



**St John the Baptist**  
**COOKHAM DEAN**

**Annual Report  
and Accounts  
for the year ending  
31 December 2023**

This Annual Report is published by the Parochial Church Council  
of St John the Baptist, Cookham Dean.

## **AGENDAS**

### **Agenda for the Annual Meeting of Parishioners 10.30 Sunday 21 April 2024**

1. The election of two churchwardens to serve for the forthcoming year.

### **Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 21 April 2024**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 30 April 2023 - see page 23
3. Presentation of changes to the Electoral Roll
4. The annual reports on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally for the year ended 31 December 2023
5. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023
6. Appointment of Independent Examiner
7. Election of PCC members
8. Any other business – by leave of the Chairman

Closing prayers

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# Annual PCC Report for the year ending 31st December 2023

## Background

The parish of St. John the Baptist Cookham Dean together with Holy Trinity Cookham forms The Benefice of The Cookhams. The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting within the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, ecumenical, and social. It also has responsibilities for the maintenance of the church and churchyard of St. John the Baptist, Church Road, Cookham Dean.

## Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following persons served as members of the PCC:

<b><i>Incumbent</i></b>	Revd Nick Plant	Chair	to 29 January 2023
<b><i>Associate Priest</i></b>	Revd Helen Chamberlain		to 5 November 2023
<b><i>Licensed Lay Minister</i></b>	Richard Simmonds	Vice Chair	
<b><i>Church Wardens</i></b>	David Hazeldine		
	Lorna Sykes		
<b><i>Deanery Synod Reps</i></b>	Mathew Billinghamurst		Re-elected 2023 for 3yrs
	Ray Reed		Re-elected 2023 for 3 yrs
	Lorna Sykes		Re-elected 2023 for 3 yrs
<b><i>Diocesan Synod Member</i></b>	John Sykes	Secretary	
<b><i>Elected Members</i></b>	Katherine Billinghamurst		
	Greta Dixon		
	Marion Elly		
	John Fairlie		
	Stella Fairlie		
	Ros Hazeldine	Treasurer	
	Laura Satterley		
	Jeremy Webb		

## Overview

- The year was characterised by the retirement of the Incumbent, Rev'd Nick Plant, in January and movement in November of the stipendiary Associate Priest, Rev'd Helen Chamberlain, to be Incumbent of a parish in Yorkshire. In addition, self-supporting Associate Priest, Rev'd David Joynes, had retired at the end of December 2022, but retained permission to officiate and continued to serve in the benefice in a more limited capacity. Therefore, for most of the year the benefice was in interregnum. Although an appointment of Incumbent was made in late October, the Induction did not take place until January 2024.

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting

- The APCM took place on 30 April 2023 and in the absence of a vicar was chaired by Lorna Sykes, churchwarden. The whole PCC was re-elected and the Secretary and

Treasurer were elected at a special meeting of the PCC immediately after the APCM to maintain continuity before the next regular PCC and through the interregnum process. The following committees were elected at the first regular meeting of the PCC after the APCM: Standing & Finance Committee, Fund Raising, Fabric & Churchyard.

There were 94 names (2022:94; 2021:101; 2020:100) on the Church Electoral Roll as presented at the 2023 APCM, 54 (2022:54; 2021:56; 2020:58) of whom were resident in the parish with a further 17 (2022:17; 2021:21; 2020:22) resident in the Benefice. These totals are unchanged from the previous year, although there was movement within those resident in the parish.

## **Church Attendance**

- Although the steady recovery of attendance following the COVID-19 pandemic continued, attendance was affected by some reduction in the number of services as a result of the interregnum. Mid-week services alternated between the two churches week by week, and the Christmas and Easter Vigil services were held in just one of the churches rather than in both. Christmas Eve fell on a Sunday, and with the Vigil being held at Holy Trinity, there was just one Christmas communion service at Cookham Dean.
- There were 85 communion services during the year (2022:105; 2021:89; 2020:67; 2019:130).
- Easter communicants were 66 (2022:70; 2021:49; 2020:0; 2019:110),
- The number of Christmas communicants was 78 (2022:119; 2021:59; 2020:62; 2019:123).
- The average weekly attendance was 60 adults (2022:61; 2021:48; 2020:44; 2019:91) and 8 under 16s (2022:7; 2021:5; 2020:4; 2019:21).
- There were 7 baptisms during the year (2022:7; 2021:10; 2020:1; 2019:14), 3 weddings (2022:4; 2021:2; 2020:1; 2019:4), and 11 burials, memorials and interment of ashes (2022:18; 2021:14; 2020:24; 2019:18).

## **Review of the year's activities**

- The year was dominated by changes to the clergy team, and the benefice was in interregnum from the end of January to the end of the year.
- It is the churchwardens that are responsible for running the benefice during an interregnum rather than any other clergy.
- The appointment of a Vicar is a process laid down by the diocese and involves a period of discernment and the writing of a Benefice "Profile" which describes our current mission and hopes for the future.
- There were three joint meetings of the PCC with the PCC of Holy Trinity, all held in the Jubilee Vestry as part of this process of the appointment of a new Vicar. These meetings were attended by the Archdeacon of Berkshire, Ven. Stephen Pullin and the Benefice Patron, Charles Rogers.
- Disappointingly, the first round of advertising for the post did not result in any applications.
- The post was readvertised once the summer holiday months had passed, and a number of applications received. Interviews were held and Rev'd Stephen Mills

was appointed. It was not possible or practical to induct him before January 2024.

- It is hoped to start recruitment of a replacement for Rev'd Helen as soon as possible.
- The churchwardens and the PCC are grateful to Rev'd Helen, Fr David and Richard Simmonds, Lay Minister, for keeping the services going across both churches with the minimum requirement to bring in clergy from other parishes.
- Online prayers and reflections continued to be provided on Mondays and Fridays. The main Sunday service continued to be livestreamed once a month on the 4th Sunday and on special occasions.
- The all-age family services previously known as 4th@4 were rebranded Families@4 and held on selected occasions, rather than every month. The services held on Mothering Sunday, St John the Baptist, Harvest and Christingle, attracted congregations of 103, 61, 57 and 162 respectively. Rev'd Helen's contribution and energy in the success of these services over the years has been considerable, but there is a determination to continue and develop them further.
- Our Children's Church "Sunbeams" group is now disbanded as our mission to children is now concentrated on our contact with the schools and our Families@4 services.
- Easter Services included the now traditional Walk of Witness between the two churches via the Stations of the Cross depicted by local artists. This was Michael Johnson's last year of organizing the artwork since the event was inaugurated in 2005.
- The Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial and then in church was attended by 130 people including a good representation from the Scouts. The annual service of Remembrance of Loved Ones who have Died was held in November and was very much appreciated by all those who attended.
- The traditional Nine Lessons and Carols service was held on 17 December with an attendance of 109. This service was also recorded and had over 100 views.
- The Christmas Eve Crib Service returned in its traditional form for the first time since 2019 with an attendance of 82 adults and 70 children. Due to the interregnum, the Vigil service was held at Holy Trinity and there was just one Christmas communion service at Cookham Dean on Christmas morning with an attendance of 125. This was undoubtedly affected by the fact that Christmas Eve fell on a Sunday when the usual Sunday services were held.
- The PCC met on 7 occasions in 2023 in its own right, all in person. Throughout the year each sub-committee, Treasurer and Ministry Team have reported to the PCC by means of written reports circulated prior to each PCC meeting.
- Income in 2023 was c. £15,000 higher than was anticipated. This was mainly due to planned and other giving being higher than budgeted. Both the Parish Giving Scheme and the weekly giving in the plate were higher than budgeted, and donations and the card reader both brought in more than budgeted. We also received a legacy which was not expected, and interest payments were greatly improved. We also had a very good year for fund raising throughout the year. With expenditure running just below budget, the result was a surplus of c. £20,000, leaving a Cash Balance at the end of the year of c. £106,000. Our thanks go to Ros Hazeldine for the administration and stewardship of our funds.
- Fenella Reekie, Headteacher at Cookham Dean School, attended the January and

July PCC meetings to give an update of progress and activities at the school. Both Cookham Dean and Herries resumed their regular visits to the church for services throughout the year, following their suspension during COVID-19.

- The Parish Magazine continued to be produced throughout 2023, edited by John Sykes. The magazine continues to be available online as well as being distributed to each house in the parish. Thanks go to Stella and John Fairlie for the co-ordination of the distribution of the magazine in Cookham Dean. Thanks also to John Sykes for managing the magazine advertising, which had declined as a result of the pandemic, and which fell further during the economic crisis. It is, though now starting to show signs of a recovery.
- Although the number of members in the church choir has fallen, we have still managed to provide musical support of a high standard to our worship. The PCC is grateful to David Colthup, our choirmaster and organist for his continued service and for nurturing our small but able Junior Choir. St. John's "Orchestra" continues to support the Families@4 with augmentation of children from Cookham Dean School.
- Working parties in the churchyard took place throughout the year, which, together with the volunteer grass cutting, has seen the churchyard maintained in good condition. However, the number of volunteers has fallen, and an increasing amount of grass cutting is done by contractors, which has of course, to be paid for.
- Flowers are provided in the church throughout the year by a band of volunteers, coordinated by Marion Elly and Doreen Reed. The PCC is grateful to all flower arrangers, especially those who decorated the church for major occasions.
- The activities of the fund-raising committee under the leadership of Marion Elly had a very good year raising over £7000. Several social/fund-raising events were organised including the traditional Autumn Fayre, this year held in WI Hall, which raised £2750.
- As well as raising funds for our own purposes, events were also held to support other charities, including Water Aid and The Children's Society.
- The new pattern of Fellowship Lunches introduced at the restart after the pandemic has continued, with the Methodists, Holy Trinity and ourselves taking it in turn to host the monthly event. Numbers have steadily increased, and a splendid Christmas lunch was held in the Jubilee Vestry in December.
- During the year we re-established our pastoral care in the parish to Harwood House, Elizabeth House and other housebound people.
- The fabric of the church remains in good condition. There were no repairs undertaken other than routine maintenance.

PCC report for year ending December 2023 approved at the PCC meeting on 12th March 2024

Signed

(Chair of the meeting)

## Ministry Team report for APCM 2023

- The Ministry Team continued to meet regularly, approximately monthly, in 2023, all in person meetings. Fr Nick chaired the January meeting, then Revd Helen took over the chair until the November meeting, then the chair passed between the church wardens. The chair will be Fr Stephen for future meetings.
- 4th@4 All Age Service continued to be popular, with the best attendance being on Mothering Sunday, St John the Baptist Patronal, Harvest & Christingle. Due to lower attendance when the 4th Sunday coincides, e.g. with half term, it was decided to rebrand the service "Families@4" so that we can choose on which Sunday to hold the service.
- Fr Nick's leaving service was held on 29th January at HTC. It was a very moving service and there was a splendid Cheese & Wine party afterwards.
- Holy Week and Easter services:
  - Wednesday of Holy Week we held the Seder meal in the Jubilee Vestry.
  - Maundy Thursday with foot washing was at SJB. There was a watch of prayer at SJB only.
  - Good Friday – children's service at SJB was poorly attended. The Walk of Witness went well and the Liturgy was moving, as ever.
  - Easter Sunday - the 8am was poorly attended. The dawn service was at HTC, but only attended by about 20 people. 9.15 SJB went very well, with about 120 attending.
- There has been a short service each Monday to pray for the Ukraine, alternating between the two churches. Attendance has been about 10-12 each time. These services were all run by a churchwarden.
- We organised specially themed services for the coronation weekend, but attendance was not great.
- Due to the Interregnum our weekday services have alternated between Weds 10am at SJB and Thurs 7.30am at HTC.
- The Ministry Team had a social evening at St John's House, hosted by Revd Helen, in August.
- Helen's last service in the Cookhams was on 5th Nov at HTC and was very well attended. This was followed by coffee and cake in the Parish Centre. It was a lovely send off for Helen & Daven. Most of the Ministry Team attended Helen's Induction in Cleckheaton on 27th Nov.
- Clergy have hosted Harvest Festivals in church for both our church schools. Clergy have taken regular assemblies when possible. We were pleased to welcome Herries, Cookham Dean and Holy Trinity schools into church for their end of term and Christmas services.
- Harvest Festivals at SJB and HTC were well attended, providing good collections for Food Share. The 4th@4 All Age Benefice Harvest service was attended by 60 people.
- On 10th Sept we were very pleased to take 7 candidates from The Cookhams for

Confirmation at St Michael's Bray. A further 2 candidates were confirmed in Reading Minster on 10th December.

- Despite the reduced capacity on the Ministry Team, we were still able to offer services of Remembrance for Loved Ones on both churches, a service on Remembrance Sunday at both churches and Christingle services in both churches. We have also been able to take home communion to several housebound parishioners and to Harwood House on a regular basis. Some members of the team also visit Harwood House monthly for a hymn singing hour.
- Christingles at both churches were very good and well attended (162 for the SJB Families@4), and the 'make your own' kits worked very well.
- Christmas services were quite a challenge, with Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday and the reduced number of clergy available! In person Crib services were much appreciated and very well attended, HTC 300, SJB 170. We could only hold 1 "Midnight" service, which was at HTC, and attendance not great. 9.15 SJB Christmas morning very well attended (125), lower numbers at HTC 11am but 6.30pm carols was well attended. Overall, the Christmas season went very well, with grateful thanks for all the hard work on the trees, cribs, flowers, music etc.
- Overall, 2023 was a challenging year for the Ministry Team, with all the team having to undertake extra duties to enable the Benefice to continue to operate as "near normal" as possible.  
The 4 churchwardens got to grips with the process for appointing a new vicar, which was a steep learning curve for them all. The whole team were involved in "interview day", which, we're pleased to say, resulted in the appointment of Stephen Mills as the next vicar of The Benefice of the Cookhams. Grateful thanks to everyone involved in the appointment process. On, in 2024, to the appointment of a new Associate Priest!

Lorna Sykes, on behalf of the Ministry Team

## **Changes to the Electoral Roll since the last APCM**

The update of the Electoral Roll took place between the 10th and 24th March 2024.

There are 101 people on the Electoral Roll, as opposed to 94 in 2023, there being 2 deletions and 9 additions.

Of the 101, there are 57 Resident in the Parish and a further 17 Resident in the Benefice.

Lorna Sykes  
Electoral Roll Officer



## Fabric and Churchyard Report 2023

As reported in previous years, our Church's buildings, and the Churchyard, continue to be very well looked after and the Churchwardens continue to be very grateful to all the people who voluntarily look after the fabric and the grounds every week and all those who lock and unlock the building each day thus creating the opportunity for the many visits some of which result in interesting entries in our Visitors' Book. We are also very fortunate to have so many truly delightful flower arrangements in church throughout the year and we are very much in debt to the team who provide them as we also are to those who make sure that the Church's interior is always clean and well looked after.

The following is a summary of the non-routine work, in addition to the above, carried out during 2023:

- January – Repairs to the south side roof were carried out and an occasional, but significant, leak was cured as a result - £462.00 inc. V.A.T.
- March – The central heating boilers, in both the vestry and the church, were serviced and safety-checked and Carbon Monoxide alarms were installed - £506.40 inc. V.A.T.
- March – New Altar Vestments were received. These were given to the Church by Fr. Nick Plant who wanted his retirement collection to be used to purchase something for SJB's long-term benefit.
- June – Voluntary Labour inspected the Vestry roof and cleared it of dead leaves etc. The roof and surrounding masonry were found to be in good order.
- July – The very long hedge that marks the eastern boundary of the Churchyard was trimmed by Voluntary Labour.
- July – The annual lightning conductor inspection was carried out – £142.80 inc. V.A.T.
- August – The annual fire extinguisher maintenance check and service were carried out – £145.20 inc. V.A.T.
- August – The "Friends" purchased "Hymnal Plus". This is a piece of computer software that can be used, via SJB's existing sound-system, to provide a substitute musical accompaniment for SJB's services should the organ be unavailable. It is important to note that this move was made with the full knowledge and agreement of David Colthup.
- October – A new front roller and frame for one of the lawn mowers was purchased and fitted by Voluntary Labour – £44.75 inc. V.A.T.

David Hazeldine  
Lorna Sykes  
Churchwardens

## Annual Safeguarding Report 2023

We follow the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance 2021. The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.

The PCC operates a Safe Recruiting process, which aims to keep a balance between safe recruitment and not creating an onerous bureaucratic system. The recruitment of new volunteers involves informing the recruiter so that the necessary details and references can be obtained. Procedures are always monitored to ensure that checks and training for volunteers are delivered in a timely manner and the cooperation of volunteers in this is much appreciated.

Debbie Burroughs is responsible at St John the Baptist for checks with the Disclosure and Barring Services for new and established volunteers with children and vulnerable adults. We continue to use the Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS), which is the recommended DBS Umbrella Body for the Diocese of Oxford.

The Church of England's Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training and Development (2021) provides a clear framework for safeguarding training across all Church of England communities. There have been some significant changes in regard to training and expectations, to further improve the safeguarding of all. We follow the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance 2021, meaning a range of safeguarding training modules are a mandatory requirement for particular Church Officer roles. Safeguarding training should be renewed every three years and people are asked to forward their training records once completed. All safeguarding training records are kept securely. The resources and training equip our community to engage positively with the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults in both a practical and theologically informed way.

The PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

Katherine Billingham

## Darby Pension Report 2023/24

The Fund exists to provide payments each quarter to people in Cookham who are on low incomes and who meet the requirements set out in the will of the Darby brothers. Trustees, drawn from Holy Trinity Church, Cookham, and St John the Baptist Church, Cookham Dean, have the responsibility of administering the Fund.

The investments remain under the management of CCLA, a professional company which specializes in charities and church investments. Fund finances continue to remain healthy with investment income matching that of previous years.

This income has exceeded expenditure in recent years due to the falling number of pensioners supported, as such the Fund currently holds an excess in its bank account and continues to have capacity to support additional pensioners.

There were 19 pensioners supported by the Fund at the end of the year.

Kate Dille  
March 2024

## Fundraising Report 2023

During 2023 we continued our Fund Raising events for the Church as follows: -

**26th January** – A splendid illustrated talk by wildlife photographer Tom Way raised £680

**22nd April** – Bangers and Bingo was moved to the WI Hall as ticket sales were slow but raised £684

**12th June** – Paul Leddington-Wright gave an excellent organ recital for us and, as he most generously refused to take a fee, we raised £1,300 and attracted 100 people to the Church.

**16th July** – We held a Strawberry Tea in the Jubilee Vestry and Churchyard which produced £584.

**16th September** – We had a splendid concert by a Brass Quintet which was excellent and raised £700.

**18th November** – The Autumn Fayre was moved to the WI Hall this year as the number of Stalls had reduced but it still raised £2750

**Easter Baking** raised £150 not a great amount but worth doing.

**These events raised a total of £6,848**

Marion Elly

## Cookham Dean CE VA Primary School Report - January 2024

Report by Mrs Fen Reekie, Headteacher

### Context

Number of pupils on roll – 191

Full capacity – 196.

6 spaces in year 4

1 space in year 1

1 over PAN in year 3 (from an appeal) and 1 in reception (LAC)



...where we all flourish

### Staffing

Fully staffed with experienced staff. 2 ECT – 1 in their first year and 1 in their second year. Deputy Head working 3 days a week (1 teaching day/1.5 days SENCO/0.5 days leadership)

### Priority Areas for 2022-2023

- Improve whole school reading for pleasure in line with Reading Framework 2023 – book worms, new curriculum books funded by PTA, birthday books
- Ensure that the implementation of all foundation subjects is as impactful as the intent – new curriculum
- Ensure that all adults in the class have an impact on learning outcomes – suite of training for teachers and teaching assistants
- Ensure opportunities are provided for children to move from short term to long term memory

- Ensuring that all TAs are trained in SEND strategies -
- To promote positive mental health for staff and pupils – SLT very conscious of reducing workload – helped my new curriculum
- To enhance outdoor provision in curriculum time and play time – introduction of OPAL
- Improve school attendance with a focus on disadvantaged in line with DfE attendance review – supporting families where attendance is an issue (Early Help support/EWO)
- Encourage all children to be courageous advocates (Rotakids, School Council, Eco Warriors,
- Develop a suite of whole school professional development based on research by Tom Sherrington
- To monitor the wellbeing of staff – all staff given birthday off, cake, supportive for personal reasons,
- Develop stakeholder understanding of our school's culture and vision (“where everyone flourishes”), -
- Further strengthen partnership working within and beyond the local authority to improve outcomes for all children and young people across the borough. – CYP strategic board, EH board, School Sports Partnership

### **Curriculum Development**

Ofsted focus – foundation subjects (history, geography, art, D&T, music) new scheme of work implemented.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Currently working with staff and parents on healthy eating when it is packed lunches.

Emotional Wellbeing Ambassadors have been trained to support mental wellbeing in the children.

ELSA and nurture groups continue to run for focus children and groups of children.

### **Finance**

Budgets continue to be tight for the next coming years. Lack of full classes at census day will have an impact on the budget going forward.

### **Stakeholders**

Parent questionnaire – 87.5% would recommend CDPS

Mrs Fen Reekie  
Headteacher  
January 2024

## **Maidenhead and Windsor Deanery Report for 2023**

The Maidenhead and Windsor Deanery comprises 14 parishes and benefices. The Deanery Synod comprises all the clergy in the deanery and Lay Representatives elected by their respective parishes for a period of three years. July 2023 marked the start of a new triennium after Synod elections for lay representatives at parish annual meetings earlier in the year. At the end of 2023 the Synod had 68 members. Attendance varied from 31 to 38 over the year.

There were three meetings of the Synod during 2023:

### **Wednesday 8th February 2023 at All Saints Church, Boyne Hill, Maidenhead:**

- Representatives of four Deanery churches shared experiences of studying the Bible
- All Saints Dedworth shared about their Life Groups and their use of the Bible Course by the Bible Society
- St Andrew's Clewer shared about a group which read the whole Bible together over five years, meeting up regularly to discuss what they had read.
- St Mary's Maidenhead shared a personal experience of studying Philippians, and how it had helped in spiritual growth, joy, and dependence on God.
- All Saints Boyne Hill (including an Iranian refugee) shared about their use of a book "Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes", interpreting Scripture through first-century eyes, including how Jesus offered new life and gave value to women.

### **Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at St Michael's Church, Bray:**

- General Synod member Gracy Crane gave a detailed report on what had happened at the February 2023 General Synod sessions, in particular the motion and proposed amendments relating to Living in Love and Faith.
- Synod members discussed and gave feedback on their past and present use of online church, with a diverse discussion and many examples of blessings as well as some challenges.

### **Tuesday 17th October 2023 at the Soltau Centre, Stubbings:**

- Bishop Olivia, Bishop of Reading, addressed the Synod under the title of "Our church: where are we and where do we go from here?", sharing her thoughts on history; post-pandemic trends and statistics; tired volunteers and clergy; a recent clergy survey; Living in Love and Faith; the challenge of making Jesus known to unchurched people; and the vision of a "simpler, bolder, humbler" church.
- Synod members shared questions and comments with Bishop Olivia.
- General Synod member Daniel Matovu reported on the range of topics discussed at the July 2023 General Synod sessions.

Thanks to parishes' hard work and generosity, the Deanery paid £ 931,978 of parish share in 2023, against an allocation of £ 1,000,714, which was 93.1% of the requested amount from the diocese. The diocesan average was 94.5%. This was a reduction from the £ 1,019,381 paid in 2022.

Rod Broad took over the position of Deanery Treasurer in October 2023 and the Deanery would like to thank Jim Tucker for managing the responsibility whilst the position was vacant.

Thomas Walton  
Deanery Secretary



# Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023

## 2023 Treasurer's Report and Accounts

The audited accounts for 2023 have been prepared in line with Church accounting regulations (2006) and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993. The accounts have been examined, presented to, and accepted by, the PCC.

### General Fund

The general fund for the year closed with a surplus of £20,329 though a deficit budget had been set. We were truly delighted with this result, and I must, therefore, thank all the congregation who have helped us to achieve this. £3,333 was received as donations and £7,588 was raised through the Autumn Fayre and various activities the Fund Raising Committee organised.

During 2023 we again increased our Missions and Charities donating over £4,000. We sent £306.25 to Christian Aid, £172 to both Combat Stress and The British Legion from Remembrance Sunday,

£504.67 to Water Aid, £440 to DEC Earthquake Appeal, £469 to both White Chapel Mission for Homeless and Bumblebee Conservation Trust, £620 to Winston's Wish from our Christmas Day service, £45 to Roald Dahl (from Copas carol singing) £48 to Alexander Devine and £780.50 to the Children's Society.

### 2024 Budget

The budget for 2024 has been set and agreed by the PCC and predicts a small deficit by the end of year, £800. We are mindful that, although we have had a surplus for the last three years, for the 3 years before that we have ended each year in deficit and we will need to examine carefully any expenditure that is not absolutely necessary for the upkeep of the church. Regular giving is still down on pre-Covid levels, and I would ask those members, contributing by way of standing orders and other planned giving, to consider an increase in their giving in 2024 in order to assist with the ever-increasing costs of maintaining our church. We are extremely grateful to those members of our congregation and the "Friends Scheme" who have pledged money throughout the year to assist with the upkeep of the churchyard and general maintenance, but we are a small church with many expenses to keep the church in its current good repair. The graphs opposite show only too well how our Planned Giving does not cover our Diocesan Share.

### Assets and Liabilities

Monetary assets at the year-end were £ 104,389 (£84,351 in 2022 and £82,083 in 2021). The increase this year is in part due to a legacy for which we are most

grateful. Please consider making a similar provision in your own will.

**Other Notes**

My thanks to Amanda Hannington for examining the accounts and her advice, this is Amanda’s first year, and the PCC is very grateful to her. I must also mention Angela Plant for her assistance with HMRC in respect of the Gift Aid reclaim and all members of the PCC, for their help and guidance throughout the year.

A special thank you to Marion Elly and her fundraising team for all the work they have done to supplement the income for the church with some much-needed funds to help support Church finances. This year the Autumn Fayre was held in the WI hall and although the weather was absolutely appalling, soup and teas and coffee with delightful cakes attracted a number of supporters and we are truly grateful that the committee saw fit to donate most of the funds raised to the church. Thanks also to Robert Dent for counting the collection at the end of each service and who handles the “Friends Scheme”. The money donated has enabled us to keep the churchyard grounds looking splendid and we receive lots of encouraging comments, but it does all cost. We have also used some of this money to purchase a device called “Hymnal Plus” which can play any music needed in the church. This can be used if the organist is unavailable for any reason. We are very grateful to all contributors to the “Friends Scheme” and would be delighted if anyone else felt they were able to make a regular donation no matter how small, a pound per week is over £50 per year. Please speak to one of the Churchwardens or me.

I end with a special plea that you support fund raising activities whenever you can as every little helps. It is always great to see familiar faces and I believe you often enjoy those things you have had your arm twisted to attend! It costs over £1,000 per week to keep the church open.

Ros Hazeldine, PCC Treasurer





ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS

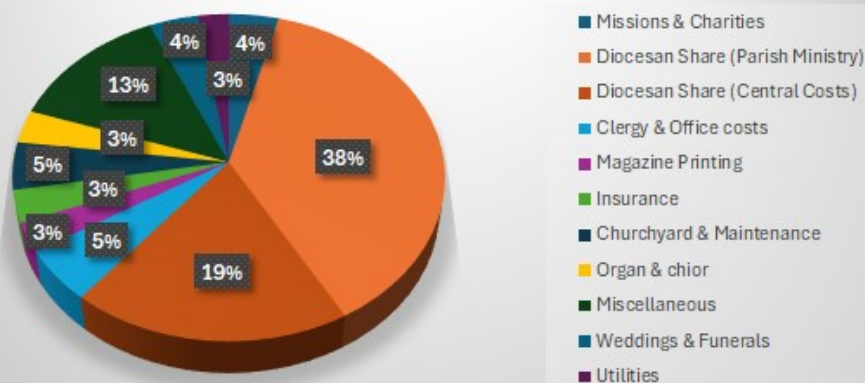
RECEIPTS	2023		2022	
<b>Voluntary Receipts</b>				
Gift Aid	3,664		3,917	
Standing Orders	10,585		11,445	
Donations	3,333		3,143	
Income Tax Recovered on GA, Standing Orders and Donations	5,387		5,882	
Parish Giving Scheme	28,350		27,054	
Income Tax Recovered on PGS	7,088		6,764	
Ordinary Collections	4,897		2,917	
CAF Income	6,610		5,350	
Collections for Missions and Other Charities	3,105		3,310	
QR Code and Card Reader	2,591		2,519	
	75,610		72,301	
<b>Receipts from Church Activities</b>				
Burials & Interments	5,564		5,332	
Weddings	3,124		4,035	
Collections from Baptisms	234		331	
	8,922		9,698	
<b>Receipts from Activities for Generating Funds</b>				
Magazine Advertising	12,126		15,310	
Fund Raising Events (See note 1)	7,588		5,701	
	19,714		21,011	
<b>Other Receipts</b>				
Other income	13,971		1,234	
	13,971		1,234	
<b>Receipts from Investments</b>				
Interest on Investments	1,683		351	
	1,683		351	
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£ 119,900</b>		<b>£ 104,595</b>	

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ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
GENERAL FUND PAYMENTS

PAYMENTS	2023	2022
Missions & Charitable Giving (See note 3)	4,026	3,449
Diocesan Share	56,604	63,237
Clergy Expenses of Office	5,252	3,684
Services (Heat, Light, Water & Sewage)	2,521	3,346
Insurance	3,137	2,914
Upkeep of Churchyard	3,049	2,116
Organ & Choir (See note 4)	3,228	3,264
Repairs & Maintenance (See note 2)	1,624	3,152
New Equipment & Fixtures		-
Sanctuary	187	307
Printing Postage & Stationery		-
Magazine Printing Costs	2,892	3,144
Magazine Share to HTC	6,901	9,141
Miscellaneous (See note 5)	5,760	843
Fundraising Costs (See note 1)	389	61
Weddings & Funerals (See note 6)	4,001	4,325
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>99,571</b>	<b>102,983</b>
<b>EXCESS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>£ 20,329</b>	<b>£ 1,612</b>

## SJB Payments 2023



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 NOTES TO THE GENERAL FUND

1 Fund Raising & Special Events	Income			Costs	2023 Net		2022 Net
Morning/Afternoon Talks							
Choir Dinner							
Letter to Parish re upkeep of churchyard							
Bangers & Mash	685			90	595		689
Sedar Meal	152				152		
Autumn Fayre	2,963			201	2,762		2,796
Hymns & Pimms							
Brass Concert	918				918		
Flower Festival							
Strawberry Tea	584				584		518
Home made cakes	150				150		217
Tom Way talk	868				868		
Scenes from the Dean							1356
Easy Fund Raising scheme (buying on line)							
Organ Recital postponed until 2023	1,268				1,268		64
	£ 7,588				7,297		5,640

2 Repairs & Maintenance	2023	2022
Mowers & Strimmers	368	
Lightening Conductors & Fire Extinguishers	288	197
Boiler Maintenance	506	611
Roof & Gutters	462	
Green Bin	75	69
EICR & PAT testing		996
Removing flies from church		599
Internet Connections		680
Quinquennial		
General Repairs		
	£ 1,699	£ 3,152

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<b>3 Missions &amp; Charitable Giving</b>			2023		2022	
Discretionary Fund						
Christ Church Oxford						
Church Army						
USPG						
Christian Aid			306		30	
Church Housing Trust						
Yeldall Christian Centre						
The Barnabus Fund						
Train a Priest						
Liveability						
Helen & Douglas House						
CHECT						
The Connection (St. Martins)						
Bible Society						
			£ 306		£ 30	
<b>AUTUMN FAYRE</b>						
St John the Baptist Church			2,762		2,796	
Cookham Dean Village Hall			50			
			£ 2,812		£ 2,796	
<b>Collections and Other Giving</b>						
USPG (Lent Boxes)						
Royal British Legion			172		118	
Combat Stress			172		118	
Clergy Support Trust (formerly Sons of the Clergy)						
Children's Society			781		1,487	
Water Aid			505		1,216	
Thames Hospice						
Ukraine					480	
DEC Appeal			440			
Bumblebee Conservation Trust			469			
White Chapel Mission for Homeless			469			
Winston's Wish			620			
Roald Dahl			45			
Alexander Devine			48			
* Actual figure £1,164 in 2021 and in 2022 £ because personal cheques were added			£ 3,721		£ 3,419	
<b>TOTAL MISSIONS &amp; CHARITABLE GIVING</b>			£ 6,839		£ 6,245	

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 NOTES TO THE GENERAL FUND (Continued)

	2023	2022
<b>4 Organ &amp; Choir</b>		
Organists & Guest Organist Expenses	2,400	2,200
Payments to Choir	65	45
Tuning Piano & Organ	636	709
Music & New Books & RSCM	127	310
	<b>£ 3,228</b>	<b>£ 3,264</b>

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 NOTES TO THE GENERAL FUND (Continued)

	2023	2022
<b>5 Miscellaneous</b>		
Coffee & Refreshments	272	156
Baptism Cards, Books	-	5
Website Hosting	249	258
Lottery Registration	20	40
GA Envelopes		
Collections for gifts to clergy leaving	3,175	
CCLI	403	376
Specified Gifts (JA)		
DSB checks	19	
J&M Sewing for vestments, altar frontal etc	1,422	
Sundry items (Sunbeams & Easter Eggs)	58	
Miscellaneous small items	92	8
	<b>£ 5,710</b>	<b>£ 843</b>
<b>6 Wedding &amp; Funeral Costs</b>		
Oxford Diocese Benevolent Fund	1,827	2,295
Vergers	888	660
Organist	960	810
Choir		410
Vicars	326	150
HTC Printing		
	<b>£ 4,001</b>	<b>£ 4,325</b>

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ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH FUND

	2023	2022
Carried Forward from previous year	6,321	4,421
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Gift Aid Income	1,565	1,815
Tax Reclaimed	788	
Donations (not gift aided)	35	85
	2,388	1,900
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Hymnal Plus	2,481	
	2,481	-
<b>Balance at Bank</b>	£ 6,227	£ 6,321

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, COOKHAM DEAN  
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Year Ending 31st December 2023  
 STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES

Monetary Assets	General Fund	Friends Fund	2023		2022
Lloyds PCC Cookham Dean Accounts	49,655		49,655		58,682
Debtors	0		0		0
Creditors/uncashed cheques	-1,494		-1,494		-652
Lloyds Treasurers Account (Friends)		6,227	6,227		6,321
CBF Church of England Deposit Account	50,000		50,000		20,000
	£ 98,162	6,227	104,389		84,351
<b>Investment Assets</b>			2023		2022
356 CBF Church of England Investment Shares			8,025		7,335
Representing the A A'Bear permanent endowment fund - income upkeep of Churchyard					
<b>Liabilities</b>			0		0

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC)  
of St John the Baptist Church, Cookham Dean  
on the Accounts for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner**

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. You consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

**Basis of the 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 PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from the PCC 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**

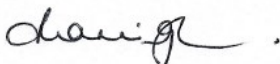
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

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 Charities Act;
- to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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.

Signed:



Date:

15.3.2024

Amanda Hannington  
2 Lea Road, Sonning Common, RG4 9LJ

# **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 30 April 2023 at 10.30 in the church**

**Present:** Lorna Sykes, Churchwarden, in the chair in the absence of the Vicar, and 22 other members.

## ***Annual Vestry Meeting***

1. Election of Churchwardens – David Hazeldine and Lorna Sykes have both been proposed and seconded. David & Lorna were unanimously elected as Churchwardens. The meeting thanked David and Lorna for their work over the last year.
2. The Vestry meeting closed at 10.35am.

## ***Annual Parochial Meeting***

### **• Apologies for absence**

Received from Helen Chamberlain, Barbara Dent, Robert Dent, Jeremy Webb, Anthea Webb, and Laura Satterley.

### **• Minutes of the meeting held on 8th May 2022**

These were circulated in the report's booklet.

Proposed by Greta Dixon, seconded by Richard Simmonds and agreed as a correct record, and signed by the chairman.

### **• Changes to the Electoral Roll**

The update of the Electoral Roll took place between 2nd and 15th April 2023. There are 94 people on the Electoral Roll, the same as last year, but with 1 addition and 1 deletion. 54 are resident in the Parish and a further 17 resident in the Benefice.

### **• The Annual Reports on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally for the year ended 31st December 2022**

The annual reports were published beforehand and taken as read. The PCC report, Ministry Team Report, Fabric and Churchyard Report, Safeguarding Report, Fund Raising Report, Darby Pension Report and the report from Cookham Dean School were officially received. Proposed by Richard Simmonds and seconded by Ros Hazeldine.

### **• Report of the Deanery Synod**

The meeting formally received the Deanery Report, which is provided by the Deanery and outlines the activities over the year. Proposed by Stella Fairlie and seconded by Marion Elly.

### **• Presentation of the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2022**



Ros Hazeldine presented highlights of the 2022 accounts:

*I should like to say a few words about the accounts and my report, which start on page 14 of the booklet.*

*It is important to understand that the accounts show a snapshot of the position as it was at 31st December 2022 and that year continued to be a challenging time for the church.*

*I was very pleased that Arthur, our accounts examiner, found everything in order once again.*

*Our income for 2022 (page 16) was very similar to the previous year with just £300 more received. We were able to resume all our usual fundraising activities but have been rather disappointed that they have not been as well supported as we had hoped. Donations were significantly down, but we were nevertheless able to collect and hold activities which enabled us to send over £3,000 to Missions and Charities.*

*While the QR code has not been used this year, the card reader continues to be used at the end of services, after weddings, funerals, baptisms and fund-raising activities and has generated just over £2,500.*

*No legacies were received in 2022.*

*I have introduced the pie charts this year showing both income and expenditure. The colour version shows graphically just how we receive and spend our money.*

*We received more income via planned giving PGS (The Parish Giving Scheme) as one or two more of the congregation moved to this way of giving and some generously increased their monthly contributions. If anyone not using this method of planned giving feels they could move to PGS I would be very willing to talk to you about the scheme and its benefits. Of course, if anyone would like to increase their monthly contributions we would also be delighted, and I can help you to achieve this.*

*Before I leave income, I feel I must thank everyone who has supported our initiatives by buying cakes, going to the Autumn Fayre, making a payment to the Friends account or just coming to church each week and putting money in the collection, every little has helped.*

*Our payments in 2022 (page 17) were somewhat higher than in 2021. This is primarily because Parish share and utilities were higher, and we were able to send more money to our missions and charities, most other expenditure was similar to 2021. Here again the pie chart shows just how much we spend on Parish Share. Mention should also be made to the fact that we have enhanced the building by carrying out some of the overdue maintenance such as PAT testing all our electrical appliances, having the Electrical Installation Condition Report inspection and doing the updates it suggested. Most significantly we have installed Wi-Fi to the church and vestry. This was made possible by the grant from the Diocese of Oxford paying the connection and upfront costs.*

*We were delighted that once again we did not end the year with a deficit. Thanks again to you all for your continued support.*

*Monetary assets of £84,351 (page 21) was an excellent position to start this year and it has enabled us to set a break-even budget.*

*I should like to finish by reiterating my thanks to all the people I have listed on page 15, they have all helped to make this job much easier and with special thanks to Angela who will show me how to do the Gift Aid return and Arthur who continued to help with the auditing even after he had moved but says this is his last year.*

Lorna Sykes thanked Ros for all her hard work as Treasurer.

Elizabeth Runnacles enquired about the level of Diocesan Share which represents 67% of our outgoings. It was explained that approximately 70% of this is the direct cost of our own clergy and their housing. It was felt that this would be worth showing on the pie chart next year. Members were encouraged to have a look at a document on the Diocesan website called "On the Money" which gives details in simple terms of where the diocese gets its income and what it spends it on.

Ray Reed proposed adoption of the accounts, seconded by Mathew Billinghurst, which was unanimously agreed.

- **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Arthur Giorgi now feels that it is time for him to step down as Independent Examiner. Ros has thanked him for the many years of service to the church, and the PCC echoed those thanks.

We have been offered the services of Amanda Hannington. She has a history of working in banks and building societies Barclays and Nationwide. She has been treasurer to a local football club and is currently working as a Finance Analyst.

Her appointment was proposed by Ros Hazeldine and seconded by Mathew Billinghurst, and carried unanimously.

- **Election of 3 Deanery Synod Representatives**

There were three nominations:-

Lorna Sykes, Mathew Billinghurst and Ray Reed, who were duly elected unopposed.

John Sykes is also a member of Deanery Synod by virtue of being a member of Diocesan Synod

- **Election of 9 PCC members**

This year all nine existing members were nominated for re-election. This was welcomed in the interests of continuity through the interregnum.

The nominations for the 9 places were as follows:- –

Katherine Billinghurst

Greta Dixon

Marion Elly

John Fairlie

Stella Fairlie

Rosalind Hazeldine

Laura Satterley  
Richard Simmonds  
Jeremy Webb

These 9 were elected unopposed to the PCC.

Also on PCC are the Rev'd Helen as a member of clergy, the Churchwardens (David Hazeldine & Lorna Sykes), John Sykes by virtue of being a member of Diocesan Synod, and the Deanery Synod representatives Lorna Sykes, Mathew Billinghamurst and Ray Reed.

- **The Appointment of a new Vicar**

David Hazeldine gave an update on the progress in appointing a new vicar.

- It is a long process and we are as far through it as we could have expected to be at this stage.
- The joint PCCs held what is known as a Section 11 meeting on 15th February, which appointed the four parish representatives for the interview and selection process to be the 4 churchwardens from the 2 parishes. They also appointed John Sykes from SJB and Tim Sharples from HTC to assist with the drafting of the Profile - the prospectus that we have to prepare as part of the process.
- The Profile is nearing completion and will be formally ratified by what is known as a Section 12 meeting which is the joint PCCs plus the Archdeacon and Patron, and is scheduled for 24 May.
- The survey /questionnaire seeking view on the choice of vicar attracted 80 responses and these have been incorporated into the Profile.
- The advert for the job should be out in June and 12 July has been fixed as the interview date.
- Bearing in mind that the successful candidate is likely to be on 3 months' notice, their arrival is going to be October at the very soonest.

- **Thanks**

In the absence of a Vicar, Richard Simmonds gave a vote of thanks to the churchwardens and to all who keep our church in clean and good working order. He also thanked everyone involved in the welcome we give to our congregations and to all involved in the organisation of social events.

He then closed with a prayer and supplication for God's blessing.

- **AOB**

None

The meeting closed at 11.13am.

Signed.....

Date .....

