

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1133346**

**Report of the Parochial Church Council and  
Unaudited Financial Statements For The Year Ended  
31st December 2024  
for**

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**R Harvey-Robson F.C.C.A.  
Adenhurst  
Abbey Road  
Llangollen  
LL20 8SS**

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Contents of the Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

	Page
Report of the Parochial Church Council	1 to 2
Independent Examiner's Report	3
Statement of Financial Activities	4
Balance Sheet	5
Notes to the Financial Statements	6 to 15

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Report of the Parochial Church Council  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

The Parochial Church Council present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2024. The Parochial Church Council have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in 2015.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

**Registered Charity number**

1133346

**Principal address**

The Parish Church of St Oswald, King and Martyr  
Church Street  
Oswestry  
Shropshire  
SY11 2SY

**Parochial Church Council**

Rev H Gibbons (Chairman)

Mr D P Evison

Miss E J Williams

Mr P R Crosby

Mr M W Donkin

Mrs L Clarke

Mr A Neale

Mrs J Chesworth

Mrs M Jones

Mrs F Pearson

Ms C Boulton

Mrs MC Crosby

Mr J Abram

Mr J Abbatt

Rev Yin-An Chen

Resigned 31st October 2024

Rev J Castillo-Burley

Mrs J Chippet-Williams

Ms R Evans

Retired 20th May 2024

Mr R Major

Ms S Wright

Mr D Smith

Appointed 20th May 2024

Ms S Best

Appointed 20th May 2024

Ms S Merrony-Potton

Appointed 20th May 2024

Ms A Pilsbury

Appointed 20th May 2024

Mrs S Hart

Appointed 20th May 2024

Ms C Fraser

Appointed 20th May 2024

Mrs A Earl Sadiq

Appointed 20th May 2024

**Independent Examiner**

R. Harvey-Robson F.C.C.A.

Adenhurst

Abbey Road

Llangollen

LL20 8SS

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Report of the Parochial Church Council  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing document**

Parochial Church Council powers measure (1956) as amended and church representation rules.

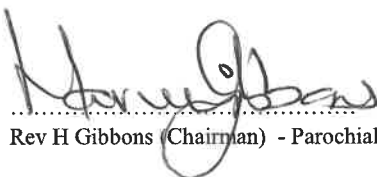
**Risk management**

The Parochial Church Council have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

**Safeguarding**

The Parochial Church Council has adopted the Diocesan and Church of England policies in this regard.

**ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Gibbons', written over a dotted line.

Rev H Gibbons (Chairman) - Parochial Church Council member

17th March 2025

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**  
**TO THE P.C.C. OF ST OSWALD, KING AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

This report on the financial statements of the P.C.C. for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, which are set out on pages 4 to 15 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

**RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE P.C.C. AND INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

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

It is my responsibility to

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

**BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the P.C.C. and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT**

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

- 1) which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
  - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



R Harvey-Robson F.C.C.A.  
Adenhurst  
Abbey Road  
Llangollen  
LL20 8SS

17th March 2025

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

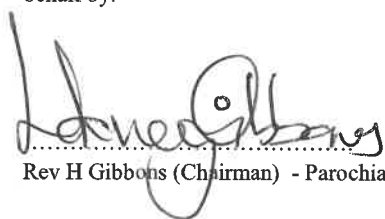
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £	* See note 10 for full comparatives
<b>Incoming Resources</b>						
Donations and Legacies	2a	115,180	973	116,153	183,433	
Charitable Activities	2b	18,481	7,372	25,853	26,933	
Other Trading Activities	2c	12,028	-	12,028	12,943	
Investments	2d	22,538	-	22,538	21,290	
<b>Total</b>		<b>168,227</b>	<b>8,345</b>	<b>176,572</b>	<b>244,599</b>	
<b>Resources Expended</b>						
Raising Funds	3a	-	6,629	6,629	8,800	
Charitable Activities	3b	159,256	3,112	162,368	157,706	
<b>Total</b>		<b>159,256</b>	<b>9,741</b>	<b>168,997</b>	<b>166,506</b>	
Net gain/(losses) on investment		11,647	-	11,647	10,622	
Depreciation on fixed assets, charity's own use		(4,582)	-	(4,582)	(4,582)	
Net Income/(Expenditure)		16,036	(1,396)	14,640	84,133	
Transfer between funds		(2,293)	2,293	-	-	
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>13,743</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>14,640</b>	<b>84,133</b>	
<b>Total funds brought forward (1st Jan)</b>		<b>761,797</b>	<b>69,357</b>	<b>831,154</b>	<b>747,021</b>	
<b>Total funds carried forward (31st Dec)</b>		<b>775,540</b>	<b>70,254</b>	<b>845,794</b>	<b>831,154</b>	

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Balance Sheet  
At 31st December 2024**

	Notes	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Assets	5a	13,745	18,327
Investment Assets	5b	678,604	666,957
		<u>692,349</u>	<u>685,284</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Bank current accounts		-	-
Bank deposit accounts		126,832	123,402
CBF deposit fund		32,419	25,983
Cash		199	117
Stocks		511	125
Debtors		16,119	10,358
		<u>176,080</u>	<u>159,985</u>
<b>Liabilities due in one year</b>			
Bank current accounts		(4,898)	(1,239)
Creditors	6	<u>(17,737)</u>	<u>(12,876)</u>
<b>Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)</b>		<u>153,445</u>	<u>145,870</u>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<u><u>845,794</u></u>	<u><u>831,154</u></u>
<b>Parish Funds</b>	8		
Unrestricted funds		775,540	761,797
Restricted funds		70,254	69,357
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<u><u>845,794</u></u>	<u><u>831,154</u></u>

The financial statements were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 17th March 2025 and were signed on it's behalf by:



Rev H Gibbons (Chairman) - Parochial Church Council member



D P Evison FCA - Chairman of Finance Committee and Treasurer

The attached notes form part of these financial statements

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**1 Accounting Policies**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP) and applicable accounting standard FRS102.

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

**Cash Flow Statement**

The Charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement on the grounds that the income does not exceed £500,000.

**Description of Funds**

**Restricted funds** comprise of two elements:-

- a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest
- b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

**Unrestricted funds** are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purpose.

**Incoming Resources**

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

**Resources Expended**

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

**Fixed Assets**

Consecrated and Benefice Property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10 ( 2 ) ( a ) & ( C ) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the Church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time).

For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Depreciation is charged as follows;

Sound System - 20% Straight Line Basis.

**Investments**

Investments are valued at market value on 31st December.

**Investment property**

Investment property is shown at the most recent valuation. Any aggregate surplus or deficit arising from changes in the market value is transferred to a revaluation reserve.

**Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

**Taxation**

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

**Hire purchase and leasing commitments**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.



**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>2a Donations and Legacies</b>				
<i>Voluntary Income/Receipts</i>				
1 Tax efficient planned giving	55,960	-	55,960	56,217
Other planned giving	7,504	-	7,504	5,420
2 Collections at services	13,907	-	13,907	14,511
3 All other giving and voluntary receipts including special appeals	16,836	973	17,809	13,821
Gift Aid Recovered	17,429	-	17,429	18,017
Legacies received	3,544	-	3,544	75,447
	<u>115,180</u>	<u>973</u>	<u>116,153</u>	<u>183,433</u>
<b>1) Analysis of Tax efficient planned giving</b>				£
Bank Donations				35,880
Regular Envelopes				<u>20,080</u>
				<u>55,960</u>
<b>2) Analysis of Collections at services</b>				£
White Envelopes				3,746
Loose plate collections				8,120
Collections - Baptisms				845
Collections - Home Communion				231
Collections - Weddings				-
Collections - Special				<u>965</u>
				<u>13,907</u>
<b>3) Analysis of all other giving and voluntary receipts including special appeals</b>				£
Donations - Church				4,180
Donations - Charities				800
Donations - Organ Fund - Restricted				68
Donations - Organ Fund - Unrestricted				1,492
Donations - Flower Fund				195
Wall safes				4,313
Donations - Funerals				3,073
Donations - Place of Welcome				338
Donations - Bell Training - Restricted				905
Donations - Under 5's				280
Donations - Anniversary Events				<u>2,165</u>
				<u>17,809</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS CONTINUED:**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>2b Charitable Activities</b>				
<i>Church Activities</i>				
Statutory Fees (retained by PCC)	11,693	400	12,093	12,921
Summer Fete	-	-	-	-
Fundraising Activities	6,788	6,972	13,760	14,012
	<u>18,481</u>	<u>7,372</u>	<u>25,853</u>	<u>26,933</u>
<b>2c Other Trading Activities</b>				
<i>Activities for Generating Funds</i>				
Church Hall Hire	246	-	246	336
Church Lettings	2,170	-	2,170	2,820
Lower Brook Street Rent	8,400	-	8,400	8,400
Lichfield Diocesan - Decorator's Scheme	-	-	-	-
Parish Magazine & Bookstall	1,212	-	1,212	1,387
	<u>12,028</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,028</u>	<u>12,943</u>
<b>2d Investments</b>				
Dividends	19,407	-	19,407	19,288
Bank Interest	3,131	-	3,131	2,002
	<u>22,538</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,538</u>	<u>21,290</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>168,227</u>	<u>8,345</u>	<u>176,572</u>	<u>244,599</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**EXPENDITURE ON:**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>3a Raising Funds</b>				
<i>Costs of Generating Income</i>				
Fetes & Fundraising	-	6,629	6,629	8,800
	-	6,629	6,629	8,800
<b>3b Charitable Activities</b>				
<i>Church Activities</i>				
Mission giving and donations	6,125	-	6,125	7,606
Diocesan Parish Share	46,672	-	46,672	45,757
Salaries/Wages	29,660	255	29,915	25,401
Clergy and Staff Expenses	12,001	-	12,001	7,591
<i>Church Expenses</i>				
Church running expenses	10,933	-	10,933	18,026
Church utility bills	24,447	-	24,447	20,114
Cost of trading	16,349	2,857	19,206	16,165
<i>Major Capital Expenditure</i>				
Major Repairs to the Church	9,295	-	9,295	13,493
<i>Governance Costs</i>	3,774	-	3,774	3,553
	159,256	3,112	162,368	157,706
<b>TOTAL</b>	159,256	9,741	168,997	166,506

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**4a STAFF COSTS**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries	<u>29,915</u>	<u>25,401</u>

During the year the PCC employed the following members of the PCC:

	31.12.24	31.12.23
	£	£
Mr M Donkin	7,780	5,673
Ms C Boulton	<u>6,880</u>	<u>6,552</u>
	<u>14,660</u>	<u>12,225</u>

There were no other transactions made in respect of PCC Members, no PCC Member received benefit, or reimbursement of travelling or other expenses.

**5a FIXED ASSETS**

	Freehold Buildings £	Church Equipment £	Total £
<b>At Cost</b>			
As at 1st January 2024	-	22,909	22,909
Additions in the Year	-	-	-
Disposals in the Year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Value at 31st December 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>22,909</u>	<u>22,909</u>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>			
As at 1st January 2024	-	4,582	4,582
Charge for the Year	-	4,582	4,582
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
As at 31st December 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>9,164</u>	<u>9,164</u>
<b>Net Book Value at 31st December 2024</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,745</u>	<u>13,745</u>
<b>Net Book Value at 31st December 2023</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,327</u>	<u>18,327</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**5b INVESTMENT ASSETS**

	At 1.1.24 £	Additions £	Disposals £	Transfers £	Change in Market Value £	At 31.12.24 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
Investments	385,580	-	-	499	11,647	397,726
Investment Property - 14 Lower Brook Street	220,000	-	-	-	-	220,000
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
Investments	61,377	-	-	(499)	-	60,878
<b>Total</b>	<u>666,957</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,647</u>	<u>678,604</u>

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

The unlisted investments are made up of the following:

	31.12.24 £	31.12.23 £
Church of England Investment Fund	160,217	156,632
Church of England Fixed Interest Fund	26,153	25,386
M&G Charifund	188,735	183,940
Lichfield Diocesan Trust	83,500	81,000
	<u>458,605</u>	<u>446,958</u>

**INVESTMENT PROPERTY**

	£
<b>MARKET VALUE</b>	
At 1st January 2024	220,000
Additional Expenditure	-
Change in Market Value	-
At 31st December 2024	<u>220,000</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>	
At 31st December 2024	<u>220,000</u>
At 31st December 2023	<u>220,000</u>

During 2011 the deeds at 14 Lower Brook Street were discovered to have been transferred into The PCC's name.  
In light of this, the property has been brought into the accounts in 2011 at the then current market value of £160,000.00.

**6 LIABILITIES**

*Amounts falling due in one year*

	2024 £	2023 £
Accruals of Utilities	2,083	2,363
Other Creditors	15,654	10,513
	<u>17,737</u>	<u>12,876</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**7 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS**

	General Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Fixed Assets	13,745	-	13,745
Investments Assets	617,727	60,878	678,605
Current Assets	166,706	9,376	176,082
Current Liabilities	(22,635)	-	(22,635)
	<u>775,543</u>	<u>70,254</u>	<u>845,797</u>

**STOCKS**

	2024 £	2023 £
Stocks (Prayer Cards & Notelets etc)	<u>511</u>	<u>125</u>

**DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments	1,482	1,430
Dividend Income	1,600	3,500
Gift Aid	8,063	4,336
Other debtors	<u>4,974</u>	<u>1,092</u>
	<u>16,119</u>	<u>10,358</u>

**8 FUNDS RECONCILIATION**

	Reserves at 1.1.24 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Investment Gain/Losses £	Transfer between funds £	Reserves at 31.12.24 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>						
General Fund	761,797	171,149	(162,178)	7,065	(2,293)	775,540
<b>Restricted Funds</b>						
Organ Fund	1 3,738	68	-	-	140	3,946
Flower Fund	2 1,109	-	-	-	41	1,150
Morris Fund	3 145	-	-	-	-	145
Wilfred Owen Fund	4 781	-	-	-	29	810
Vicar's Discretionary Fund for People in Need	5 567	-	-	-	-	567
For the Assistance of the Sick or Needy Parishioners Fund	6 9,640	-	-	-	360	10,000
Oswestry St Ann's Fund	7 12,898	-	-	-	482	13,380
Sunday School Fund	8 492	-	-	-	-	492
Vicar's Discretionary Beautification Fund	9 105	-	-	-	-	105
Boulton Trust Fund	10 16,013	-	-	-	598	16,611
Friends of Music / Choral Foundation	11 9	5,425	(4,733)	-	-	701
Bellringers	12 3,110	1,412	(1,069)	-	-	3,453
Bellringers - Bell Training	13 937	905	-	-	-	1,842
Ladies Group	14 1,713	535	(1,082)	-	-	1,166
Christmas Day Lunch	15 905	-	-	-	-	905
Morda School House Trust	16 17,195	-	(2,857)	-	643	14,981
	<u>69,357</u>	<u>8,345</u>	<u>(9,741)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,293</u>	<u>70,254</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>831,154</u>	<u>179,494</u>	<u>(171,919)</u>	<u>7,065</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>845,794</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Gains and Losses £	Movement in Funds £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
General Fund	171,149	(162,178)	7,065	16,036
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Organ Fund	68	-	-	68
Flower Fund	-	-	-	-
Morris Fund	-	-	-	-
Wilfred Owen Fund	-	-	-	-
Vicar's Discretionary Fund for People in Need	-	-	-	-
For the Assistance of the Sick or Needy Parishioners Fund	-	-	-	-
Oswestry St Ann's Fund	-	-	-	-
Sunday School Fund	-	-	-	-
Vicar's Discretionary Beautification Fund	-	-	-	-
Boulton Trust Fund	-	-	-	-
Friends of Music/Choral Foundation	5,425	(4,733)	-	692
Bellringers	1,412	(1,069)	-	343
Bellringers - Bell Training	905	-	-	905
Ladies Group	535	(1,082)	-	(547)
Morda School House Trust	-	(2,857)	-	(2,857)
	<u>8,345</u>	<u>(9,741)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,396)</u>
<b>TOTAL NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<u>179,494</u>	<u>(171,919)</u>	<u>7,065</u>	<u>14,640</u>

**NOTES TO THE FUNDS**

***Restricted Funds***

**1) Organ Fund**

This is used to maintain the organ in St Oswald's church.

**2) Flower Fund**

This fund is held to enable flowers to be purchased for the church throughout the year.

**3) Morris Fund**

This fund is used for the upkeep of a memorial.

**4) Wilfred Owen Fund**

This fund is held for the upkeep of the Wilfred Owen memorial.

**5) Vicar's Discretionary Fund for People In Need**

This fund is for small gifts for people in need at Vicar's discretion.

**6) Sick or Needy Parishioners Fund**

This fund is to be used to assist parishioners of St Oswald's in times of poor health and hardship. The funds were given to St Oswald's in a fellow parishioner's will.

**7) Oswestry St Ann's Fund**

This was generated from the sale of St Ann's chapel at Morda and is held to be used for capital projects.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**8) Sunday School Fund**

This fund is held to support the Sunday School at St Oswald's church.

**9) Vicar's Discretionary Beautification Fund**

This fund is held for capital projects.

**10) Boulton Trust Fund**

This fund is held for capital projects.

**11) Friends of Music / Choral Foundation Fund**

This fund is used for the Friends of Music Group.

**12) Bellringers Fund**

This fund is used for the Bellringers group.

**13) Bellringers - Bell Training Fund**

This fund was established to assist Bellringers training.

**14) Ladies Group**

This fund is used for the ladies fellowship group.

**15) Christmas Day Lunch**

This fund was established to provide funds for the Christmas Day Lunch Project.

**16) Morda School House Trust**

This fund is to be used for youth and family work within our Parish.

**9 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES**

Mr D. P. Evison, F.C.A. is a partner in Garner Pugh & Sinclair who are paid £3,145 plus VAT (£3,774) for Accounting and Administration services.



**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING  
AND MARTYR, OSWESTRY**

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

**10 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES COMPARATIVES (PREVIOUS YEAR)**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>			
Donations and Legacies	182,780	653	183,433
Charitable Activities	18,769	8,164	26,933
Other Trading Activities	12,943	-	12,943
Investments	21,290	-	21,290
<b>Total</b>	<b>235,782</b>	<b>8,817</b>	<b>244,599</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>			
Raising Funds	-	8,800	8,800
Charitable Activities	153,531	4,175	157,706
<b>Total</b>	<b>153,531</b>	<b>12,975</b>	<b>166,506</b>
Net gain/(losses) on investment	10,622	-	10,622
Depreciation on fixed assets, charity's own use	(4,582)	-	(4,582)
Net Income/(Expenditure)	88,291	(4,158)	84,133
Transfer between funds	(2,220)	2,220	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>86,071</b>	<b>(1,938)</b>	<b>84,133</b>
<b>Total funds brought forward (1st Jan)</b>	<b>675,726</b>	<b>71,295</b>	<b>747,021</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward (31st Dec)</b>	<b>761,797</b>	<b>69,357</b>	<b>831,154</b>



**THE PARISH CHURCH OF  
ST OSWALD, KING & MARTYR, OSWESTRY  
The Parish Office, Church Street, Oswestry, SY11 2SY**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL  
2025 for the year 2024**

The PCC cooperates with the Incumbent in the whole mission of the church according to the call of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. As part of the Synodical structure of the Church of England, the PCC makes known and puts into effect any provision made by the Diocesan or Deanery Synods and gives advice to these synods on any matters the PCC considers appropriate. The PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of the church; the PCC draws up a budget and has the responsibility with the Incumbent of appointing, paying and dismissing paid officers of the parish. The PCC is responsible for the care, maintenance, preservation and insurance of the fabric of the Parish Church and the adjacent Parish Centre; a house at 14 Lower Brook Street, Oswestry is in the beneficial ownership of the Parochial Church Council, vested in the Diocesan Trust and is normally let to tenants. As a parish within the Diocese of Lichfield, it follows the Bishop's Three Primary Tasks of Discipleship, Evangelism and Vocation.

Membership of the PCC is as follows:

**(a) Ex-Officio**

Incumbent: *Vicar of St Oswald, King & Martyr, Oswestry* – Rev'd H L Gibbons, M.A.  
Licensed Ministers: Rev Yin-An Chen (resigned 31<sup>st</sup> October), Rev. Jassica Castillo-Burley.

Churchwardens: Miss E. J. Williams, Mrs M. Jones, Mr A. Neale, Mr J. Abram

**Deanery Synod Representatives (*elected in 2024*)**

Mrs M. Crosby, Mrs L. Clarke, Ms Fiona Pearson & Mr Jonathan Abbatt

**b) Elected Representatives**

To serve until 2025: Mr D.P Evison, Ms C. Boulton.

To serve until 2026: Mrs J. Chesworth, Mrs Jenifer Chippet-Williams, Mr Richard Major, Ms Sally Wright, Mr Paul Crosby, Mr M. Donkin

To serve until 2027: Miss Chloe Fraser, Mrs Anne Pilsbury, Mrs Samantha Hart, Miss Sigourney Merrony-Potton, Mr David Smith, Ms Sandy Best, Mrs Angela Earl-Saddiq

**(c) Co-opted Representatives**

None

Under arrangements in force since the late 1980's and modified in 2002, five people are elected each year, for a term of three years.

#### Officers of the Council

The Vicar, as Incumbent is the legal Chairman of the Council

The Lay-co Chair of the Council is Mr Alan Neale

The Hon. Secretary to the Council is Ms Carron Boulton

The Hon. Treasurer to the Council is Mr Paul Evison

The Electoral Roll Officer is Mrs Maureen Crosby

#### Sub Committees of the Council

The Vicar is ex officio on all sub committees listed below:

##### Standing Committee (the sole statutory Sub Committee)

The Vicar, Two Churchwardens; Lay Co-Chair; Hon. Secretary; Hon. Treasurer – all ex officio Mr P Crosby, Mrs L Clarke.

Other sub committees include representatives appointed by the PCC from among their number, normally including one Churchwarden (at least) signified by “\*”

Building and Fabric Committee – the full term of reference is available on request and the membership is as follows: Mr P. Crosby (Chair), Mr P. Evison, Mr C. Tansley, Mr A. Neale\*, Mr M. Clarke, Mr P. Walley, Mr D Smith.

Finance Committee – the full terms of reference are available on request and the membership is as follows: Mr P. Evison (Chair), Mr M. Donkin, Cdr M. Peters (Gift Aid), Mr A. Clarke, Mr E. Evans, J. Abram\*.

Parish Centre Management Committee to manage the daily running of the Centre and its staff – Mr A. Neale\* (Chair), Ms Carron Boulton (Booking Secretary), Mr M. Wilson and Mrs E. Leek.

Events Committee with a focus on fellowship – Miss J. Williams\*.

Mission and Giving Group – Rev. H. Gibbons, Mrs A. Pilsbury, Mrs L. Clarke, Mr H. Jones.

Mission and Ministry Team – Rev. H. Gibbons, Mrs L. Clarke, Mrs P. Willing, Mrs G. Evison, Ms S. Wright, Rev'd J. Castillo-Burley.

Sick and Needy Fund – Rev H. Gibbons, Mr P. Crosby, Mrs M. Jones.

The PCC appoints representatives to the local ecumenical body Churches Together in Oswestry and District. A total of two including the clergy are allowed according to the revised constitution of Churches Together adopted in 2012. Those nominated at the Annual Meeting were The Vicar and Mrs A Pilsbury who agreed to fill in when called upon to do so.

### **The Parish**

The population of Oswestry according to the 2021 Census is 17,509 of which 10,700 live in the parochial parish of St Oswald, King & Martyr. The Electoral Roll at 29 April 2023 stood at 255. Thanks are due to Mrs Maureen Crosby for encouraging membership of the electoral roll. Average Sunday Adult attendance for the year stood at 261. Under the age of 16 years – 15.

### **Incumbent's Review of the Year**

It has been another fascinating year, a mixture of extraordinary celebrations and some farewells. It would be fair to say that 2024 was shaped significantly by three significant events: my sabbatical from February until May, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victorian restoration of the church building, and the departure of the Rev'd Yin-An Chen, our curate.

Unusually, my sabbatical included Easter, the first time I had been able to celebrate it alongside my family for 25 years. From a personal perspective, the time away allowed me to reflect on a quarter of a century's ministry in seven benefices along with diocesan and national church roles. It also provided a time to reflect on lay ministry and my role as Warden of Readers in the Diocese of Lichfield. My sabbatical also marked the beginning of the end of Rev'd Yin-An Chen's time with us as our curate; Yin-An and Tim left Oswestry for the diocese of London where Yin-An will continue his training. I am extremely grateful for the way the clergy team and the church wardens enabled worship, governance, and pastoral care to continue during my sabbatical, and particularly in dealing so well with Yin-An's sudden absence from Easter.

Pastoral care of church members and non-members alike continues to be a priority, and I am grateful for the support I receive from the clergy team and the dedicated pastoral care group. Naturally, there is always more we could do. Place of Welcome and Under-5's continued to provide a safe space and pastoral support to those who attended. The home-communion team continued to grow both in membership and in outreach to people in their own homes, and in residential care homes.

The sesquicentennial (150<sup>th</sup>) anniversary of the Victorian renovation of St. Oswalds filled the summer with a variety of events. The anniversary is reported in more detail elsewhere in this annual report so I will not dwell on it here except to say an enormous 'thankyou' to everyone who worked so hard to make it the huge success that it was.

Our work with local schools is an important element within our ministry to the wider community. As in previous years, it primarily involved working with Morda Primary School, Oswestry School and providing weekly 'Prayer & Praise' sessions at Derwen College. However, we also welcomed the Bishop of Shrewsbury who presided over our confirmation Eucharist which included 6 Moreton Hall School pupils alongside 3 of our own candidates.

Within our mission to the wider town, our relationship continues to grow with the Orthodox communities from Shrewsbury and Chester who use the Lady Chapel for a service of Divine liturgy. The annual walk to, and blessing of, St. Oswalds Well in August proved very successful, and it was a joy to hear the well blessed in the Orthodox tradition. Our civic ministry to the town of Oswestry included a service to

commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings in June 1944 along with the usual Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day services. The placing of Remembrance crosses on the war graves in Oswestry Cemetery involved pupils from Woodside Primary School along with the Combined Cadets from Oswestry School.

As usual, Christmas brought the year to an end, and it was a joy to welcome again local schools for their Christmas services alongside our full array of Advent and Christmas acts of worship.

I will end as I always do by stating my personal thanks to everyone who has worked so hard during the past twelve months; my clergy colleagues, the Church Wardens and PCC, our caretaker and maintenance team, the choir and music team, the flower arrangers and all who contribute to our worship, along with all those who quietly get on with things behind the scenes without making a fuss.

**Harvey Gibbons**

### **Churchwardens Report 2024**

The first 3 months of the year were busier than ever for the Churchwardens who were left in overall charge as Vicar Harvey took a well-earned 3 months Sabbatical. The year began with the Wardens having to resolve the difficulties arising from the decision not to allow the Parish Church to be used as a focus point for Oswestry's Pride Celebrations in June.

However, attention soon returned to planning the busy programme of events for celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Restoration of the Church in 1874. An Opening Concert on the 6<sup>th</sup> July was followed by a Service on the 7<sup>th</sup> to mark the start of the celebrations. A varied programme of events then followed throughout July, August, September and October, including well attended concerts, talks, bellringing, and a Teddy Bear Zip Wire event. In August we hosted the Knitted Bible display which drew in many visitors from near and far and was very well received. A busy summer for all involved.

Despite increases in postal charges our Charity Christmas Card Shop remained well supported by the public and income from sales once again enabled us to support over 20 local and national charities.

We look forward to the implementation of the Building & Fabric Committee's maintenance and development programme planned to begin in 2025 which should help ensure the long-term viability of our Church and the Parish Centre.

Congregation numbers continued to return to pre-Covid levels and once again we thank all the many hard-working volunteers who assist us to ensure things run smoothly and that we continue to be a welcoming Church for everyone.

**June, Muriel, Alan, John**

### **Secretary's Report for the year 2024**

Quarterly meetings have taken place in person in the Parish Hall. Overall attendance of PCC meetings has been very good.

We have discussed many issues this year, with the 150th anniversary celebrations being a big point. We also discussed finance, and our carbon footprint and what we can do to reduce it.

Communion is still being dealt with effectively with sanitising of the servers hands before they offer communion to communicants.

St Oswalds conducted only 3 wedding ceremonies this year, with another 3 having been cancelled for one reason or another.

22 Baptisms took place throughout this year as well as Moreton Hall School confirmation. The clergy registered 61 funeral services conducted either at St Oswalds or in a local crematorium/cemetery and conducted by a member of the St Oswalds associate clergy team.

This year, saw us have a record number of new PCC members join the committee all bringing unique qualities and skill sets. Our committee now stands with 24 members.

Our Curate left us this year however our clergy team remains strong.

**Carron Boulton - Secretary**

### **Annual report on Acolyte's / Servers**

Once again, I am delighted to be able to give a positive report on the strength of our committed team of Acolyte's / Servers. These are people who enjoy serving our Lord at the Altar with reverence. I have a very loyal team who I find are a great pleasure to work with and are willing to give up their time on Sundays and other occasions.

I am always looking for more people who feel that they may have this calling to Acolyte especially some of our young people.

I am also looking for anyone who would be prepared to be trained to serve at the 8am service on the third Sunday of the month.

Our team are: Samantha, Louise, Bridget, Carron, Chloe, Ruth, Sally W. Sally R.

Crucifer: Garry. Reserve's: Bruce, David. Choral evensong: David.

8am Servers: Paul

Chalice administer: Garry, Samantha, Bruce, Ruth, Carron, Mike, Sally W., Sally R.

The Holy Eucharist is the centre of our Sacramental life and it is a privilege that we with reverence, joy and great gladness worship our blessed Lord at the Altar.

**Mike Jones**

### **Altar linen report**

Last year I reported that much of the Altar linen needed to be replaced and that we had purchased two new Altar cloths for the Lady chapel.

I also made an appeal for certain items that the Church required, I am extremely grateful to the response, a small Ciborium has been given in memory of the late Mair Bowen donated by Bill and his family.

A set of green vestments and green altar panels for the Lady Chapel together with a restored red Frontal, a new purple frontal and also two new white High Altar cloths were given in memory of Vera and Walter Wasteney donated by Christine and Peter Wasteney. The restoration and work done on the panels and frontals was created and made by Christine Wasteney.

The Church is still in need of a new set of white vestments which are not, I might add, cheap if anyone would like to donate in memory of a loved one or a special anniversary please contact either myself or the vicar.

Once again, I would like to thank Muriel for washing the purificators and other linen week by week.

Thank you all for the love and support that you give to St. Oswalds Parish Church for the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Mike Jones**

### **Sidespeople**

It is with grateful thanks from the church wardens to the team for their loyal support and assistance throughout the year.

This years sides people are: Val Hamer, Olive Morris, Dilys Lloyd, Wendy and Mike Peters, Sue and Colin Tansley, Ann Sagar, Carol Burke, David and Margaret Smith, Fran Stocking, Sally Wright and Natasha Bell.

If anyone else would like to join our fabulous team, please see June Williams

**June Williams**

### **Church Cleaning**

We have had another busy year keeping the church clean and tidy. It was a challenging time when the renovation / repair work was carried out on the walls.

We have had to new volunteers this year for whom we are very grateful. If there is anyone else interested in joining us, particularly to help with the brass cleaning, please let Natasha know.

We have great support from Matt, Mike, Colin, Peter and David and we thank them all very much for this.



Finally, we continue to have many lovely comments about the clean and tidy state of St Oswalds Church.

**Natasha & Muriel**

### **Building And Fabric Committee Report**

Members of the committee are now Sue Tansley (Secretary), Colin Tansley, Peter Walley, David Smith, Paul Evison, Alan Neale, Rev'd Harvey Gibbons, Paul Crosby (Chairman). The committee has been very active throughout the year.

The Church Architect advised that he was reducing his workload and has suggested that we appoint a new Architect before the next Quinquennial Inspection due in 2027.

Mindful of the Church of England's target to be Carbon Neutral by 2030, the committee gained PCC approval to develop a programme of work over the next 5 – 6 years in an attempt to achieve this target date at St Oswald's.

It was recognised that there were limits to what could be achieved practically within the ancient building of St Oswald and it was felt that focusing on the windows, roof and walls of the uninsulated Parish Centre would have greater impact in reducing our carbon footprint so it was agreed that the Parish Centre should have a higher priority. It was also felt that, despite the extra time taken to seek separate Faculty permissions for the windows, roof and walls, it was a sensible approach in that any delay in seeking faculty permission for one would not delay the whole project. A Faculty has been sought to fit double glazed units in the windows.

The roof of the Parish Centre has no insulation and, coupled with the number of leaks after heavy rain, a new roof with insulation is seen as yet another priority.

We have been in discussion with contractors and initially sought estimates for the windows and roof covering.

The boilers in the church and the parish centre were serviced after some new parts had been fitted. However, further part failures have at times resulted in heating from only two of the five Church boiler modules working. The Church boilers are now 20 years old and have been less reliable. Maintenance is further complicated by some parts becoming obsolete and have had to be replaced with non-standard parts. Three contractors have been approached to establish the level of costs involved in replacing the church boilers before there is a total failure during winter months. We hope to achieve this as a planned way during summer 2025 depending on the availability of funding.

We had hoped that the Church Lighting would last until 2026/2027 however there was continued concern that switches on the lighting control panel had become obsolete and the new smaller replacement panel was impractical because there was insufficient space in the smaller panels for the amount of wiring involved within the church. However, our church electrician devised a way of fabricating a new front panel to house the new smaller switches whilst retaining the existing control panel.

Additionally, the component parts of the SON (sodium) lights were also obsolete and following failures in both the Choir and the Lady Chapel on separate Sunday mornings. Attempts were made to introduce LED lighting but the biggest wattage LED lights were insufficient to generate the light levels to an acceptable standard so experiments have been made using floodlights. These brought the light levels to the required standard for the congregation but the 100watt floodlights offered only minimal savings to our carbon footprint.

Redecoration of several areas in the church was seen as a priority with the change of lighting. Following work in St George's Chapel last year a need for plastering behind the heating pipes was identified and a local plasterer engaged to repair not only that area but several other areas around the church where remedial action was needed were re-plastered with lime plaster before any redecoration could be undertaken.

A new Electricity 3-year contract with British Gas Lite was signed last year until 2026. St Oswald's has benefitted throughout the year from being locked into a 5-year Gas contract ending February 2025. A new Gas contract has been signed, also with British Gas, but is at a significantly higher rate.

VAT totalling £1,362, which had already been paid on eligible work, has been reclaimed under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. Paul Crosby made representation on behalf of St Oswald's to the Secretary of State DCMS, Rt. Hon. Lisa Nandy, that the LPWGS should be extended beyond 31 March 2025. Following our representation, we heard in January 2025 that the scheme has been extended for 12 months.

A new contract has been negotiated for servicing of the Fire Extinguishers. The Parish Centre Lift, Organ and Clock have all been serviced. A new contract is about to be signed for maintenance of the Turret Clock and Bells. All portable appliances in the church have been tested (PAT testing) and are safe to use.

Though thanks are due to the whole committee, particular thanks must go to David Smith who has co-ordinated the efforts to progress work on reducing our carbon footprint and who, along with Colin Tansley and Peter Walley have undertaken 'self-help' works and on-going maintenance throughout the year.

**Paul Crosby, Chairman**

### **Parish Centre Report**

There has been an increase in the use of the Centre, with the Under-5s group now meeting twice a week and a number of new outside lettings. We were particularly pleased to welcome back the Brownies to the Centre, who are very appreciative of the facilities we offer. There have also been dance classes, talks and meetings, and children's birthday parties. The Centre has also been used for wakes following funerals in church.

Bookings are now managed by the church administrator with a booking form available for download from the church website.

The heating system has generally worked satisfactorily. The dishwasher continues to sporadically underperform and its future useful life may now need to be considered.

The Building and Fabric Committee continues to take forward planning for improvements to the building to make it more energy efficient.

**Elaine Leek - Parish Centre Management Committee**

### **Place Of Welcome**

The Place of Welcome drop-in on a Tuesday morning was held 51 times during 2024, snow in November forcing the first ever closure in our history. We have continued to welcome guests from both the community and the church family. Numbers fluctuate, with some regular weekly attenders and others who drop in only periodically, but there is always good conversation to be had. We had Hot Cross Buns in Holy Week and in December Haydn Jones played Christmas music for us at our mince pie morning, which was very well attended.

Place of Welcome again registered as a 'Warm Welcome Space' available to anyone in our community who might be struggling to be warm at home. We continue to support the Foodbank from donations made by guests, and in 2024 also sent money to the UNICEF Gaza fund, the Hurricane Beryl emergency appeal, a project run by Crisis in Liverpool helping prisoners who might be released into homelessness and also the Crisis at Christmas appeal.

Place of Welcome could not be possible without our nine cheerful volunteers on the kitchen rota, to whom thanks are due.

**Elaine Leek**

### **Ladies Group Report For The Year 2024**

The Committee consists of:

Chair: June Williams

Secretary: Ann Sagar

Treasurer: Glenda Evison

Over 30 members

The members have enjoyed a wide range of speakers also a summer afternoon tea and a Christmas lunch both held at the Derwen Training College.

Friendship and Fellowship are important as are the endless cups of tea, coffee, biscuits and sometimes cake.

As usual members have helped out at church events including Place of Welcome, Sunday coffee.

We encourage and welcome Ladies to join us at our meetings on the first Monday of the month at 2.30 p.m. in the Parish Centre.

**June Williams**

### **Mothers' Union Fellowship Group**

We are a small group now who meet in the Parish Centre on the second Thursday of the month. As we cannot any longer afford to pay, we have to rely on speakers who do not require a fee. Despite this last year we had a fairly varied programme with Harvey taking a Eucharist, Mike Donkin and Jassica both speaking. A talk about Tiwan by our Curate and two visits to Bluebell View Residential Home, one at Christmas to share carols and readings with them. The remaining meetings we had talks provided by the members with discussions amongst ourselves.

**Pam Musson**

### **Bible Study Group**

It has been another enjoyable year of reading, learning, and earnest discussion during our bible studies.

Particular highlights have been a visit by Father Phil, when we learned more about his ministry; and listening to lectures given by David Solomon, a Jewish theologian on "Women in Judaism". We have tried to widen our topics by including a study relating to the Jewish faith thus broadening our knowledge of the origins of Christianity.

We were saddened to hear of the death of one of our previous and valued members Ann Solway, who hosted the group for several years.

**Sally Wright - on behalf of Monday's bible study group**

### **St Oswald's Church Choir Including The St. Oswald's Singers and the Scholars & Gentlemen Chamber Choir**

The choir numbers are as follows:-

10 Trebles / Sopranos (2 fewer than last year)  
4 Altos  
2 Tenors and  
4 Basses.

During the year the choir has sung 71 services. Despite the smaller numbers the Choir has maintained the high standard of music that does so much to support the services.

The St. Oswald's Singers, our informal group who sing when the choir is unavailable, sang 11 services. This group has gone from strength to strength and is much appreciated for providing a lead for the services in the Choir's absence.

The major event this year was the festival to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Restoration of the Church. This ran from 6th July until 13th October with many events and displays.

Music played a large part in the festival. The Choir sang two choral services to open the Festival on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July (Eucharist and Choral Evensong) and they sang the Closing service on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October in the presence of the Bishop of Lichfield.

There were 7 concerts, four of which formed a group entitled 'Music for a Summer's Evening'.

The Scholars & Gentlemen sang the opening concert on 6<sup>th</sup> July and one of the Summer's Evening concerts on 31<sup>st</sup> August. The Choir gave the final concert on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October, entitled 'What we really do' a programme of music that the Choir has sung for services but which is worthy of the concert hall. The programme comprised, among others, music by Haydn, Mozart and Handel and included a performance of the famous 'Miserere' by Allegri. A highlight was the performance of the 'Pie Jesu' from the Fauré and Lloyd Webber Requiems beautifully rendered by Eleri Roberts and Aoife Brennan.

It is a mark of the Choir's ability and stamina that they were able to sing such a demanding concert and then the next day sing to the same high standard for the Closing Service.

The festival apart, the Choir gave a performance of the Fauré 'Requiem' in the evening of Remembrance Sunday (10<sup>th</sup> November) and for the first time since the Covid lockdown we were able to put on a full Advent Carol Service on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December with the Choir processing by candlelight through the church as the service unfolded. Finally, a splendid Nine Lessons & Carols with 19 items sung by the choir was given to a packed church on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, followed by a splendid Midnight Mass and Christmas morning just two days later.

The Choristers work hard but the rewards, in terms of a free education in singing and musicianship is very worthwhile. I recommend the choir to any child who loves to sing. You would be surprised how many professional singers from the worlds of classical, jazz and pop started their careers in a church choir.

In July we lost two of our senior choristers. Alice Williams left to begin her studies at Birmingham University and Myles Wilkinson left to take up a place with a Choral Scholarship at Summerville College, Oxford. Fortunately, like other ex-choristers, they returned during the university holidays and sang with us for the Christmas season.

On the credit side an ex-chorister, Jools Brennan, having graduated from Chester University, rejoined the Choir as a bass. It has been great to have Jools back with us, albeit for a short time as he leaves next September to do a Master's Degree at Queen's University, Belfast.

Now I must turn to some sadder news. On 17<sup>th</sup> November we lost a long-standing chairman and friend when John Moore died in a tragic car accident while driving to Oswestry to sing for Choral Evensong. Choral music was John's great love. He had performed in a concert given by the Scholars & Gentlemen the previous evening and had sung again for the Sunday morning at St. Oswald's. It was a huge shock to hear of his death the next day.

John joined the choir in 2009 and had become the Choir's leading tenor. He is and will be sorely missed. A full Choir sang for John's funeral which included pieces that he had requested and others which I knew had a special place in his heart.

We have lost a committed member who always put the church and choir first and Kate and I have lost a very dear friend. May he rest in peace.

**Mike Donkin**  
**Director of Music**

### **Churches Together In Oswestry District**

In January St Oswald's hosted a prayer meeting in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Then in March members participated in a service at St Martin's devised by Palestinian women for the World Day of Prayer. It made the struggle in the Holy Land feel very real.

As usual on Good Friday CTOD took their trailer to the Bailey Head, where for 4½ hours they ran children's activities, gave out Easter booklets and provided a Christian presence. Volunteers would be welcome for a similar event in 2025.

The trailer made an appearance again just before Christmas where a group sang carols and read some of the Christmas story. Bethlehem carol sheets were available for passers by to join in.

There were general meetings at St John the Baptist, Whittington, and at Holy Trinity, Oswestry where we heard about plans for setting up a Street Pastors group in Oswestry.

Sadly two churches closed in 2024: Cornerstone Baptist Church, and the 150 year-old Moors Methodist Church. Services of thanksgiving were held for each.

On a happier note, Albert Road Evangelical Church welcomed their new minister, Ben Sealey, in November.

CTOD now has 13 churches.

**Fiona Pearson**

### **Safeguarding Report for 2024**

Safeguarding remains a very important topic for the church and the PCC.

During 2024, unfortunately, we were notified by a local police force of an incident that was being investigate. Whilst this was not something that had occurred inside the church, and had occurred outside of the church, it did involve a member of our congregation. This was dealt with, proactively and sensitively with the safeguarding leads at the diocese. This has now been resolved.

All PCC members have undertaken to complete the basic and foundation awareness training courses offered by the diocese.

The Assistant Safeguarding officer for the diocese is Kim Hodgkins 01543 306099 [kim.hodgkins@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:kim.hodgkins@lichfield.anglican.org).

The Shropshire Safeguarding Local Authority Designated Officer is Ellie Jones [Lado@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lado@shropshire.gov.uk) 0345 678 9021

Notices are around the church and parish hall with contact information available.

**Carron Boulton**  
**Parish Safeguarding Officer**

### **Mission and Giving**

The amount allocated for charitable giving was increased to £5,000. This is in addition to the charitable giving raised through special collections and fundraising efforts supporting emergency appeals and the charities we traditionally support. This year, the situation in Gaza steered the international giving whilst the local giving continued to support mental health and well-being.

The £5,000 was shared as follows:

UNHCR £500

International Rescue Committee £500

Compassion UK £500

Childhood bereavement £500

The Farming Community Network £500

Designs in mind £500

West Mercia Women's Aid £500

Derwen College £500

Hope House £500

Morda Primary School (Pastoral fund) £250

Our Lady & St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School (Choir fund) £250

**Harvey Gibbons**

### **The Parish Sick and Needy Fund**

The fund was set up some years ago formerly known as the Vicar's Discretionary Fund to help people within the parish who are suffering with hardship and is administered by a small committee under the chairmanship of the Vicar. If any member of the congregation is aware of any such case, they should contact the Vicar for the case to be discussed with the committee.

**Harvey Gibbons**

### **MMT Report 2024**

MMT met four times during 2024 to exchange and develop ideas for St Oswald's moving forward. Subjects under discussion were Lent Groups, Holy Week, new Intercessors, Prayer and Spirituality, Pastoral Care, Advent Reflections and Dementia Church. Sadly, the Prayer Walk with picnic which had been planned for early summer as part of our Prayer and Spirituality, had to be cancelled due to the resignation of Rev Chen. However, we managed to recruit 6 new intercessors for the Sunday morning services which has led to a welcome diversity of approaches. New dementia-friendly signage has been installed. The Lent Groups had been well attended, although the books under discussion hadn't been very popular, and the Advent Reflections had provided a time of quiet during that busy month.

It was hoped that we would be able to join with the Pastoral Care Group in providing times of fellowship in 2025.

Everything we do as a church should be underpinned by prayer, and it is vital that we develop and maintain prayer at St Oswald's not only on Sundays but also during the week, and MMT is keen to seed new prayer groups and house groups. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels called to contribute to this crucial part of our spiritual life.

**Lindsay Clarke**

### **Schools work**

The clergy were variously involved in taking Acts of Collective Worship at Morda Primary School. Clergy were also actively involved in supporting focus weeks such as 'eat well' and 'sleep well' weeks and in pastoral support to staff, children and school families. The school attended church to celebrate their end of term service at Christmas, Easter and the end of the academic year in July.

As a result of Morda Church of England Primary School entering a federation arrangement with Whittington Church of England Primary School during the year, the vicar became a Foundation Governor of the Federation and an Associate Governor of Morda Primary School. He continues to be the Bishop of Lichfield's Representative on the Governing Body of Oswestry School.

**Harvey Gibbons**

### **Home Communion**

This outreach ministry continues to grow both in the numbers visited and in those doing the visiting. During the year several recipients have died but at the same time fresh individuals have been added to the list. In addition, we have been able to develop a significant ministry with the new residential home Bluebell View. Starting our visits before the Home formerly opened enabled us to form working relationships with the staff which have led to high level of mutual trust. This has enabled us in addition to monthly visits for Holy Communion to support them in events such as their Summer Fete, at which Pam performed the formal opening, Christmas and St Valentines Parties at which yours truly is always expected to say a few words and most recently an act of remembrance for a deceased resident with residents and members of his



family present. We continue to visit New Fairholm, High Lea and Woodlands in Morda where the residents include several previous members of our congregation.

Currently there are nine members in the team Sal, Frances, Michael, Julia, Fiona, Natasha, June, Pam and Keith. If you wish to know more about our ministry please speak to any member of the team or myself. We have started to worship together once a quarter and you are welcome to join us as we value your prayerful support. Times of the services are included in the pew slip.

**Keith Musson**

### **Deanery Synod Report 2024 (including environmental action)**

It has been a time of change for the Oswestry Deanery, but a more positive atmosphere than 2023 under the active and enthusiastic leadership of Rural Dean Suzane Williams until her departure near the end of the year. We thank Suzan for all her work here in difficult times and wish her well in her move to Herefordshire.

The first meeting of the year, on 30th January, was a Deanery Social at the Parish Centre where I was introduced as Lay Co-Chair of the Synod and we said goodbye to Chris Precious and Kathy Trimby, who will be much missed. We each brought one 'encouragement' and one 'challenge' to share about our parish.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May at Trefonen, the Synod met to hear a presentation by Strategic Development Officer Jill Smith on 'Pioneering Parishes', aimed at helping parishes to reach out and implement change. The Synod discussed our goals in 'Shaping for Mission', and our parish strengths and challenges. These were later discussed by Church members from across the Deanery on 15 July when Bishop Sarah led a stimulating meeting attended by over 80 people at St Oswalds Church.

Vacant positions in the Diocesan Synod were filled by uncontested nominations at the end of June, from Paul Darlington, Stuart Jermy and Steve Nicholson in the House of Clergy, and from Geoff Nankivell and Michael Davie in the House of Laity.

Rural Deans and Lay Chairs from across the Shrewsbury Area met with Bishop Sarah at Emmanuel Church in Shrewsbury on 25<sup>th</sup> March and in Lichfield on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> September to discuss matters of common concern, including the process for filling vacant posts.

The Deanery Synod met at Kinnerley on 25<sup>th</sup> September where we discussed the Climate and Nature crises and how to respond to them. Suzan presented a short video from the Diocesan Synod of schoolchildren sharing their concerns about the future. I introduced some stories from Katharine Hayhoe, a renowned climate scientist and evangelical Christian, about the challenges of discussing her research and engaging people without overwhelming them.

We looked at how we can be both faith-motivated and science-informed. That our Christian hope gives us confidence to take action, even if success is not guaranteed! We looked at the support offered by EcoChurch which has registered over 8000

churches across the UK, 100 in our diocese, in schemes which mark progress and award success. We discussed how we might take these issues forward, and celebrate action already taken in building work, land use, nature protection, outreach and prayer. St Oswald's Church is now registered under EcoChurch and will form a group to do a survey early in 2025. Others are registered or interested.

At the Deanery Day in St Martins Church on 26 October, Pete and Christine Winmill gave an inspiring account of their work with Count Everyone In, a charity they established in 2017. There are an estimated 1.5 million adults with learning disabilities, the vast majority of whom never enter any of the 40,000 churches in the UK. There is much work to be done, inspiring and equipping churches to be welcoming and accessible to everyone, especially adults with learning disabilities. Everyone Christian is called to help people know who Jesus is, help them to understand him, trust him and to grow in faith.

The day was attended by a small but enthusiastic group from the Deanery. Following the presentation, the group learned some basic Makaton sign language during the singing of a worship song, how to engage with a Bible story using coloured flags and spent time sharing experiences.

**Jonathan Abbatt**

### **Under 5's (U5's)**

The U5's runs on a Wednesday and Friday, 10am-12pm. We have a steady number of children on a Wednesday session at the moment and the numbers increase on a half term/holiday session. Fridays are very quiet still and Rosita and Sigourney work alternative Fridays as they are contracted to 2.5 hours a week each.

Wednesdays consist of some form of craft, such as painting, playdough or making some kind of art piece, as well as playing with the toys and a little singsong at the end of the session. Friday is more about playing and has less structure to it.

We have 2 volunteers a month, Cynthia and Irene, they come and make the refreshments for us on the first and last Wednesday each month. They are a great addition to us so that both S & R can be out working with the children and parents.

As well as tea's and coffee's we are providing snacks for the children & parents/grandparents which are cheese, fruit and crackers/crisps (sometimes cakes).

Quite a lot of our 'regular children' have now started nursery/pre-school and we only see them on our holiday sessions, we are registering more new younger children, who are attending with parents and grandparents.

We had Jolly visit from Father Christmas in December, parents/grandparents brought in dishes/snacks for the party and Irene made a fabulous spread (her famous sausage rolls went down a treat!!) and we had lots of dancing and party games with the children before we closed over the Christmas period.

We are always looking for more volunteers to help with the refreshments or mixing with the children & families.

**Sigourney Merrony-Potton**

### **The Children's Society**

St Oswald's continues to support The Children's Society through the House Box scheme and Annual Christingle Service. The Children's Society works to provide specialist support that empowers young people to make positive changes and rediscover their hope. Children and young people want a future they can look forward to and the Children's Society is there to make sure they get it. Working alongside young people, their families and community, they will not rest until together, step-by-step, they've created a society built for all children.

The total amount donated from the Christingle Service and house box collections this year was just over £900. Collecting loose change in a House Box is one way to support the Children's Society but as less and less cash is being used some people are switching to donating via a direct debit from their bank account. This could be monthly, annually or as a one-off and can still be 'gift aided'. Information on how to set up a regular or one off direct debit can be found from the Children's Society Website [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk) or by contacting Liz Gibbons, our Children's Society Co-ordinator.

**Liz Gibbons - Children's Society House Box Co-ordinator**

### **Social Media**

The new website is working well and is (usually) kept up to date, bright and interesting. We try to attract new people to St Oswalds as well as giving information to visitors and keeping the congregation informed.

Chloe Fraser keeps the St Oswalds Facebook page up to date. The FB page received nearly 10,000 views during Christmas period and most likely to go up again during Easter or for special events like St Oswald's day or concerts where they get 3,000 to 4,000 views.

Photos and videos taken during and after a service do particularly well on Social media which can and possibly do encourage people to come to the services in the future.

Thanks go, as always, to Diane Dawson for the Parish Magazine and to Ann Sagar for the pew sheet.

**Anne Pilsbury and Chloe Fraser**

### **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

2024 marked one hundred and fifty years since our church reopened for worship following major restoration work. To celebrate this occasion, we held a series of events. Music formed a large part of the celebrations with guest artists and our own choir performing to large audiences.

Throughout August we hosted The Knitted Bible which drew in many visitors who marvelled at the detail of the work.

Our bellringers displayed their talents with a variety of peals and some teddies and soft toys once again braved the zip wire ride.

In the parish centre we held four well attended talks remembering the role that many people had played in the life of Oswestry and our church, and we supported the local heritage days with displays in church.

All of this culminated in a Celebration Service on the 13<sup>th</sup> October attended by Michael, Bishop of Lichfield and various other dignitaries, followed by a sumptuous high tea.

**Pam Willing**

### **Bell Ringers**

January and February recruitment 'Taster Days', were well attended and very well received. Those attending were offered a planned twice weekly, personalised training programme over the remainder of the year. Thanks to Richard Major, Chris Hoare, Brian Rothera and Peter Woollam, supported by others from the tower when needed, this has been a great success and seven attendees are now very capable of ringing Call Changes and Plain Hunt. Two new experienced ringers also joined the band this year, raising our band numbers to 23 ringers. This has meant we can ring all eight bells for Sunday worship and practice evenings are well attended. Additionally we were able to ring for Christmas services simultaneously at St Oswald's and Whittington, St. John the Baptist. Ben Rothera was lost from regular ringing as he took up his university place in September but he continues to attend when home. We were very sad to lose our friend, respected and experienced ringing colleague Andrew J Harris early in 2024. A Quarter Peal was rung to celebrate his life and Andy's sister joined in the ringing.

Andrew's wishes for his funeral in February were that donations should go toward improving the bells, specifically for training purposes. Over £900 was donated in this way and we decided to combine this with money that Richard Major won for his 'Pullometer' research article in the Ringing World, giving us £1800 to put towards a project. After a meeting in October to discuss different options we decided to purchase 2 training bells to be installed in the clock room, with the option to include these in the simulator. Andy had gained a faculty some years ago to adjust the ringing circle and had purchased the pulley blocks that would be needed for enhancement. It is the intention to visit towers with each of these types of training bells to assess the suitability for our needs. A successful application was made to Oswestry Council for a £500 grant and an application has also been made to Whittington Parish Council

Quarter Peals were rung for the inauguration service of St. Oswald's celebrations for the 150<sup>th</sup> G.E. Street renovation of the church, with 2 more in August and October, and also for the Anniversary closing service in October.

Other Quarter Peals were rung in memory of Hilda Rothera, John Moore and the widow of a bell ringer who rang his first Quarter Peal at St. Oswald's and proposed in the tower.

Two very successful Zip-wire days, the first in July as part of the 150<sup>th</sup> Church Renovation celebrations and the second, as usual, on Boxing Day. Donations from both events, raised £274 for the bell fund.

The Shropshire Association of Church Bell Ringers held its Monthly Practice Meeting in July 2024. In September we won the Charles Allmand Memorial Shield at the Shropshire Association Striking Competition. This competition gave further opportunity for new ringers to demonstrate their newly acquired skills and join a good day out meeting others in the Association.

A May ringing outing visiting 6 towers around the Wenlocks and surrounding churches gave our new ringers an excellent opportunity to ring church bells elsewhere (not always as good as St Oswald's) with a second in August to Calverhall and Ightfield.

Oswestry Cubs visited the tower in September. Many questions were asked and the group were really interested. These Cubs were known to our youngest ringer Sam Davies (11 years old) and appeared impressed watching him ringing.

Visitors came to ring from Hampshire, Kent and 13 ringers from Cambridge University Guild of Change Ringers.

**Jan Snowball – Secretary**

### **Gift-Aid Report For 2024**

I am pleased to provide a positive report about donations to St Oswald's in 2024 which have enabled recovery from the HMRC of a very similar value to the previous year.

Recovery of tax from the HMRC: For 2024, the total tax recovered from HMRC was £17,429. This achieved 99.6% of the anticipated amount in the 2024 budget, and is only a little lower than the recovery in 2023 which was £18,017.

Some additional information:

Gifts from named donors: Gifts from all named donors during the year amounted to £67,210. This includes payments received through (i) the Bank, (ii) Stewardship numbered envelopes (iii) Casual donations via Blue envelopes and one-off occasions when cheques are received with donor details. The majority of these donations were tax efficient enabling recovery of tax from the HMRC.

The HMRC Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (known as GASDS), enables gift aid to be recovered from anonymous donations in cash up to £20 at a time, up to a maximum

of £8,000 in any financial year, giving a possible return to the Church of £2,000. This includes cash received from donations via the Card Reader machine, the cash plate at Church Services, Wall Safes, Coffee after Services etc. I'm pleased to report that once again cash donations of this type exceeded more than the £8,000 threshold in 2024, thus enabling a recovery of £2,000 from the HMRC.

**Payments through the bank:** It is encouraging to see the total value of donations made by regular Bank payments has increased by 9.16% during the last 12 months. This is partly due to members increasing the amount of their donations and partly due to an increase in parishioners choosing to donate to the Church in this way. Members can choose the frequency of their Bank payments when setting up their standing order. I can provide the St Oswald's bank details for parishioners who would like to start donating in this way, together with a Gift Aid Declaration Form for tax payers.

**Stewardship envelopes:** The envelopes scheme provides a box of 52 envelopes which have a unique reference number assigned to the member. The envelopes are date stamped for each Sunday of the year. Whilst the intent of the envelopes is to enable the member to easily make a weekly donation when they attend Church, the scheme is flexible regarding how often a member makes their donation and the amount they donate. If you are a member of this scheme and miss donations for a week or so, you can simply use the relevant dated envelope the next time you come to Church, without the need to submit envelopes for the weeks you missed. The number of members opting to donate via the envelopes scheme is continuing to reduce as members elect to use bank payments instead. The new envelopes for the 2024/25 tax years have recently been made available, and are yellow. We hope you like the new colour!

**Blue envelopes:** Blue envelopes are available in church for parishioners and visitors who would like to make occasional donations. These require name and address details to be completed on the front of the envelope, together with signature of the gift aid section if you are a tax payer. If you are regularly using this type of envelope for your donations you might like to consider the Stewardship envelopes scheme or Bank payments as an alternative and easier way to make your donations.

As always, sincere thanks go to all those who make donations to St Oswald's and additionally to those who have been able to complete the process for the Gift Aid scheme.

I would also like to thank Mike Peters and Muriel Jones for assisting with communications between parishioners and myself. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or to provide my details to parishioners who may be interested in participating.

***Alison Vincent  
Gift Aid Secretary, 2024***

***Contact details: Email [alisonvincent43@btinternet.com](mailto:alisonvincent43@btinternet.com)  
Mobile: 07541056235***