

Christ Church In the Parish of Erith



Annual Report & Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ending 31 December 2023

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The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Christ Church in the parish of Erith, has the responsibility of cooperating with the Priest in Charge, the Revd Anthea Harris-Faulkner, in promoting the ecclesiastical parish and the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical.

The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the Church Hall which is adjacent to the Church.

Christ Church Erith PCC's primary responsibility is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

In planning the activities of the church, the clergy and the PCC have considered the Charities Commission's guidance on Public Benefit, and in particular the specific guidance for charities for the advancement of religion. These activities include:

- Provision of public worship which is open to all and seeks to provide variation in styles to make it accessible to communities in the parish.
- Pastoral Care which includes visiting the sick and bereaved at home or in hospital.
- Teaching the Christian faith through sermon and Bible study.
- Messy Church and Toddler Church for families who do not wish to attend the regular Sunday Service.
- Leading collective worship in school.
- Communion to residents in the local care home and to those in their own home.

MISSION STATEMENT

We exist for Christ and are committed to the mission and teachings of Christ.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Christ Church is part of the Diocese of Rochester within the Church of England and is situated in Erith.

The correspondence address is Christ Church Vicarage
Victoria Road
Erith
Kent DA8 3AN

The Parochial Church Council is registered with the Charity Commission, number 1133966.

Bank

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Independent Examiner

Martyn Burt ACMA CGMA
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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Appointment to the PCC is in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Church Representation Rules 2022. All those who attend church services are encouraged to register on the electoral role and stand for election to the PCC.

PCC members including ex-officio who have served from 1st January 2023 to the date the minute is approved:

Priest in Charge – Revd Anthea Harris-Faulkner

Licensed Lay Minister & Licensed Anna Chaplain

Mrs. Funmi Makanju

Wardens

Doreen Ives
Natalie Slator

Representatives to Deanery Synod

Mr. Okechukwu Iwuagwu
Mr. Benjamin Milton- Cole

Elected Members

Mrs. Claire Perkins (PCC Treasurer)	2022 - 2025
Mrs. Patricia Iwaugwu (PCC Secretary)	2022 - 2025

Mr. Ayodeji Akande	2022 - 2025
Mrs. Heather Taylor	2022 - 2025
Mrs Velma Gage -Tobun	2023 - 2026
Mr Chris Wakeman	2023 - 2026
Ms Ernesta Redwood-Sawyer	2023 - 2026

Safeguarding

As a church, we take our **safeguarding** responsibilities very seriously and we are committed to ensuring our church and hall buildings are safe places for all.

All PCC members have completed their DBS checks. All those with responsibilities to the congregation have completed the various levels of safeguarding courses required by Rochester Diocese and the Church of England.

Risk Management

Christ Church has clear objectives. Between September and November 2023, it set out its vision and Mission Action Plan which will inform its activities for 2024 to 2028.

Health and safety policy is implemented. Appliances are PAT tested as required.

There are three first aiders for Christ Church and they have completed the first aiders training with Rochester Diocese.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Electoral Roll – Davison Simbagegavi, Electoral Roll officer

During the period from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 Christ Church Erith had 13 new members successfully applying for enrolment on the Church Electoral Roll. During the same period also one member left Christ Church Erith to join St Augustine's Church in Slade Green., By 31st December 2023 the total number of members in the books for Christ Church Erith was standing at 129. which is more than the previous year when we had 120 members.

Report from the Church Wardens – Doreen Ives & Natalie Slator

We were very happy to see the congregation growing over the year, many returning after the disrupted Covid Epidemic years. Thanks to this fact the list of those happy to undertake the roles of readers and intercessors has grown. We now need to see similar growth of those willing to get to Sunday services by 9.30 to undertake Welcomers' duties.

A new notice board case to better publicise Church activities, was installed by the Church fence, well positioned to be seen by the public travelling to and from the railway station and the centre of town.

The fraying Font carpet was replaced using money gifted to us by the Erith Historical Society. The carpet behind the Altar had become dangerous although not worn out so new underlay was put down and the carpet refitted. Both jobs were done by Erith Carpets. We would very much like to replace the carpet opposite the West Porch which is also showing signs of very heavy wear. Ideally this ought to be done before we resume the Toddlers Group and likewise the bare floorboards left when pews were removed from the back of the south aisle.

Acting on the recommendations in the Quinquennial Report, the carpets in both vestries were taped down at edges and doorways to prevent tripping. New strip lighting units were installed in both vestries, the chancel and behind the organ because they were found to be dangerous, one having completely burnt itself out.

The Church boilers were not performing well over the year culminating in a very cold Church in the later months of 2023. Eventually new parts were installed and the heating is now working efficiently. Consideration is underway about possibly changing Service contractors.

The handrail in the ramped entrance was damaged during the summer BBQ so this was repaired using FOCCE funds.

Climate change and more frequent prolonged periods of rain meant the puddling problem on the route from hall to Church became much worse, so a soak away was installed in the worst area which has solved this particular problem. Concrete slabs have been acquired to install within the gravel laid on top of the soak away but so far we have not been able to lay them in position.

The extensive periods of heavy rain also raised awareness of the need to do work to the outside guttering. This has had serious implications for the internal wall paintings and ceilings of the south aisle. Efforts are being made to solve the problems. Funding is the main obstacle to making progress with this. Towards the end of 2023 funding was on the PCC agenda and efforts are now being made to acquire permission from the Charities Commission to use money from the RANT TRUST which is money left as a legacy to Christ Church by a congregation member in 1967 and managed by the Diocese.

The organ has also received lots of attention during the year and, although it does still suffer from a few intermittent faults, it sounds as good as ever most of the time.

Report from the Deanery Synod Secretary - Okechukwu Iwuagwu & Ben Milton – Cole

There were three formal Deanery Synod meetings held this year. They were held in February, June and October 2023.

A representative from CCE attended all meetings bar the meeting in February 2023. However, minutes of this meeting was received to fill in any gaps.

On 16 May 2023, Roderick Johnson stepped down as Deanery Synod Rep. Ben Milton Cole was elected Deanery Synod Rep with Okechukwu Iwuagwu.

The meeting in February was held at St Paulinus Crayford. Rev Paul Prentice gave a short talk about St Paulinus Crayford. This was the last meeting before APCM so a vote of thanks was given to all those retiring.

There was an additional meeting held on 17 May 2023 @ Christ Church Bexleyheath. This meeting was held at the bequest of the Allie Kerr, the new archdeacon to enable her meet Deanery Synod members and church wardens.

The 2nd meeting was held on 20 June @ St Augustine's Slade Green. This was the first meeting after APCM so all new members were welcomed. Elections were carried out as normal with the Synod breaking into two houses for the election of three representatives to standing committee and deputy Secretary (Clergy).

At the business meeting, Danny Branch was elected as Lay Chair. Linda Dowell was elected as Secretary and David Baldwin elected as Treasurer, both unopposed.

When the houses returned as one meeting, Rev Gareth Brown, Rev Anthea Harris-Faulkner and Rev Adam Foot were elected to standing committee. There was no volunteer for Deputy Secretary. The Area Dean Jim Bennett made the decision to deal with this as the need arose.

St John's Erith announced that they would be celebrating 900 years with various events taking place as part of the celebrations.

The last meeting of the year was held on 19 October 2023. There was a talk by Neil Bunker on Mental Health in Bexley. He talked about the work he is doing with diocese of Rochester. He signed posted the churches to various support agencies within Bexley borough. This was mainly through Mind in Bexley www.mindinbexley.org.uk (information on Young Adults Project (YAP), The family and Carers Information Session, Grow online and Bexley Crisis Cafe) can be found using the mind website above. There was also leaflet on Re-Instate – www.reinstate.co.uk.

David Branch who was elected Lay Chair at the last meeting had to stand down and Sue Maxwell from St Augustine's Slade Green was elected Lay Chair. Keith Trutzenbach took on the role of Deanery Prayer Co-ordinator.

Rev Gordon Mcbean was bade farewell as this was his last meeting before taking up his new post in Northfleet.

Other Areas of Achievements and Performances

Children and family ministry is a mission priority. The kids club which is held in the church hall on Sunday morning continues to grow from strength to strength, both numerically and spiritually. The children return to church beaming and want to share what they had done at kids club.

The children and families project worker resigned from her post at the start of April 2023. This put a strain on Messy and Toddler Church. Both continued up until the summer break but had to be put on hold until another project worker was employed. There were two rounds of advertisement for a children and families worker but unfortunately we were not able to recruit into the role. It will be advertised again in early 2024.

The youths have become more visible and active in the church.

Four of our youths were confirmed on 21st May by The Bishop of Tonbridge, The Right Reverend Simon Burton-Jones, at St Augustine's Church in Slade Green.

Five of the youths from Christ Church attended the Rochester Youth Council residential camp during summer, an experience which they enjoyed and said they will attend again.

The youths from Christ Church and St John's had a games and pizza social evening on Friday 6th October. They had fun, shared ideas for Bible Sunday and Black History Month Service. Sunday October 29th was a joint service with St John's at Christ Church where we celebrated Bible Sunday and Black history month. The service was shaped and led by the youths from both Christ Church and St John's.

There has been collaborative ministry between Christ Church and St John's, Erith, throughout the year. This has enhanced the mission of the churches and strengthened the presence of the Churches within the community of Erith. Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day, All Souls, Christmas Day services were all joint services alternating between the two churches. Where there was a fifth Sunday in the month, it was a joint service again alternating between the churches.

There was the first New Year's Eve watchnight service for the two churches in Erith held at Christ Church. It was well attended and there is another one planned for next year.

The pattern of Sunday Services is 1st Sunday 8am Holy Communion

10am All Age Worship

2nd Sunday 10am Holy Communion

3rd Sunday 10am Service of the Word

4th Sunday 10am Holy Communion

5th Sunday 10am Holy Communion alternating between

Christ Church and St John's.

My thanks and gratitude go to Funmi Mekanju, Licenced Lay Minister, Richard Demuth, Licenced Lay Minister at St Paulinus Church, Crayford and George Johnson, Licenced Lay Minister at Christ Church, Bexleyheath for their ongoing support in leading and preaching at the 10am Service of the Word Services.

Visits were made to the sick at home and in hospital. Home Communion was taken to the sick at home where it was offered and accepted.

Bible study during Lent and Advent were collaborative activities with St John's and held at St John's.

The King's Coronation was an opportunity to worship and fellowship with St John's and Queen Street Baptist Church and some members of the community during the morning service on 7th May held at Christ Church.

The weekend of 9th and 10th September was the Erith Made celebration, organised by Erith Town Partnership. As part of our community engagement, Christ Church hosted an Erith Made Music Concert on Sunday evening to close the event.

The relationship between the church and Christ Church school has been strengthened and this was acknowledged by the headteacher Mrs Hedman during her Christmas message. I have had the opportunity to lead collective worship at the school once a month. I was invited to lead worship for the staff at the start of the academic year. The school has been in church for their Easter, End of Year and Christmas Services. They also visited the Christmas Tree Festival.

Christ Church has re-established contact with Myer House, the local care home. I visit the home once a month to chat with the residents and staff.

Christ Church is growing both numerically and spiritually. We are thankful for God's faithfulness. Christ Church is also growing leaders. Marlene, who is the lead for kids club was commissioned as a children's worker by Bishop Jonathan at Rochester Cathedral in June 2023.

Benjamin and Godwin started the hearing and speaking God's word training in autumn.

The finance continues to present a challenge, but we are taking steps to address this. One of the steps taken is to sign up to the parish giving schemes. May I encourage you all, if you have not yet collected your envelopes, to do so and those who have collected theirs but not returned them to please do so as we need to move forward with the scheme.

Looking ahead to next year, we are aware that there are some challenges ahead of us, not least, repairs to the church building. We also look in anticipation of the mission and ministry opportunities that will be presented to us. We pray for God's wisdom and council as we discern them.

Two mission activities already discussed in response to the Mission Action Plan are:

- Morning prayer in church at 9am on Fridays starts in July.
- Praise and Worship Sunday afternoon Service at St John's every other month start in July.

Further details of these plans are to follow.

On behalf of the PCC, I wish to thank all who use their gifts and talents to support the mission and ministry of the Church.

Revd Anthea Harris- Faulkner

Financial Review

Total income in the year was £89,616 (2022: £88,750) and total expenditure was £88,646 (2022: £94,361) giving a surplus of £970 (2022: deficit £5,611). At the end of the year, we had £50,012 in the bank in the various PCC accounts (2022: £54,301). The PCCs financial position is beginning to recover after a few difficult years.

Further details about specific items are explained in the paragraphs below and the full set of the statutory financial accounts are on the pages following.

As is in previous years, the payment of fuel bills constitutes a large part of our expenditure. Our large, but beautiful church takes an awful lot of gas to heat and this is reflected in the utility charges.

Our main source of income remains donations from the congregation, and in late 2023 we signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme and launched this in Church to encourage the congregation to think about their giving and where possible sign up to a Direct Debit scheme. The Dona machine is still proving popular for contactless payments in Church during both our regular Sunday services and additional services held throughout the year. We remain heavily reliant on the income generated from the letting out of the hall to both regular hirers and those using the hall for celebrations on weekends.

The Christmas Tree Festival does generate a good amount of donations, but these were matched by an increase in the gas and electricity bill for the energy costs during the weekend.

We paid a contribution towards our Parish Share where the PCC felt we could afford to, but we did not meet our full request for 2023.

All restricted funds within the main account are fully preserved with a positive balance in the account to cover monthly fees.

There were no Gift Aid claims made in 2023 due to the absence of a Gift Aid Officer, this is a priority for 2024.

Following formal advice from the diocese and others, it has been recommended that the permanent endowment from the Rant bequest should be included within the parish accounts, whereas until now they have not been included. To this extent, the accounts for 2022 have been restated to include this, with the relevant endowment values and dividends received from the investment being fully included within the PCC accounts. Although the Diocese of Rochester receives the dividend payment, the diocese has not included the endowment within its own accounts and it has been determined that the bequest should have historically been included within the PCC accounts. The restatement of the accounts rectifies this matter.

The Rant bequest was received in 1964 and was in 2 parts:

- The bequest gave the Vicar and Church wardens of Christ Church, Erith £1,000 for the repair and maintenance of the Church
- And, the residue of his estate to the vicar and church wardens of Christ Church, Erith and the Missions to Seaman in equal shares, the share of the Church to be invested and the income to be applied to augment the stipend of the vicar of the Church for the time being. The value of the bequest as at 31 December 2023 was £181,301.

Reserve Policy

Ideally, we would aim to maintain free reserves equal to approximately two months unrestricted expenditure i.e. a figure in the region of £20,000. The current level of free reserves are £25,069 (2022: £23,480) which exceeds the reserve policy. The PCC keep a close eye on this figure.

adventus accounting solutions

Supporting Charitable Organisations

8 April 2024

Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees of Christ Church Erith Charity Registration Number 1133966

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on the pages following.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees 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 charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records 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.

Yours sincerely



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Accounts

ERITH CHRIST CHURCH						
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES						
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023						
						<i>as restated</i>
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	Note	£	£	£	2023	2022
		£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments						
Voluntary income	2	31,948	2,045		33,993	41,148
Activities for generating funds	3	49,655	-		49,655	42,434
Investment income	4	5,660	308		5,968	5,168
Total income		87,263	2,353	-	89,616	88,750
Expenditure						
Charitable activities	5	87,637	1,009		88,646	94,361
Total expenditure		87,637	1,009	-	88,646	94,361
Net income/(expenditure) before Investment Gains/(Losses)		(374)	1,344	-	970	(5,611)
Net Gain/(Losses) on Investments		-	-	15,591	15,591	(22,110)
Net Income/(Expenditure)		(374)	1,344	15,591	16,561	(27,721)
Transfers between funds		3,731	(3,731)	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		3,357	(2,387)	15,591	16,561	(27,721)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	10	35,689	11,031	165,710	212,430	240,151
Total funds carried forward	10	39,046	8,644	181,301	228,991	212,430
						<i>as restated</i>
Following formal advice the funds for 2022 have been restated to allow for the inclusion of the Rant Bequest, previously excluded from these accounts						
The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.						
All income and expenditure derive from continuing operations.						
The notes on the pages following form part of these accounts.						

ERITH CHRIST CHURCH						
BALANCE SHEET						
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023						
						as restated
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	Note	£	£	£	2023	2022
					£	£
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	7	0	-	-	0	768
Fixed Asset Investments						
Investment Assets				181,301	181,301	165,710
Current Assets						
Debtors	8	4,133	-	-	4,133	2,498
Cash at bank and in hand		41,368	8,644	-	50,012	54,301
		45,501	8,644	-	54,145	56,799
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(6,455)	-	-	(6,455)	(10,847)
Net current assets / (liabilities)		39,046	8,644	-	47,690	45,952
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year	9	-	-	-	-	-
Net assets / (liabilities)		39,046	8,644	181,301	228,991	45,952
Net assets		39,046	8,644	181,301	228,991	212,430
Funds						
Unrestricted Funds						
General funds	10	25,069	-	-	25,069	24,249
Designated funds	10	13,977	-	-	13,977	11,440
		39,046	-	-	39,046	35,689
Restricted Funds	10	-	8,644	-	8,644	11,031
Endowment Funds	10	-	-	181,301	181,301	165,710
Total funds		39,046	8,644	181,301	228,991	212,430
						as restated
Following formal advice the funds for 2022 have been restated to allow for the inclusion of the Rant Bequest, previously excluded from these accounts						
The financial statements were approved by the members of the Parochial Church Council on _____ and were signed on its behalf by:						

[name]				[name]		
The notes on the pages following form part of these accounts						

ERITH CHRIST CHURCH						
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS						
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023						
						<i>as restated</i>
2	Voluntary income	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2023 £	<i>Total 2022 £</i>
	Planned giving	20,893			20,893	17,534
	Collections and other giving	8,291			8,291	9,018
	Collections for charitable purposes	-	-		-	136
	Gift Aid recoverable	1,500			1,500	1,440
	Grants	-	2,045		2,045	12,450
	Other Donations	493	-		493	389
	Friends of Christ Church Erith (FOCCE)	-	-		-	181
	Insurance Claim & Sundry Income	771	-		771	-
		31,948	2,045	-	33,993	41,148
3	Activities for generating funds	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2023 £	<i>Total 2022 £</i>
	Sundry Income	-	-		-	736
	Hall Income	38,866	-		38,866	30,877
	Fundraising	270	-		270	422
	Christmas Tree Festival	5,246	-		5,246	5,658
	Income from magazine	272	-		272	-
	Clergy Fees	5,001	-		5,001	4,741
	Other income	-	-		-	-
		49,655	-	-	49,655	42,434
4	Investment income	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2023 £	<i>Total 2022 £</i>
	Income from interest on bank and investments	704	308		1,012	240
	Income from Rant Bequest	4,956	-		4,956	4,928
		5,660	308	-	5,968	5,168

|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

8	Investments								
						2023	2022		
						£	£		
	Market value as at 1 January 2023					165,710	187,820		
	Disposal					-	-		
	Additions at cost					-	-		
	Net gains/(loss)					15,591	(22,110)		
	Market value as at 31 December 2023					181,301	165,710		
							<i>as restated</i>		
	Following formal advice the funds for 2022 have been restated to allow for the inclusion of the Rant Bequest, previously excluded from these accounts								
	The investments are held with the CCLA Investment Fund, number 131001406S and the Rochester Diocesan Board of Finance act as custodian trustees								
	As at 31 December 2023 there were 8,020.29 shares held at a mid market value of 2,260.53 pence (2022: 8,020.29 shares mid market value 2,066.14 pence).								
	The investment was originally made following a bequest, date unknown.								
	The bequest states that dividends generated would be used to augment the stipend of the vicar/rector of the parish, but current practice is to pass these dividends to the diocese as part of the PCC's contribution towards the Diocesan Offer/Parish Share								
	Dividends received in 2023 were £4,956 (2022: £4,928) - see Note 4.								
8	Debtors					2023	<i>as restated</i> 2022		
						£	£		
	Gift Aid					3,940	2,440		
	Other Debtors					193	8		
	Prepayments						50		
	Total Debtors					4,133	2,498		
9	Creditors					2023	<i>as restated</i> 2022		
						£	£		
	Creditors: liabilities falling due within one year								
	Accounting Fees & Independent Examiner					890	850		
	Utility Creditors					2,100	6,287		
	Miscellaneous Creditors					2,815	1,710		
	Hall Hirers & Fees Paid in Advance					650	2,000		
						6,455	10,847		
	Creditors: liabilities falling due after one year					-	-		
	Total All Creditors					6,455	10,847		
10	Funds								
	During the year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:								
		Opening balance	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Investment Gains/(Losses)	Transfers in the year	Closing balance		
		2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023		
		£	£	£	£	£	£		
	General Unrestricted Funds								
	General Fund	24,249	86,976	(87,637)	-	1,481	25,069		
	Designated Funds								
	Church Repair Fund	8,864	287	-	-	2,100	11,251		
	Hall Repair Fund	1,970	-	-	-	-	1,970		
	Charities	606	-	-	-	-	606		
	Men's Group	-	-	-	-	150	150		
	Total Unrestricted Funds	35,689	87,263	(87,637)	-	3,731	39,046		
	Restricted Funds								
	Friends	181	-	-	-	682	863		
	Church Path	1,900	-	-	-	(1,900)	-		
	Church Repairs	-	-	-	-	820	820		
	Organ fund	53	284	-	-	(337)	-		
	Legacy	-	-	-	-	400	400		
	School Bibles	696	-	-	-	-	696		
	Community lunch	334	-	-	-	-	334		
	SDF	473	2,069	(1,009)	-	(1,090)	443		
	CYP	171	-	-	-	850	1,021		
	Woollett	3,996	-	-	-	-	3,996		
	Choir and Robes	71	-	-	-	-	71		
	Energy Grant	3,156	-	-	-	(3,156)	-		
	Total Restricted Funds	11,031	2,353	(1,009)	-	(3,731)	8,644		
	Endowment Funds								
	Rant Bequest	165,710	-	-	15,591	-	181,301		
	Total Endowment Funds								
	Aggregate of Funds	212,430	89,616	(88,646)	15,591	-	228,991		

In the previous year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:

				as restated			
		Opening balance 2022 £	Incoming resources 2022 £	Outgoing resources 2022 £	Investment Gains/(Losses) 2022 £	Transfers in the year 2022 £	Closing balance 2022 £
General Unrestricted Funds							
	General Fund	34,392	81,808	(87,519)		(4,432)	24,249
Designated Funds							
	Church Repair Fund	6,723	41	-		2,100	8,864
	Hall Repair Fund	1,970	-	-			1,970
	Charities	606	-	-		-	606
Total Unrestricted Funds		43,691	81,849	(87,519)	-	(2,332)	35,689
Restricted Funds							
	Friends & Toilet Project	-	181	-		0	181
	Church Path	1,900	-	-		-	1,900
	Organ fund	-	53	-		-	53
	School Bibles	696	-	-		-	696
	Community lunch	423	-	-		(89)	334
	SDF	1,554	2,837	(4,878)		960	473
	CYP	-	-	(1,289)		1,460	171
	Woollett	3,996	-	-		-	3,996
	Choir and Robes	71	-	-		-	71
	Energy Grant	-	3,831	(675)		-	3,156
Total Restricted Funds		8,640	6,902	(6,842)	-	2,332	11,031
Endowment Funds							
	Rant Bequest	187,820	-	-	(22,110)	-	165,710
Total Endowment Funds							
Aggregate of Funds		240,151	88,751	(94,361)	(22,110)	-	212,430

[illegible]

Designated Funds

Designated Funds	
Church Repair Fund	Money set aside by the PCC for emergency repairs to church
Hall Repair Fund	Money set aside by the PCC for emergency repairs to hall
Charities	Money set aside by the PCC in previous years for transfer to various charities
Men's Group	Funds raised for maintenance of church and grounds

Restricted Funds

Friends	Money raised by the Friends of Christ Church Erith to support the upkeep of the fabric of the church. These funds are included within the PCC accounts as any funds raised are for the benefit of the church and the PCC.
Church Path	Money given towards repairs of the church path.
Church Repairs	Money given towards church repairs.
Organ fund	Money raised for major repairs to the church organ. All funds were utilised in 2021
Legacy	
School Bibles	Money given to buy bibles for children in the local school
Community Lunch	The specific proceeds for the yearly community lunch to be carried over to future similar events.
SDF	Grants received for expenditure on strategic development/outreach work
CYP	Money given to be used for youth work outreach activities
Woollett	Proceeds of a legacy to support children and young families.
Choir and Robes	Money given as donations for new choir robes and resources

Endowment Funds

Rant Bequest	Permanent Endowment given where the dividends and interest generated are for the augmentation of the parish priest's stipend (now paid to the diocese as part of the parish contribution to the Diocesan Offer/Parish Share
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Analysis of net assets by fund

		as restated				
		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2023
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	
		£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Investment assets		-	-	-	181,301	181,301
Current assets		31,524	13,827	8,794	-	54,145
Liabilities:						
Amounts falling due within 1 year		(6,455)	-	-	-	(6,455)
Amounts falling due after 1 year						
		25,069	13,827	8,794	181,301	228,991

Analysis of net assets by fund at previous year end date

				as restated		
		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	
		Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	2022
		£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets		768	-	-	-	768
Investment assets		-	-	-	165,710	165,710
Current assets		33,913	11,855	11,031	-	56,799
Liabilities:						
Amounts falling due within 1 year		(10,433)	(414)	-	-	(10,847)
Amounts falling due after 1 year						
		24,248	11,441	11,031	165,710	212,430

11	Transactions with related parties
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During the year the charity:

- | | |
|----|---|
| a) | received donations totalling £5,402 (2022: £4,329) from related parties (which includes members of the PCC and anyone closely connected to them). |
| b) | No expenses (2022: £nil) were paid to, or for, non-clergy members of the PCC (reimbursements for expenses incurred |

Report from Kids Club – Marlene Busayo Elegunde, Kids Club Lead.

It has been a successful year as we noticed about 50 percent increase in attendance in comparison to the previous year (2022). This is very encouraging and we hope to encourage more children to attend the club. A maximum number of 18 children have been recorded in the year which is impressive and encouraging.

The kid's club is held every Sunday except the first Sunday due to the All-Age service and briefly during the holidays (Summer and Christmas) due to availability of leaders and its duration is between 30 - 45mins. The kids club takes place in the quiet room at the church hall and children are supervised back into the church where we join in for the communion and close of service. Parent/guardian of children attending the kids club are required to complete a consent form granting permission.

The leaders are CRB trained and are required to have completed the Basic awareness and Foundation safeguarding training. A minimum of three leaders is required to proceed. We currently have six volunteers and interest have been shown by members of the church to become a volunteer.

During the club, the children open with a prayer and discuss on a bible passage which is mostly in line with the word in the main church. The children are involved in different activities such as art and craft, singing, drawing and colouring. They are engaging and very enthusiastic to read or showcase their craft to the church.

The children presented at the 2023 crib service.

Three leaders (Marlene, Miranda and Salem) attended the First aid course which was held on the 18th of November 2023 at St Andrew's Church Paddock Wood and are certified as first aiders with their certificates valid for 3 years.

Marlene was commissioned by the Lord Bishop of Rochester to serve as a Children's volunteer on the 3rd of June 2023.

We look forward to another year as we plan to continue to train the children in the way of the Lord and create a safe and exciting space for them to grow and thrive.

We would like to publish the children's weekly creation on the church's Facebook page and the parish magazine to make people aware and encourage the community to join in.

A big appreciation goes to the leaders (Claire, Miranda, Salem, Prettie, Jebalin and Marlene) who have continuously invested time in planning, supervising and making the club a success.

Hall Report - Ayodeji Akande, Hall Manager

We are very Grateful to God for our hall. The hall is heavily relied on to supplement the accounts. The income generated by the hall is of great importance and blessing to Christ Church Erith. The Christ church congregation uses the hall for tea and coffee after the Sunday service and to host community and church led events like the summer event.

The wider Erith community is still hiring our hall for events and parties, and we currently have eight regular hirers using the hall for one activity or the other.

We are still receiving hall enquires and are optimistic that we would increase the number of regular hirers using the hall.

We are actively looking for more members to join the hall committee and pleased to inform you that some new members are set to join the Hall committee shortly.

Please see below for the fees for 2024

Saturday Hall Fees 2024	
11am - 11pm (12Hrs)	£780
2pm – 11pm (9Hrs)	£650
12Noon – 7pm (7Hrs)	£500
8am – 2pm (6Hrs)	£350

We have carried out a variety of repair jobs in the hall and there is still more to do.

We replaced the legacy florescent lights with new LED lights and fittings.
We have also renewed the Gas boiler support contract with Blue Flame

Thanks to Chris Wakeman who has devoted a lot of time and effort for the upkeep of the hall, and thanks to the men's group for working on the hall premises.

Thanks to Ayo and Bunmi for taking the time to open the hall for hirer's event.
If you can help maintain our hall or join the hall committee in some capacity, please feel free to contact any member of the hall committee.

Report from the Bellinger's – Natalie Slator, Tower Captain

Numbers of ringers belonging to Christ Church have remained the same this year. We have a band of 4 who ring regularly on Sunday mornings though we do have visitors occasionally. Three are available for Monday practice nights.

We have joined up with St. John's and alternate our practices with them, also on Monday nights. Unfortunately, they are less blessed than us in the numbers that attend practices and only one, Margaret, rings regularly.

Margaret is a very good teacher, so we can offer instruction in how to begin bell control most Monday evenings. Once you can handle a bell by yourself you can start to join in and learn how to ring in sequence with other bells. The hobby is one that just grows with your skill and there is always another level to aim for.

We have gathered a friendly group on Mondays from local towers of Dartford, Crayford and sometimes Sidcup so our numbers on practice nights are usually between 8 and 12 and our ability to ring different methods (these are pattens where the bells change their order) is growing.

We have, with the help of our Monday visitors, been able to ring for all the weddings and funerals where bells are requested at both Christ Church and St John's.

If anyone would like to see if it could be something they would like to try please contact me and we will organise some instruction for you. I am in church, usually at the back, every Sunday as a churchwarden or on my mobile:- 07973877110.

Choir Report – Heather Taylor

The choir has grown this year and is continuing to do so both in numbers and musically. This is due (in no small way) to Ethan whose patience and perseverance especially with new members has worked wonders.

Events we have sung in this year include “St John’s 900th Anniversary celebration” in July and “Erith Made” in September.

The Christmas Carol Service went very well and we are now rehearsing for the next big church celebration Easter. We are of course looking towards our own 150th celebration in the summer.

Choir Practice is held every Sunday at present immediately after morning services to enable us to learn new music and brush up on our normal Sunday service music. We are always looking for new choristers. Please see Heather or Ethan if you are interested in joining the Choir.

Parish Magazine Report – Paul Hyde, Editor

Overview

- Best-selling edition was December – 52 copies in total.
- A number of measures introduced from May 2023 to reduce the cost of producing the magazine whilst hopefully improving its content.
- We produced the Order of Service books for a memorial service held at our church on 18 November on a commercial basis, raising a net profit.
- Format of Pew sheet revised in two stages, to reduce costs

Subscriptions

Collect from church	1
By hand delivery (within parish)	9
By post	2
By email (PDF)	3

The number of persons subscribing to the magazine has remained broadly similar to those for the previous years.

Due to only ten editions having been published, the 2022/3 subscription year was extended to include the April edition. Therefore, 2023/4 and future subscription years will commence Early Summer (June).

Circulation

This year sales of the magazine have remained similar to those seen in 2022, in line with church service attendances post pandemic. The magazine had historically sold about 50 copies each month, but has now settled at around 30. As usual, the Christmas Tree Festival produced an uptick for the Christmas edition, which sold about 50 copies.

General content

There were seven editions of the magazine this year, each consisting of 20 pages per edition, with the following exceptions:

Early summer 24

Late summer 28

Christmas 28

Due to a bereavement, the January and February editions were combined and titled "Winter", with publication in late January.

Once again, my sincere thanks to the few parishioners who have sent me articles and other material which has been included in the magazine over the last year. My role as Editor is to compile and collate these into a consistent format so as to produce a unified magazine each month. As in previous years, I have myself contributed at least one article each month, ranging from the regular Town & Around piece, to occasional longer, more thoughtful articles.

Restructuring

At the meeting on 21 March 2023, the PCC agreed to an overhaul of the publication schedule for the magazine. The changes were designed to address the following issues:

- Pressure on church finances
- A substantial rise in the cost of paper
- High cost of printing, especially in colour
- Lack of content submitted by parishioners for publication each month, meaning its often a struggle to fill a reasonably sized edition
- Stagnant sales

Frequency of publication

Publication switched to bi-monthly, on the following basis:

Issue title	Target publication date
Early Summer	Early June (commencing June 2023)
Late Summer	Early August
Autumn	Early October
Christmas	Early December
Lent	Early February
Easter	In advance of the date of Palm Sunday

There was no May edition.

Cover price and subscriptions

Commencing Early Summer 2023, the cover price increased from £1 to £1.50.

Annual Subscription (including delivery) is revised as follows:

Delivery within the parish	£9.00
Delivery by Royal Mail 2 nd class	£15.00
e-Subscription (PDF by email)	£9.00

Advertising

Once again, there were no paying advertisers. Two firms were granted free advertising in recognition of services provided to the church.

Commercial activity

A private memorial service was held at our church on 18 November, for which we were asked to produce the Order of Service book. We produced 175 copies, which realized a profit of around £150 for church funds.

Pew Sheet

Commencing Palm Sunday 2023, the Pew Sheet was printed in black and white only. This measure reduces the printing costs (excluding paper) by about 90%.

Starting with the Christmas period, the Pew Sheet was treated to a new format which made better use of the available space on each page, which enabled a reduction from eight to four pages. This reduced paper consumption by 50%.

These two measures taken together have realized significant cost savings.

Some new Order of Service books were created, most notably for services in Lent and Easter, plus a new version for All Age Service of the Word.

Report From Christmas Tree Festival (CTF) – Claire Perkins

The Erith Christmas Tree Festival took place during the weekend of 8th to 10th December 2023. The number of trees remained at 50 and we had a number of new sponsors from the local community this time. The trees looked fantastic and were, as usual, provided by Bexley Garden Centre and we remain grateful to Daryl and Danielle for their continued support. Thanks as always go to David Fitch for providing and installing all the electronics required to make the festival happen.

The weekend was very well attended and we received lots of compliments for the way the trees and the Church looked. The Charity Fair took place on the Saturday in the hall with a variety of stalls including a Christ Church cake stall and a Men in Sheds stall which proved very popular.

The Saturday evening concert included Theatre Box, a local performing arts academy for the first time who put on an amazing performance for us, followed by the Rock Choir who with their many members really did raise the roof with their beautiful singing!

We were honoured to have the Deputy Mayor and our local MP and councillors join us for our Sunday evening Carol Concert of Nine Lessons wrapping up what was a wonderful weekend.

Thanks to all those who offered their time and gifts as volunteers, but as always the committee needs new volunteers and a new Chair with fresh enthusiasm and ideas to take the festival forwards. Please do consider if you are able to help this year.

As always, any money raised is split between the Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice and Church funds.

Report from Friends of Christ Church Erith (FOCCE) – Doreen Ives

The Covid epidemic certainly halted activity within the FOCCE group. The toilet project was completed during 2021 but then we had the interregnum which made serious demands on everyone with special responsibilities within the Church during 2022. Although we renewed the license, we did not organise and run the 2023 Annual Draw and Quiz Night. Membership renewals were also significantly down. However, FOCCE leaflets have been distributed at Church services, a rallying message is now getting out and new members are pledging their support for FOCCE.

I stepped down from being Chairperson in August 2023 to allow younger people to step up to the management committee and take the lead with future projects, also making better use of social media to publicise them. We hope that by identifying and widely publicising a future major project within the 2* listed building, FOCCE will inspire ready and generous support within the Erith community.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported FOCCE thus far.

Social committee Report –Marlene Elegunde, Social Committee Lead.

The first quarter of the year was quiet with no planned celebration or gathering organised by the committee. The last three quarters of the year had series of events which the social committee was involved in. The events are as follows:

- Easter Bring and Share – 9th of April
- King Coronation lunch – 7th of May
- Summer BBQ –15th of July
- Harvest Bring and Share – 8th of October
- Christmas Breakfast stall at the Christmas tree festival – 9th of December

The King coronation lunch was a collaboration with the St John's and Queen Street Baptist church. This was a community event, and it was well attended by members of the three churches with food and drink donations made by all three churches. As always, members of the committee worked tirelessly to make this a success with series of meetings.

The Summer Fayre took a different shape this year as the committee was tasked with the BBQ side of the event. Monetary donation of £280 was received from members of the congregation towards the cost of the food and drinks. £161.34 was spent on the cost of items used for purchasing the food items and drinks. The BBQ raised £133.87 making a total profit of £252.53.

The Harvest Bring and Share was organised to get families and members of the church to get together to celebrate God's blessings. We noticed a decline in number of prepared meals and food items showcased. This could possibly be associated with inflation and the increase in prices, however it was well attended and we were pleased that there was enough for everyone.

Lastly, we played a part in the Christmas tree festival. The Social committee was involved in providing breakfast at the Christmas fair and participated in co-ordinating the refreshments during the event.

The committee was able to raise £316.36 from donation and sales. The expenditure was kept to the minimal owing to lessons learnt in previous event and to reduce wastage. £130 was spent towards the food items, utensils, consumables, and drinks. A profit of £186.36p was made from the breakfast stall. A massive thank you to Adanna (one of our youths) who has consistently for years been involved in helping at the breakfast stall.

All profit made is paid into the church account for the social committee and can be accessed when we need to use it for agreed expenditure by the committee.

The social committee continues to manage the Tea and Coffee rota for volunteers in designated groups involved in the reception of visitors, first timers and church members in the church hall after the service. This involves serving of light refreshments (Tea, Squash, Hot chocolate and Coffee, biscuits, pancakes, cakes and snacks) and setting up the hall. Voluntary donations are made upon receipt of the refreshments.

Thank you to all group members, Uniformed group (13th Erith) and the men of Christ Church Erith team.

For upcoming year, we aim to organise more events that will involve more of the community such as a family picnic, Bring and Share, summer BBQ party and Movie night.

A massive thank you to all members of the Social committee (Ernesta, Funmi, Natalie, Moji, Martha, Ellen, Francis, Deji, Heather, Ayo, Sylvia and Roselyn) for your time, commitment and dedication towards the success to all events or activities organised.

Report from Men in Sheds – Emily Willey

248 sessions delivered at Men in Sheds with 1777 attendances (between 47 people)-

Session highlights from 2023 at Men in Sheds centres around the many social outings and activities arranged for the Shed members. Trips in 2023 included the Sky Garden, a Riverboat tour, the Imperial War Muesum, a Barbeque for the Coronation and meals out. Men in Sheds also enjoyed being a part of Christ Church Erith's summer and Christmas fairs. The members made items in their workshop to sell on a market stall and raised funds for their project.

In October, Men in Sheds was awarded £242,594 from the National Lottery Community Fund. This funding will support the project for 5 years.

In November, Men in Sheds was nominated by Christ Church Erith for an Interfaith Award for their service and contribution to promoting "Healthy Communities" in Bexley.



Coronation Barbeque



Trip to the Skygarden

Men in Sheds delivered 2 Outreach sessions for the local community-

In August, members ran a one-day workshop at the Exchange for 9–16-year-olds. 13 young people all made footstalls from kit form using hand tools like saws and electric drills. In the afternoon, the group decorated the footstalls with paint and fabrics.

Members also ran a family friendly workshop making bamboo wind chimes with local residents at Belvedere Fun Day in August.

In February 2023, a few members from Men in Sheds participated in a podcasting workshop with Youth Unity. Shed members were interviewed by young people and asked about their outlook on youth today. These interviews were edited into a podcast and video (<https://youthunity.org/men-in-she>



Outreach workshop at The Exchange

Report from Beavers and Scouts by Eve Ives

In the past year there have been several changes within the Scout Group. In July, we had to close the Explorer Unit due to lack of Leaders but happily two of the Explorers have become Young Leaders in the Beaver Colony. We also lost Nathan as Akela but our Group Secretary, Ben Kennor, (an ex Scout of the Group) stepped up and took over the role of Cub Leader. The Scout Association is undergoing a massive change with regard to the management and Leadership of the Groups but we are well ahead of the changes and although our titles will change, we will still be undertaking the same duties.

We have improved the numbers in the Beavers and Cubs but Scouts are still trying to recruit more members.

In the past year the Sections have been active, attending various District activities and also a Group weekend camp at Cudham Shaws, the District's camp site where everyone had a great time. The Cubs and Beavers attended the Panto at Erith Playhouse in January, which was very popular. We have lots of activities planned for the future and look forward to a very active Scouting year.

We continue to serve the wider community where we can and last year I reported that one of our Scout Leaders, Charlotte Born, helped out as a marshall at her late Majesty's lying-in-state. Charlotte also stepped in as a Leader with the Beavers when the Beaver Leader broke her ankle

and was out of action for some time. Charlotte also undertakes fund raising for her employers and the Scout Group and for all her work with the Scouts and others, she was recently awarded the Deputy Lieutenants Award which was presented at the Town Hall. To date, Charlotte is one of only five Scouters in Bexley who has received this award.

As usual, we need more helpers and Leaders to volunteer at the Scout Group, and I repeat what I said last year and that is that our young people are from diverse backgrounds but there is no diversity among the Leaders and we would welcome adult help from all sections of the community. As you will know, several of the Leaders are of the older generation and we need younger helpers or Leaders to progress.

We are looking forward to the coming year when we will be offering a wide variety of Scouting opportunities for the members of the 13th Erith (Christ Church) Scout Group.

