

## **REPORT FOR CHARITY COMMISSION**

### **Aims and purposes**

St Nicholas Allington Parochial Church Council (the PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with our joint priest-in-charge in promoting the whole mission of the church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for maintaining the church building, halls and church grounds (but not the Rectory which is the responsibility of the Diocese).

### **Objectives and activities**

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. Nicholas. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus through a range of formal and informal worship, with and without communion. The church is committed to providing the Church of England 'occasional offices' of baptism, marriage and funerals.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. Nicholas and the Church Halls.

The PCC has complied with Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults).

### **Achievements and Performance**

#### *Worship and Prayer*

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. For example, a range of worship services from Morning Worship, Holy Communion and informal worship at Oasis Communion and Oasis with contemporary worship songs.

Following on from the Pandemic of March 2020 to February 2022 that affected worship, social activities, hall hire and the loss of production of our Parish Magazine, we are pleased to note that many activities have started to develop again.

The negative impact is that we have lost connection with many families and have had to re-think certain activities, and it has not been possible to re-start the magazine at this stage. Some have been hesitant to return and the worshipping patterns of some seems to have changed. It is difficult to fully determine what impact the pandemic lockdowns will have in the longer term.

On a positive note, we have seen hall hire income return to acceptable levels and have seen an upturn in generosity from the community for the stock of items that we manage to help supply the local Foodbank and other causes. Our online worship presence on Facebook still seems popular and the intention is to continue with this

whilst resources allow. It was also encouraging to see attendance at Christmas services almost back to pre-pandemic levels.

Guide and Scout organisations continue to hold Parade Services in the church two or three times a year.

We endeavour to make our services easy for visitors to follow using Power Point projection, enlarged texts, or printed out in short booklets. The church sound system helps all visitors, as well as the hearing-impaired.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. At present there are 126 parishioners on the Church

Electoral Roll. 10 names were added during the year and 7 were removed either through death or because they moved away from the parish. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 75, but this number increased at festivals including Christmas.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 10 baptisms in church. Our minister has carried out 31 funerals this year, most of which were at the local crematorium. We have had 1 wedding - historically St Nicholas Church has not held many weddings, most likely to the modern nature of the building.

Fiona Higgs, Children, Families & Schools Minister has developed a Chaplaincy role within our local primary schools and leads assemblies, supports classrooms and the staff. She has developed significant relationships with the schools and, at their request, she has re-started the Explorers after school clubs at Allington and Palace Wood Primary Schools.

St Nicholas has an active Mothers' Union group with monthly Holy Communion services. We also run St Nicholas' Fellowship, a social group for the elderly. Residential Homes are visited, and services conducted there

#### *Deanery Synod*

Two members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

#### *The Church and Church Halls*

St Nicholas is open every day to our community for private prayer and is used on a regular basis.

Our present church, consecrated in 1975, is a square building mainly, recently re-ordered by the replacement of pews with chairs. The church space is used for worship every Sunday and Wednesday and at other times as required. It is also used for PCC Meetings, a weekly prayer group, a monthly meeting of mums and babes and other groups, and for appropriate community activities. To one side are the clergy vestry, Parish Office used three mornings a week and three toilets, with disabled access. The church has kitchen facilities in the main body of the church.

There are two church halls in a building adjacent to the church that provide facilities to many local groups and businesses - these halls have a kitchen and toilet facilities, including a baby change and disabled toilets.

Both church and halls have disabled access.

A wide range of social and fund-raising events held throughout the year that are open to the larger community. The Christmas Market draws many people into our buildings and is supported by a number of small local businesses.

Carol singing takes place at Christmas time at the local shopping centre.

The outside Notice Board advertising our services and events is always well presented

The St Nicholas Lunch club meets the stringent health and safety requirements with 5\* rating and allows us to continue the old people's luncheon club 6 times a year and approx. 40 people regularly attend.

Each Tuesday a Community Café takes place in St Nicholas Church which is run by a team of volunteers, is registered with Maidstone Borough Council, and is attended by approx. 60 people each week.

During the week the hall is used by many local groups and organisations including a mother and toddlers' group on Tuesdays. We run a monthly Mum & Babes group in St Nicholas which has led to a Faith Explorers group led by our Children, Families & Schools Minister. During the summer the youth group – Jahfa (youth group), which meets monthly, went on an outing to Westminster Abbey.

Our church halls offer valuable meeting places for a wide variety of community and commercial activities, including the numerous branches of the Guide and Scout organisations. The halls are booked frequently for private bookings by local residents.

From a financial perspective our reserves have held up fairly well and income is returning now that hall hire is once again taking place. The church building is also being used more as a space for hire to the community.

### **Pastoral Care**

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age.

Reverend Chris Lavender has visited all church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes, in care homes, or in hospital.

Our Prayer and Pastoral care co-ordinator, Angela Redford maintains ongoing contact with many members of the congregation, particularly the elderly.

Care Home ministry is provided through the Anna Chaplaincy network that draws from all denominations across the town and visits most care homes once a month.

### **Mission and Evangelism**

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. St Nicholas gives monthly to a range of charities both local and abroad including Alongside Africa.

St Nicholas provides a weekly online service via Facebook and the church website to over 250 people, the majority of whom do not regularly connect with St Nicholas in other ways.

A weekly update that is emailed to approx. 200 people and paper copies are delivered to 33 homes for those who are not on the internet.

We maintain a significant presence in the Primary Schools, which are non-church, through the work of our Children's, Families & Schools Minister.

### **Ecumenical Relationships**

The church is a member of Churches Together in Maidstone. Our incumbent has attended Leaders Breakfasts that are held each month and involve all Christian denominations from across the town.

### **Financial Review**

Total income for the year amounted to £131,284 (2021 - £122,905) of which £3,511 related to restricted income. There is a net surplus for the year of £16,887 (2021 £1817 surplus), of which £10,316 related to general funds. At the year end unrestricted funds totalled £94,932 (2021 - £79,616) of which £37,143 is held in designated funds.

From a financial perspective our reserves have held up fairly well and income is returning now that hall hire is once again taking place. Current levels of hall hire income, post-pandemic, are at about half of pre-pandemic levels and the true nature of how this recovers will need to be seen in this coming year. The church building is also being used more as a space for hire to the community to increase income, greatly aided by the more flexible space that has been developed.

### **Reserves Policy**

The PCC aims to maintain reserves to a level of six months of annual expenditure.

The building reserve of £15,000 is designated for possible roof repairs needed in the future.

### **Volunteers**

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our church the lively and vibrant community it is. In particular we want to mention our Tuesday Café team and the finance team who has helped us all to understand the church's accounts.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St. Nicholas the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC. The full PCC met six times during the year with an average level of attendance of 78%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees, which include worship, social, halls, fabric and finance, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly with minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

### **Administrative information**

St. Nicholas Church is situated on Poplar Grove, Allington, Maidstone. It is part of the Diocese of Canterbury within the Church of England. The parish is legally known as the Parish of St Nicholas, Allington with St Peter, Maidstone. Roughly it stretches at its western edge from the Park and Ride, either side of the London Road, toward the town centre down to the river and Lockmeadow. The river end of the parish is the area which formerly came under the previous St Peter's Church, no longer in use. The running of the parish comes under two Churchwardens and the Parochial Church Council or PCC. Ministry and worship comes under a Priest-in-Charge and a Children's and Families Minister.

The correspondence address is The Parish Office, Poplar Grove, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0DE. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2021 until the date this report was approved are:

Incumbent: Rev. Christopher Lavender (Chairman) – **retired 22 February 2023**  
Church Wardens: Mr Nigel Smetham, Mrs Jenny Stone  
Children, Families & Schools Minister: Mrs Fiona Higgs

Elected members:

Mrs Sarah Lavender – representative on Deanery Synod – **left 22 February 2023**

Mr Michael Evans – representative of Deanery Synod – **left December 2022**

Mrs Gill Waite – Treasurer

Ms June Bagshaw

Mrs Gill Poole

Mrs Martina Tidball

Mrs Nicola Tulip

Mr David Salvage

Ms Jacqueline Wilkinson

Ms Ruth Brind

Mrs Angela Redford

Approved by the PCC on 20th March 2023 and signed on their behalf by Nigel Smetham (Acting PCC chairman – Parish in vacancy)

**ALLINGTON P C C**
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**
**Notes**
**RECEIPTS**

Voluntary Receipts

*Regular Giving*

Pledged giving

Income tax recovered

Collections in church

Other voluntary receipts

Activities for generating funds

Receipts from Church activities

Interest on Deposits

3a

3b

3c

**PAYMENTS**
*Church activities*

Diocesan Parish Share

Other Payments

3d

Surplus/(deficit) before transfers

Transfers between funds

Surplus/(deficit) for year after transfers

Cash Balances at 01/01/22

Cash Balances at 31/12/22

2022				2021
General fund	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
£	£	£	£	£
44775			44775	47710
12255			12255	11447
8237			8237	3967
65267			65267	63124
2383		0	2383	28220
5018			5018	2694
54847		3511	58358	28857
258			258	10
127773	0	3511	131284	122905
£	£	£	£	£
54604			54604	62078
57751		2042	59793	59010
112355		2042	114397	121088
15418	0	1469	16887	1817
-5102	5000	102		
10316	5000	1571	16887	1817
47473	32143	478	80094	
57789	37143	2049	96981	

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities**
**Cash Funds**

Bank Current Account

CBF Deposit Fund

Bequest Account

Goodbox

Cash

**Other Monetary Assets**

Gift Aid Tax recoverable

Halls lettings due

**Liabilities**

Deposits

Pension payment


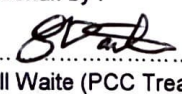
Creditor

Payments to diocese

Amounts collected for Charity Appeals

2022				2021
General fund	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
34618		2049	36667	20029
0	11739		11739	11587
23111	25404		48515	48409
0			0	9
60			60	60
57789	37143	2049	96981	80094
2961			2961	2915
1129			1129	2724
4090			4090	5639
200			200	
568			568	109
276			276	
1154			1154	
9			9	69
2207	0	0	2207	178

Approved by the PCC on 20/3/23 and signed on their behalf by :

 signed .....  
 signed .....  
 Dr Nigel Smeadham (PCC Chairman) and Mrs Gill Waite (PCC Treasurer during 2022)

**NOTES**



1. Fixed Assets retained for church use are written-off in the year of purchase.  
The two church halls previously shown in restricted fixed assets have an insured value of approximately £2,600,000.

2. The movement in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance b/f	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
Designated: Building fund	10000			5000	15000
Bequest fund (unrestricted)	22143				22143
	32143	0	0	5000	37143
Sunday Lunch Club	-21	1159	728		410
Fellowship	430				430
Halls Deposit	0	200			200
Heating Grant	0	1000			1000
Flag pole	0	1152	1254	102	0
Special charity appeals	69		60		9
	478	3511	2042	102	2049

3. Receipts and Payments analysis

a. Other voluntary receipts

Donations  
Charitable Donations  
Covid grant  
Furlough

b. Activities for generating funds

Fund Raising

c. Receipts from Church activities

Fees  
Halls Income  
Sunday Lunch Club  
Flag pole  
Covid 19  
Heating Grant  
Halls deposit  
Sundries

	2022			2021
General fund	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
2383			2383	4588
			0	205
			0	19002
			0	4425
2383	0	0	2383	28220
5018			5018	2694
5018		0	5018	2694
1086			1086	710
53761			53761	26286
		1159	1159	240
		1152	1152	0
			0	1540
		1000	1000	
		200	200	
			0	81
54847		3511	58358	28857

3. Receipts and Payments analysis ctd

d. Church activities - payments

Charitable payments  
Overseas  
Christian Relief and Development  
Home Mission

Clergy expenses  
Church running expenses  
Halls running expenses  
Salaries, wages and honoraria  
Administration expenses  
Youth Work  
Fundraising  
Sunday Lunch Club  
Covid 19  
St Andrews Wages  
Sundries  
Halls Deposit

2022				2021
General fund	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
1100			1100	110
300			300	1260
485		60	545	100
1885		60	1945	1470
			0	459
6983		1254	8237	8332
23910			23910	16441
20836			20836	19101
3037			3037	1746
465			465	207
635			635	88
		728	728	212
			0	8097
			0	2745
			0	12
			0	100
57751	0	2042	59793	59010

4. The expenses paid to clergy may include a small immaterial proportion, which relates to their function as PCC members. No other payments were made to PCC members.



# Christopher McLaughlin

Chartered Accountant

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St Nicholas Church  
Parish Office  
Poplar Grove  
Maidstone  
ME16 0DE

30<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Dear sir / Madam

## Independent review of Allington PCC Financial Statements

I hereby confirm that I have completed an independent review of the financial statements of Allington PCC for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and found them to be in good order.

Yours faithfully



Christopher McLaughlin - CGMA



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Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0PQ



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Chartered Accountant

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Parish Office  
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30<sup>th</sup> April 2023

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**Christopher McLaughlin - CGMA**