005	11,526
Grants	5	3,155	33,059	36,214	4,038
Legacies	6	2,000		2,000	-
		54,701	35,588	90,289	67,528
Church activities					
Fees - weddings & funerals	7	9,474		9,474	13,995
Property lettings	8	16,506		16,506	31,114
Advertising income		4,539		4,539	9,695
Fundraising & sponsorship			108	108	1,398
Other		121		121	11
		30,640	108	30,748	56,213
Investment income	9	28,355		28,355	29,842
Total income		**113,696**	**35,696**	**149,392**	**153,583**
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities					
Mission & charitable giving	10	4,280	2,513	6,793	10,777
Ministry	11	71,900		71,900	70,886
Regular church services	12	5,841		5,841	9,958
Fees paid – weddings & funerals	13	5,710		5,710	9,115
Properties	14	23,065	37,465	60,530	37,167
Magazine		2,301		2,301	8,750
Administration	15	12,589		12,589	23,185
Other	16	1,290		1,290	3,907
		126,976	39,978	166,954	173,745
Governance					
Independent examination fee		1,620		1,620	1,560
Total expenditure		**128,596**	**39,978**	**168,574**	**175,305**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		**(14,900)**	**(4,282)**	**(19,182)**	**(21,722)**
Divestment proceeds		**30,000**		**30,000**	**15,000**
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments	18	26,517		26,517	106,058
Net movement in funds		**41,617**	**(4,282)**	**37,335**	**99,336**

Funds brought forward	1,433,397	13,575	1,446,972	1,347,636
Funds carried forward	**1,475,014**	**9,293**	**1,484,307**	**1,446,972**

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

BALANCE SHEET
at 31 December 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible	17	490,000	490,000
Investments	18	955,295	928,778
		1,445,295	1,418,778
Current assets			
Debtors	19	9,911	10,807
Short term deposits	20	14,801	7,446
Cash at bank and in hand		19,144	14,294
		43,856	32,547
Liabilities			
Creditors payable within one year	21	(4,844)	(4,353)
Net current assets		39,012	28,194
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**1,484,307**	**1,446,972**
Funds	22		
Unrestricted			
Property capital		490,000	490,000
Legacy capital		542,617	540,617
General		442,397	402,780
		1,475,014	1,433,397
Restricted		9,293	13,575
		1,484,307	**1,446,972**

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH
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Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 23 March 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Anthony Heard – Churchwarden **Angela Alder** – PCC Secretary

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2020

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effect from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except that properties are included at valuation and investments are included at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Parochial Church Council ("PCC") is responsible in law. They do not include the financial statements of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the PCC members believe that no material uncertainties exist. The PCC members

have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure deficit is covered with the support of withdrawing funds from the investments, as held within unrestricted general funds, and therefore enables the PCC to continue as a going concern. A detailed commentary on its impact is detailed in the Annual Report on page 8.

Funds

- *Unrestricted designated funds*
  Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside at the discretion of the PCC for specific purposes. The property capital fund is represented by the value of property held. The legacy capital fund is the aggregate of legacies received and is represented by assets held for future major capital projects.
- *Unrestricted general funds*
  Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used for the ordinary purposes of the PCC.
- *Restricted funds*
  Restricted funds arise where collections are made or fundraising undertaken for specific causes, or where income is subject to specific conditions imposed by donors or grant-making organisations.

Incoming resources

- *Stewardship, service collections and donations*
  Amounts are recognised when received; at which point income tax recoverable is accounted for.
- *Other voluntary income*
  Grants and legacies are recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

- *Church fees*
  Wedding and funeral fees are recognised when the event occurs.
- *Advertising income*
  Income is recognised following the publication of a magazine.
- *Property lettings*
  Rental income from the letting of premises is recognised when due.
- *Investment income, fundraising and sponsorship*
  Income is recognised when received.

Gifts in kind

Assets donated to the PCC are included in the financial records at valuation at the date of gift.

Resources expended

Amounts are recognised when payable and include irrecoverable VAT. All costs have been directly allocated to the relevant activity and fund.

Tangible fixed assets

- *Consecrated land and buildings and moveable church furnishings*
  Consecrated and benefice property is excluded from the financial statements under the Charities Act 2011. No value is placed on moveable church furnishings that require a faculty for their disposal as they are considered by the PCC as inalienable property.
- *Other real estate*
  Given the unusual nature and features of the freehold properties (note 17), the properties are held at residual value based on valuations by Wright & Co, a local estate agent, in November 2010. Thus, no depreciation has been charged.
- *Fixtures and fittings*
  Items costing up to £10,000 are written off in the period in which the assets are acquired.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. Unrealised gains and losses arising from movements in market values during the year are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the market value at the year end.

Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value before any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank

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

Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at the settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially

recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date. All financial instruments of the charity are measured at cost.

Financial assets include the bank balances, trade debtors and other debtors, but exclude prepayments and taxation.

Financial liabilities include trade creditors, other creditors, accruals and deferred income, but exclude social security and other taxes due.

Key Source of Judgement and Estimate Uncertainty

No significant judgements, accounting policies or assumptions have been made by the PCC in applying the Charity's accounting policies.

Transactions involving members of the PCC and connected persons

Members of the PCC are obliged to declare any interest in any proposed transaction that involves them or connected persons, and to withdraw from any discussions and not participate in any vote taken. Any transactions undertaken by or on behalf of the PCC and involving members of the PCC and/or connected persons are detailed in notes 11 and 23.

2. Donations, other than planned giving

	2020	2019
	£	£
Donations under Gift Aid	6,430	7,076
Other donations	2,457	2,456
Collections in church services	1,232	3,153
Donations towards specified unrestricted expenditure	50	1,055
Restricted donations	-	300
	10,169	14,040

Donations under Gift Aid included one donation of £1,250 including tax recoverable (2019: one donation of £6,000 including tax recoverable) and there was one other large donation of £1,000 (2019: nil). Unrestricted donations totalled £10,169 (2019: £13,740) and restricted nil (2019: £300).

3. Collections for other specific causes (restricted)

The figure of £2,098 (2019: £6,477) comprised £1,174 (2019: £667) of giving under Gift Aid and £924 (2019: £5,810) of other giving. (See also Note 10).

4. Tax received/claimed

Tax recoverable on giving under Gift Aid in 2020 is estimated at £9,020 (2019: £9,779 estimated; £9,943 received). £1,437 was received under the small donations scheme for the tax year 2019/20 (2018/19: £1,826), of which £220 was recognised as claimable in 2019, and a further £137 has been recognised as claimable in 2020. £10,574 was in relation to unrestricted funds (2019: £11,139) and £431 restricted (2019: £387).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2020 (continued)

5. Grants

	2020	2019
	£	£
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (unrestricted)	3,155	-
The Sawbridgeworth Ecclesiastical Charity:	3,052	2,729
- Church insurance		
- Church costs	7,077	533
Friends of Great St Mary's	10,890	-
Archbishop's Council (Church Care & The Radcliff Trust)	5,000	500
Hertfordshire County Council (sanitiser etc)	750	-
DCMS Scheme (VAT claim)	4,232	248
Ecclesiastical Insurance (claim for weathervane)	2,030	
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission	28	28
	36,214	4,038

£33,059 was in relation to restricted funds (2019: £4,038) and £3,155 unrestricted (2019 nil).

6. Legacies

An unrestricted legacy of £2,000 was received in 2020 from the estate of Joy Burles (2019: no legacies received).

7. Fees - weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

Fees receivable exclude amounts due to the clergy which, in accordance with normal church accounting practice, are not included. The fees shown comprise amounts earned by the PCC and amounts payable to the Diocese and to assistants for their participation at weddings and funerals (see also note 13).

8. Property lettings (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Church House	3,579	12,97
Parish Hall	3,452	7
		9,767
Car park	9,475	8,370
	16,506	31,11
		4

9. Investment income (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£

Interest on CCLA Deposit Fund	27	116
Dividends on CCLA Fixed Interest Fund investment	6,387	8,249
Dividends on CCLA Investment Fund investment	21,941	21,477
	28,355	29,842

10. Mission & charitable giving

	2020	2019
Mission grants to organisations – unrestricted	£	£
India Touch Trust (Shiksha Rath) – *overseas mission giving*	1,179	2,393
CMS – South Sudan Diocese – *overseas mission giving*	1,179	
Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter – *UK mission giving*	1,572	1,595
World Vision	300	300
Fraternity of St Albans	25	70
Historic Churches Trust	25	25
	4,280	4,383

	2020	2019
Distribution of collections for specific causes – restricted	£	£
Women's World Day of Prayer	239	161
Train-a-Priest Fund (Lent lunches and Induction Service in 2020)	345	329
Scouts and Guides (St George's Day)	-	191
Christian Aid ("Big Breakfast")	-	1,931
The Sawbridgeworth Mayor's Appeal (Civic Service)	-	270
The Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal	534	838
The Royal British Legion (Poppy Appeal)	-	357
The Childrens' Society (Christingle)	291	288
Crisis UK (Christmas collections)	1,104	1,112
Church Urban Fund (Pancake party)	-	64
Friends of Great St Mary's (funeral service)	-	244
CMS (funeral service)	-	238
Red Cross (Bahamas Appeal)	-	371
	2,513	6,394

11. Ministry (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Diocesan parish share	70,333	68,660
Clergy expenses	1,360	1,540
Outreach	207	686
	71,900	70,886

The Vicar and non-stipendiary priest are reimbursed for expenses incurred on PCC business.

12. Regular church services (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Organists	4,546	7,594
Other costs	1,295	2,364
	5,841	9,958

13. Fees paid – weddings and funerals (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Diocesan fees	4,097	4,716
Fees paid to service assistants	1,613	4,219
Honoraria	-	180
	5,710	9,115

The PCC retains the difference between the total of fees received and the total of fees paid.

14. Properties – maintenance, repair and utilities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Church	32,596	5,174
Churchyard	3,830	2,728
Church House	3,186	3,756
Parish Hall	1,036	7,416
The Lodge	276	110
Car park	-	27
Utilities	12,270	11,932
Insurances	7,336	6,024
	60,530	37,167

£37,465 was in relation to restricted funds (2019: £12,598) and £23,065 unrestricted (2019: £24,569). The restricted costs comprised £30,822 (2019: £3,520) for the church, £2,518 (2019: £278) for the churchyard, £974 (2019: £490) for Church House, £99 (2019: £5,589) for the Parish Hall, nil (2019: nil) for the car park and £3,052 (2019: £2,729) for church insurances.

15. Administration (unrestricted)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Staff costs	8,196	14,722
Bookkeeping	1,675	2,256
Committee expenses	-	51
Telephone	678	594
Equipment	1,224	2,640
Printing	351	940
Office Supplies	465	1,982
	12,589	23,185

The figure for staff costs in 2020 comprises salaries and wages of £7,849 (2019: £14,098), payroll administration costs of £315 (2019: £454) and staff training costs of £32 (2019: £170). The figure for salaries and wages in 2020 included pension costs of £318 (2019: £417). £3,155 was received towards salaries and wages from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (2019: nil) – see note 5.

The average number of employees during the year was one in both 2020 and 2019. The PCC considers its key management personnel to comprise the Vicar, Churchwardens and appointed officials (see page 12). No employees received over £60,000 remuneration during the year (2019: nil). No PCC members or other officers were remunerated for their role (2019: nil).

16. Other expenditure (unrestricted)

The figure for other expenditure in 2020 of £1,290 included: gifts totalling £537 (2019: £931), net bank charges of £121 (2019: £262) and recruitment costs of £116 (2019: £1,102). (The figure for 2019 also included £854 for an independent IT review and £634 for Revd Frances Arnold's leaving event.)

17. Tangible fixed assets (unrestricted)

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures & fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Valuation / Cost – *beginning and end of year*	490,000	7,899	497,899

Depreciation – *beginning and end of year*	-	(7,899)	(7,899)
Net book value - *beginning and end of year*	490,000	-	490,000

The amount of freehold land and buildings comprises valuations of St Mary's Lodge £335,000, the Parish Hall £45,000 and Church House £110,000, provided by local estate agent Wright & Co in November 2010 and reflecting current usage. Fixtures and fittings comprise the sound system

18. Investments (unrestricted)

	2020	**2019**
	£	£
Market value at beginning of year	928,778	822,720
Additions/(withdrawals) at cost	(30,000)	(15,000)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	56,517	121,058
Market value at end of year	955,295	928,778
The portfolio consists of investments in:		
CCLA Fixed Interest Fund	190,601	189,933
CCLA Investment Fund	764,694	738,845
	955,295	928,778

19. Debtors (receivable within one year)

	2020	**2019**
	£	£
Tax recoverable (of which £431 restricted (2019: 387) – see note 4)	9,624	9,999
Hire fees due (unrestricted)	174	484
Undertakers (unrestricted)	-	324
Diocese (Vicarage maintenance costs) (unrestricted)	113	-
	9,911	**10,807**

20. Short term deposits (unrestricted)

These cash deposits are held with The Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund, which is managed by CCLA.

21. Creditors (payable within one year)

	2020	**2019**
	£	£

Wedding deposits (unrestricted)	100	100
Distributions of collections to specific causes (restricted)	1,395	2,019
Diocesan fees (unrestricted)	1,200	674
Clergy expenses (unrestricted)	529	-
Independent examination fee (unrestricted)	1,620	1,560
	4,844	4,353

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 31 December 2020 (continued)

22. Funds

	Balances end-2019 £	Income in 2020 £	Expenditure in 2020 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2020 £
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	540,617	2,000	-	-	542,617
General	402,780	165,058	(125,441)	-	442,397
	1,433,397	167,058	(125,441)	-	1,475,014
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	470	2,529	(2,513)	-	486
Specific grants & fundraising	13,105	33,167	(37,465)	-	8,807
	13,575	35,696	(39,978)	-	9,293
Total	1,446,972	202,754	(165,419)	-	1,484,307

For an explanation of restricted funds, see page 16. For restricted funds comprising monies for specific causes, see notes 3 and 10, which included some creditors (see note 20) and £431 in reclaimable tax (2019: £387). The end-year balance comprises £470 of fundraising for the 2021 “Big Breakfast” event for Christian Aid (2019: £470) and £16 for other charities (2019: nil). See notes 5 and 14 for restricted grants and restricted expenditure. In addition, there was restricted fundraising of £108 (2019: £1,398).

Prior year funds

	Balances end-2018	Income in 2019	Expenditure in 2019 £	Fund transfers £	Balances end-2019

	£				£
Unrestricted					
Property capital	490,000	-	-	-	490,000
Legacy capital	540,617	-	-	-	540,617
General	297,052	262,041	(156,563)	-	402,780
	1,327,669	262,041	(156,563)	-	1,433,397
Restricted					
Monies for specific causes	-	6,864	(6,394)	-	470
Specific grants & fundraising	19,967	5,736	(12,598)	-	13,105
	19,967	12,600	(18,992)	-	13,575
Total	1,347,636	274,641	(175,305)	-	1,446,972

23. Payments to PCC members and connected persons

PCC members were reimbursed £2,463 (2019: £2,255) for purchases on behalf of the PCC, including restricted costs of £765 (2019: nil), and paid £300 (2019: £600) for verger services (unrestricted in both years). No other payments to PCC members and connected persons were made (2019: nil).