



St. Nicholas Church, Blundellsands



St Nicholas CE Primary School
Blundellsands

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council
and of the Governors
for the year ended
31st December 2024

Reference and Administrative Information:

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Nicholas Blundellsands is a registered charity, Registration Number 1158819.

St Nicholas' Church is situated in Bridge Road, Blundellsands, Liverpool and is part of the Diocese of Liverpool within the Church of England. The official correspondence address is:

St Nicholas' Vicarage,
Nicholas Road,
Liverpool,
L23 6TS.

Safeguarding Statement:

St Nicholas' Church Blundellsands takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the Church of England's robust procedures and national guidelines. These can be found at: <http://churchofengland.org/safeguarding>

If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues on a safeguarding matter, useful information can be obtained at: <http://wwwliverpool.anglican.org/safeguarding>

PCC Membership:

For the period 1st January 2024 until the date of the approval of this report, the following people served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex-officio members:

Chair	Rev'd E Anderson
Lay Chair	Prof P Batey
Churchwarden (until April 2024)	Mrs L Utley
Churchwarden	Miss A Dobie
Deanery Synod Representative	Prof P Batey
Deanery Synod Representative	Mr S Green
Deanery Synod Representative	Mr D Phillips

Co-opted members:

Hon Treasurer

Mrs E Sinker

Elected Members:

Mrs G Enstone (PCC Secretary)

Mrs R Doyle (until April 2024)

Mrs G Cain

Mr D Parkinson

Mrs H Pennington

Mr P Warren

Mrs J Batey

Ms A Blundell

Mrs L Utley (from April 2024)

The Rev'd E Anderson was appointed Incumbent by the Bishop of Liverpool (Patron of St Nicholas' and Diocesan Bishop) and is an ex-officio member of the PCC.

The Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance acted as Custodian Trustee for the inalienable property of the church.

Bank Current Account:

Santander
Bridle Road
Bootle
Liverpool
L30 4GB

Bank Savings Account:

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
One Angel Lane
London
EC4R 3AB

Independent Examiner:

L Marr
9 Fewston Close
Bolton BL1 7BJ

Structure, Management and Governance:

St Nicholas' Blundellsands PCC is a body corporate and operates under the Parochial Church Powers 1956 and the Church Representation Rules.

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

Related Trusts:

St Nicholas' CE Primary School Blundellsands: Foundation Governors are: Mr P Bonnet (Chair), Mrs G Cain (Vice chair), Revd E Anderson, Mrs G Enstone, Mrs N Wilson. Mrs L Godfrey (from November 2023) Mrs J Warren

The PCC and its sub-committees:

During 2024 the PCC met 6 times, with an average attendance of 11.

The PCC operates 10 sub-committees (teams), which meet regularly and report back to the PCC: Standing Committee, which acts for the PCC when urgent matters arise and need decision or action between PCC meetings, (subject to subsequent ratification by the PCC), and also prepares for PCC meetings; Worship and Mission; Finance; Under-18 Ministry with Safeguarding; Building and Plant with Health and Safety; Social; Heritage; Restoration, Eco and Communications. The Revd Beth Anderson is an ex-officio member of all committees. Other membership comprises:

Standing Committee: Incumbent, PCC Lay Chair, 1 Churchwarden, Treasurer and PCC Secretary.

Worship and Mission: Mrs G Cain, Mrs G Enstone, Mr D Parkinson, Mrs J Batey. Co-opted members: Mrs J Parkinson.

Finance: Mrs E Sinker, Prof P Batey, Miss A Dobie, Mrs R Doyle, Co-opted member: Mr J Rankin

Under-18 Ministry with Safeguarding: Mrs L Utley, Mrs E Sinker (Parish Safeguarding Officer), Mr P Warren, (DBS Verifier). Co-opted members: Mrs L Martin, Mrs C Creed, Mrs B Sapre, Mrs C Hughes

Building and Plant with Health and Safety: Mr S Green, Miss A Dobie, Mrs R Doyle. Co-opted members: Mr C Rooney

Social: Mr D Parkinson, Mrs H Pennington, Mrs A Blundell, Mr D Phillips, Co-opted member: Mrs L Jones

Heritage: Prof P Batey, Mrs G Cain, Mr S Green, Mrs L Utley, Mrs G Enstone, Mrs J Batey, Co-opted member: Mrs L Godfrey

Restoration: Mr S Green, Prof P Batey, Mrs G Enstone, Mr D Parkinson. Co-opted member: Mr T Johnston,

Eco: Mr P Warren, Miss A Dobie, Mr S Green

Communications: Mrs J Batey, Mrs G Cain, Mrs G Enstone.

PCC members, both individually and collectively, receive training as and when deemed appropriate by the PCC. This has included: trustee responsibility, safeguarding, domestic abuse awareness, first aid, Parish Giving Scheme. Members who are also Foundation Governors of St Nicholas' School regularly complete local authority governor training courses.

Risk Assessments and Policies:

The PCC has undertaken a programme of risk assessments to identify major risks.

Procedures have been put in place to manage those risks and minimise their impact on the life of the church. Areas of risk covered have included: finance, first aid provision, PAT testing, food hygiene, safeguarding and disclosure and barring. The Church's Health and Safety Policy is reviewed and updated by PCC annually, with Health and Safety checks carried out monthly. PCC also reviews the Safeguarding and Volunteer Policies yearly.

For fuller information regarding the financial risk assessment policy and trustee and patron payment, please see:

St Nicholas' Church Blundellsands and St Nicholas' School Blundellsands: Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council and of the Governors for the year ended 31st December 2023, published separately and available on St Nicholas' Church website <http://www.stnicholasblundellsands.org> Currently one patron, the office assistant, and one trustee, the hall bookings secretary, receive payment for their work for the church.

A safeguarding update is available below as part of the report of the Under 18 Ministry with Safeguarding team.

Electoral Roll Report April 2024:

The number of people on the Electoral Roll in 2024 was 189.

Now every six years the Electoral Roll is totally revised and everyone needs to reapply for inclusion. Much has changed since 2019 and those who have sadly died, relocated, moved to other churches or worship at St Nicholas sporadically are not included in this year's total which currently stands at 111.

It is interesting to note that there are 18 people who have joined the Electoral Roll for the first time this year; they join our worship at Sunday morning services, midweek communion, Church@School and Picnic Praise.

We have 71 female members and 40 male; the age profile is more evenly distributed with 56 people aged 65 and under, and 55 aged over 65. This is a very encouraging balance.

So if you do notice a new face in church, please make them welcome with a smile and an introduction. If you can welcome them by name when you next see them, it would make all the difference!

Objectives and Activities 2024:

The general functions of the PCC are stated within Section 2 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) measure 1956. St Nicholas' PCC has the responsibility of jointly operating with the Incumbent in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church, a Grade 2 listed building, and for St Nicholas' School.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC has given consideration to the **Charity Commission Guidance on Public Benefit, in particular the specific guidance related to the advancement of religion.**

- **Regular public worship, open to all:**

In planning our public worship, our aim is to develop the diversity of what we offer so that we can extend a warm welcome to the widest possible range of worshippers from within both our regular congregation and the wider community.

We continue to hold two weekly Sunday morning services, at 8.30am (using the BCP once a month) and at 10.30 am (live streamed where possible). Both include Communion, apart from the monthly All Age 10.30 am service, aimed to appeal to a wide age range of

children and young people. Regular Wednesday morning Communion also continues to take place, but in a more informal, cafe-style setting, in either one of the smaller church halls or the community space at the back of church. This allows greater emphasis on Bible study and discussion and can perhaps appeal to those less familiar with a traditional church setting.

In addition, Picnic Praise, twice a month on Sunday afternoons, caters for families with nursery and primary age children and includes games, crafts, music and Bible stories, while Church@School extends our school / church and family links in a different setting.

In addition to the celebration of the major yearly Christian festivals, special services are held which reach out directly to those suffering from illness, bereavement or other forms of distress.

Inclusivity has also been an important consideration when planning worship and is under constant review. Care has been taken to make our premises and services as accessible as possible for the elderly, disabled and those with dementia or learning difficulties, while babies and very young children are made welcome at all services with a dedicated children's corner and breast-feeding space. Equality of access for all is represented through the incorporation of the Pride Progress flag into our logo.

- **The provision of sacred space for personal prayer and contemplation:**

Meetings and courses provide structured opportunities for prayer outside normal services and visitors to the church are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity for private prayer and contemplation whenever the church building is open for any purpose. Since the end of pandemic restrictions we have worked to increase the number of such occasions, holding events such as welcome days, heritage open days and a prayer festival. A prayer tree is placed centrally for those who wish to request support for themselves or a loved one and this is widely used, by both regular church members and visitors.

- **Pastoral work, including visiting the sick, the elderly and the bereaved:**

Clergy and members of the congregation regularly visit those who are sick, bereaved or housebound. Considerable efforts are also made through live streaming of services and distribution of the weekly church newsletter, electronically or by hand, to ensure that all who are unable to attend church in person are able to feel part of the church family.

- **Teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups:**

Regular weekly Bible study and prayer meetings take place and attendance at a variety of courses is also encouraged.

- **Taking of religious assemblies in local schools:**

Our Vicar has developed a close relationship with our church school, regularly taking both whole school and class assemblies. School church links are supported through the work of a team of seven Foundation Governors drawn from the congregation and through joint eco ventures.

- **Provision of a youth club with a Christian ethos:**

The Bridge youth group has been successfully re-established for children from Year Six and above, supporting their transition from primary school to a variety of local secondary schools, exploring faith and offering confirmation.

- **Promoting the whole mission of the church through provision of activities for senior citizens, parents and toddlers and other special need groups:**

Earlybirds, providing tea and toast for parents and younger toddlers after the morning school run, and Picnic Praise, mentioned above, provide regular opportunities to support parents and young children. Also weekly, Soupa Thursday is open for morning coffee or a soup and sandwich lunch for members of our community in need of companionship, a meal or a 'warm space'. Activities such as board games, crafts and a book swap are also available and the numbers attending have grown steadily over the two year period since its establishment. Although this event is largely staffed by volunteers from the church, Sefton CVS is also on hand to provide links with local support services for those with specific special needs.

- **Supporting other charities, at home and overseas:**

We have continued to support our church mission partner through CMS. We also support the Children's Society, Christian Aid, the local food bank, the Red Cross, Sefton Baby Baskets and the Salvation Army. The Finance Team reviews our giving annually.

- **Promoting links with our ecumenical partners in Churches Together:**

Recent years have seen many changes for the churches of both the L23 Partnership and Churches Together in Crosby and Blundellsands, making partnership working within and across both groupings all the more vital, an aim which St Nicholas' Church is keen to pursue in all aspects of our mission and ministry. L23 clergy meet every week and are looking to do more together across the churches.

- **Reaching out to our local community in ways which make a positive difference to the lives of our neighbours:**

A common theme across most of the activities outlined above is that of community outreach, providing practical, emotional and spiritual support, food, warmth and companionship to our neighbours in a variety of ways. We also see the role of the church as providing an important hub to promote community cohesion and a sense of local

identity. Many Heritage activities provide opportunities for discussion and reminiscence, often focusing on the two chapels of remembrance, evoking memories of family members and a shared past. Our Social Team also welcomes members of the community to a wide range of events such as quizzes, litter picks and treasure hunts.

Achievements and Performance 2024. Reports from the Teams:

Joint report of the Worship and Mission, Heritage and Communication Teams 2024:

The year 2024 celebrated 150 years since the consecration of St Nicholas' Church and the three teams worked together to plan, run and publicise several events throughout the year. We launched on 4th Feb with 'Living Stones and Collage', in which members of the church were asked to bring in photographs of themselves /family, which were placed on the pillars of the Church to create a vivid picture of the 'living' church of St Nicholas.

In March we were able to give the Reception class at school daffodils to take home for Mothering Sunday. We also held a school art exhibition throughout March in church, which was open to school and members of the community. Our Music Festival started in the week of the 19th of May with the celebration of Pentecost led by Tongues of Fire, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The end of the month saw the latest in what has now become a regular Heritage event, with a lecture by historian Peter Cousins on lesser-known aspects of the First World War which everyone in the room found extremely moving. In preparation for this, an exhibition on church life during the two world wars was also mounted.

In June a service was held on the beach, which also included a pets' blessing. Although it was bitterly cold a large number came, some with their animals, and Mike Anderson valiantly provided the music.

Sea Sunday, supported by members of the RNA, took place on 14th July and the service was followed by a talk by members on Malta and the events leading to their award of the George Cross. An exhibition was also mounted at the end of this month illustrating how the Church developed from a cottage school where the children of the labouring classes were taught into the Church and modern school of today.

Unusually, September saw the church open for both of the available Heritage Open Weekends, with refreshments, guided tours and different talks each weekend. The first of these concerned

the origins of St Nicholas' Church and the social divisions this revealed within what became the Parish of St Nicholas' and the second explored the origins and development of Blundellsands. Past clergy were invited to come and preach at Sunday Services during September. Janet Roberts, Keith Thornborough and Ravi Sangra all came, while on 22nd September the school assisted with the service, thus providing their own celebration of 150 years. On Tuesday 24th September, the actual day 150 years ago when the church was consecrated, a Thanksgiving service was held followed by cheese and wine. On Saturday 28th a Fun Day was held with games, refreshments and craft activities. Following this on Sunday 29th September Bishop John, Bishop of Liverpool, graced the Church with his presence, and there was a most enjoyable buffet lunch.

Our mission within the community continued to develop and we saw the start of Early Birds on Thursdays during term time for toddlers and carers, from 9 -10.30am and Soupa Thursday continued to grow. On the 19th December Early Birds held a Christmas Party in Church whilst Soupa Thursday provided a Christmas Lunch for 40 people in the hall.

The year of celebration concluded with various groups decorating their own Christmas trees, which were displayed at the back of Church. 2024 genuinely was a celebration year, with all the events both very well attended and clearly enjoyed.

Under 18 Ministry with Safeguarding by Lesley Utley:

2024/25 brings positive news from the Under 18 Ministry with Safeguarding Team. The team met three times and business included a review of the Safeguarding Policy. No safeguarding incidents relating to children and young people have been reported to Liz Sinker, our Parish Safeguarding Officer. PCC is most grateful to her for carrying out this important role.

Checks on leaders and volunteers through the Disclosure and Barring Service have been updated as required by Pete Warren, DBS verifier and thanks are due to Pete for his diligence.

Under 18 Mission for our children and young people has developed throughout the year as follows:

- A spin-off from Soupa Thursday community café has been the launch of **Early Birds**, a group for our youngest children and their parents/carers. It's been so exciting to see it take off steered by Kate, Jen and Sophie. There are plenty of inviting resources, crafts, story & singing sessions and a healthy snack prepared by Soupa Thursday volunteers. Numbers continue to grow and feedback is always positive.
- **Picnic Praise** – Services led by Beth and two parents take place twice each month and the menu of games, crafts, singing, bible stories and prayer proves very popular with families.

- **The Bridge** Beth organises weekly sessions for two groups of young people in Y6, Y7 and Y8, assisted by Pat (All Saints with St Frideswyde Church) and Alison (St Nicholas). They have fun with activities, games and discussion.
- **The Children's Corner** offers books, puzzles, simple crafts etc for families. It's always lovely to hear a little buzz of activity.
- **Church@School** – The team plans services for the academic year and continues to be welcomed and supported by St Nicholas School. Pre-school and school age children and their families join us for bible stories, crafts, singing and prayers.

Uniformed Groups Report by Liz Sinker:

All three Girlguiding Units – Guides, Brownies and Rainbows – have had a busy and fun year. 8th Crosby Guides have enjoyed completing a variety of challenge badges, unit meeting activities and theme awards. The girls took part in many different activities including writing plays, songs and baking amongst other things.

Last year, the girls enjoyed trips around the local area picking up litter and sailing at the Marine Lake, as well as a trip to Southport. The unit unfortunately went through some sadness last year as they lost Sue one of their helpers suddenly, but the girls have all supported each other through this sad time and have also grown in number taking on some girls from a local unit that was closing.

8th Crosby Brownies has also had a successful year, with unit numbers remaining at maximum, having nearly 30 girls. Fortunately, two more young leaders have joined the team to give valuable support to Gemma and Ruby. In 2024 they enjoyed trips to a Chinese restaurant for Chinese New Year and enjoyed an overnight trip to the Catalyst Science Museum.

Both Brownies and Rainbows took the Division coach trip to a fun day at Scarisbrick campsite including campfire singing and fun games. They took part in Move It – a Division sponsored event raising money for Children in Need which reached a total of £3,000.

All the units enjoyed a Thinking Day service and craft day based on a theme of 'Our World' and the environment, held at St Nicholas' Church with Beth and Kate presiding, and attended by the North West Regional Commissioner.

Rainbows has had to increase its' capacity to accommodate the waiting list and now has 18 girls. They are fortunate to have five young leaders, from both Guides and the Duke of Edinburgh programme, who will be looking to gain their Young Leader qualification. Rainbows also enjoyed a trip to Coronation Park in the summer, hosted at the pavilion by the Friends of Coronation

Park, including a litter pick around the grounds, and a Forest School trip to the Waterloo Community Gardens, where the girls enjoyed toasting marshmallows round the campfire, climbing trees and falling out of hammocks!

All the units are very grateful for the support given to their work by the Church and have enjoyed several trips to church services, the highlight being the All Age Nativity Service which the girls loved

Building and Plant with Health and Safety and Restoration by Stephen Green:

The hall heating system, the roof alarm and fire extinguishers were serviced.

The new church heating boilers were serviced for free last year but a fee is to be paid this year after servicing in March.

Last year, which was our 150th anniversary year, we appointed a new architect, Rebecca Grimshaw, as our long standing architect, Robin Wolley, had announced his retirement. We have been grateful for his faithful assistance to three restoration phases and several insurance claims.

Rebecca's first job with us was to conduct a quinquennial inspection and produce a report. As custodians, we are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the buildings and grounds. The resulting report contained advice and warnings which we are expected to respond to within certain time frames depending on their severity. As expected, due to the age and location of the church, the challenges increase with each inspection. The previous one was before the pandemic so the financial and accessibility ramifications have affected our ability to repair and care during the last five years.

Our prime issue is the restoration of the East end of the church which we have named as Phase 4. Due to its condition and its most exposed location, we are still on the Heritage at Risk Register.

Our report has revealed new issues as well as those we are aware of. The damp issue on the North aisle has not yet been resolved. We are working on a solution both externally and internally. A copy of the report is pinned to the noticeboard next to the hall kitchen.

The Church of England has challenged each church to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2030. Each diocese has been allocated funding to be applied for by parishes for up to £5,000 to reduce their carbon footprint. We were successful in applying for £4,870 and a host of tasks were completed including repairing the South porch glazed doors, installing led lighting, fitting timer controls in the WC areas and the introduction of PIR lighting over the South porch and hall entrances. Roofing repairs and gutter clearances were also included.

We were finalists in Care and Conservation Awards competition again. We came so close to winning this year and were highly commended. It is a tremendous acknowledgement for the dedication and diligence applied by the Men's Working Party to achieve this accolade which has also been acknowledged by the Diocese of Liverpool. No other parish in Liverpool has achieved this.

Please look at the framed certificate and covering card displayed on one of the South aisle window ledges.

Pat and Ian are also to be applauded for the care and dedication they take to maintain the plots, borders, memorial garden and wildflower area.

The H & S policy has been updated, and approved by the PCC and duly signed by our vicar Beth.

Social by Derek Parkinson:

Alison Blundell joined the Social Committee in February and Helen Kay later in the year. The Social Committee now comprises of Derek Parkinson (Team Leader), Linda Jones, Helen Pennington , Alison Blundell, Helen Kay.

During the year several events were organised by the Committee. A Cheese and Wine evening with quiz and raffle was attended by 57 people who enjoyed the evening and the raffle raised £118 for church funds.

A coffee morning was held in the hospitality area at the back of church to coordinate with the Art Exhibition There was a book/DVD/CD sale of donated items. Coffee/tea and cakes were sold at £1 each as 'cafe' items. A Children's Story Time was held twice during the morning with Lesley Utley telling the stories and she was surrounded by many children engrossed in the stories whilst their parents enjoyed the cake and coffee.

In May the members of the Committee helped at the Music Festival performances .

A litter pick around local streets followed by afternoon tea on was held in June. There was no charge, but a raffle was held towards church funds.

In July, we held a Walking Treasure hunt followed by afternoon tea. There was a £3 donation for adults towards the cost of refreshments but children were free.

There were no other events arranged by the Social Committee as there were several events arranged to celebrate the church's 150 years since it's consecration. The members of the Committee helped to arrange and assist at many of those events.

The annual Carol Service in December was followed by mulled wine, cordial drinks, mince pies and biscuits. As the large hall was booked for an outside event the refreshments were prepared and served in the Hospitality Area at the back of church.

The Team would like to thank all those who supported the events by their attendance and a particular thanks to those who came early or stayed late to help in the setting up and clearing away for all the events.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to those members of the committee who helped prepare the venues and the food and drink, and to the many people who helped to clear up at the end. These events not only raised funds for the church but increased the opportunities for people to meet together socially.

More members and helpers are always welcome, please see any of the Committee for more information.

Eco Report by Peter Warren:

Activity for the last 12 months has been focused on two issues:

Firstly – how we could progress towards our challenge of Net Zero Carbon by 2030;

Secondly- how we could engage St Nicholas' School pupils and the youngsters in the Church in ECO awareness.

In progressing towards Net Zero Carbon (NZC) the attention has naturally focused on reducing the energy used in the Church premises. This has been a big challenge and, along with the building team, we have concentrated on the “low hanging fruit” such as changing light bulbs to LEDs, improving insulation where possible, and generally maintaining the buildings so that they are dry and weatherproof.

After meeting with Diocesan representatives we were pleased to be put forward for consideration to be an NZC “Demonstrator Church” and this would have enabled access to significant grant funding . Unfortunately, the nomination didn't succeed so it was back to looking at what grant aid we might qualify for off our own efforts. We did, however, get put forward by the Diocesan team for a paid for professional Energy Audit of the Church buildings, and at the time of writing we are awaiting a confirmed date for this to take place. The benefit of this audit will hopefully be support for a prioritised list of building repairs and improvements which would be aimed both at reducing the energy used and also protecting the physical structure of the buildings. This will be used as a platform for pursuing grant aid.

We are about to launch a “Consumer Survey” to check that our thoughts on what services St Nicholas’ Church is offering are in accordance with the aspirations of our congregation, hall users, and local businesses. In this way we can work towards ensuring that any building improvements we plan are indeed serving the local community.

In line with the themes of the 2024 National Earth Day, we had a couple of events aimed at encouraging youngsters to focus on the three ECO basics: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle. Crafting sessions were run both in the Church and at St Nicholas’ School to illustrate what fun could be had on the three themes. At the time of writing, we are also involved in planning a spring beach litter pick with the youngsters at the school. The date for this has been fixed for April 23rd.

Finance:

The financial reports and accounts are on a separate document.

St Nicholas’ CE Primary School Report by Gill Enstone:

During 2024, our school has been subject to the financial pressures experienced across all state schools as a result of various government policies and an ever rising cost of living. Nevertheless, careful financial management by an experienced team of governors and, above all, by a committed headteacher and staff, have ensured that our school continues to provide an environment for all our children where academic progress, personal wellbeing and extracurricular activities can all be valued and celebrated equally.

The school’s success in achieving these aspirations was confirmed by the results of the OFSTED inspection which took place during the Spring Term and which found St Nicholas’ to be ‘Good in all areas’. It is unfortunate that the experience of the process itself, by staff, children, parents and governors alike, was found to be a less than positive one, with the conduct of the inspection proving to be very far from ‘good in all areas’.

Nevertheless, these results are a genuine cause for celebration and the report’s recommendations have been incorporated into the wider school action plan for the current academic year.

Regular analysis of data monitoring pupil progress in core subjects for all groups throughout the school continues to compare more than favourably with similar data nationally. Most significantly, these comparisons apply to scores achieved not just for the previous year but those pre dating the pandemic, which has been one of the primary aims of the staff ever since children were once again able to attend school regularly after the various lockdown restrictions.

SATS testing at the end of Key Stage 2 took place as usual during May, with scores in the highest 20% nationally, with results for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities also comparing favourably with those of their peers. While additional government 'catch-up' funding was discontinued last year, staff have continued to provide targeted additional support for those who need it wherever they can, using a variety of means, including 1:1 support and small group sessions.

The new Rainbow Room has provided a particularly invaluable resource in enabling SEND pupils to fulfil their potential.

Academic results, while a crucial element in all children's education, are, of course, only one part of the whole picture: our school works hard to provide a wide and balanced programme of extracurricular activities and clubs, from sports, in which St Nicholas' has always excelled, to creative activities. A busy programme of cultural, community and residential opportunities has continued to ensure that every aspect of children's development can be catered for, whatever their age or personal and family circumstances.

Proof of success in the sphere of artistic endeavour was provided in abundance by a whole school art exhibition mounted in church in the Spring, in which every corner of the building was filled with examples of the children's work, a clear indication, if any were needed, of the continued closeness of the relationship between school and St Nicholas' Church. This relationship was also celebrated during the summer in a Heritage exhibition and talk focusing on the joint origins of the church itself and of our own modern school through the establishment of St Barnabas' School in Brighton le Sands in 1856. Both the exhibition and the talk formed part of the church's celebration of its 150th anniversary in September, in which St Nicholas' School played an enthusiastic part,

Sadly, the end of the academic year in July also saw the departure of our much loved Deputy Head, Jayne Nel, as a result of her well deserved promotion to a headship in Formby. Mrs Woods has paid tribute to a gifted teacher and kind and caring colleague who will be much missed by all at St Nicholas', a judgement with which everyone, whether teachers, parents or children, will agree. Her successor, Mrs Claire Boyd, an experienced and enthusiastic addition to our staff who has, by common consent, 'hit the ground running', is warmly welcomed by us all.

Vicar's Report

Celebration, thanksgiving, togetherness, connection and care are some of the words that spring to my mind as I think back over 2024 at St Nicholas Church here in Blundellsands. We celebrated our big anniversary well and the Worship and Mission team report reminds us of all the wonderful events and occasions.

Everything we did was characterised by a bringing together of people across our community, a celebration of the 'Living Stones' of this church family past and present, and thankfulness for God's love, faithfulness and provision for the last 150 years. And, amongst all these big events, the day-to-day life of the church was faithfully, lovingly and generously lived out. You, the family of the church, have served coffee and washed-up cups; done DIY jobs, gardening and cleaning; contributed to and delivered bulletins; checked in on each other; helped out and prayed for each other. You have made soup and served toasties. You have welcomed, listened to and encouraged people in God's name. This year I have witnessed, in many ways, the opening of hearts and arms, new friendships and connections, an increased eagerness to serve, people stepping up and stepping in to new roles and new people joining our services and communities. Under God's grace, St Nic's church is growing and I thank him and you for all you do.

We have worked hard on our commitment to social justice with our Food Bank support, Soupa Thursday Warm Space provision and the clothes exchange at our new and rather brilliant Early Birds Tots Group. We have furthered our commitment to Net Zero Carbon in our maintenance practices and built on our Silver Eco Church award by eco activities in church and with our school. We have maintained our two Sunday services, midweek communion, Church@School, Bridge youth group and Picnic Praise worship and are grateful to Kirsty and Mike for providing the music for our Sunday worship so faithfully. We have committed to training and equipping all our volunteers especially in safeguarding and I am so thankful for the commitment and hard work of our PCC and all its teams and team leaders in Worship and Mission; Communications; Buildings and Plant and Health and Safety; Finance; Heritage; Restoration; Under 18's and Safeguarding.

It has been a bonus to have Kate Greaves continuing her ordinand placement with us this year and a joy to know she will be serving her curacy as our joint L23 curate along with St Luke's, St Michael's and ASSF. I am also deeply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside Linda and Chris Jones and Alan Brooks and thank them for all their support, hard work and contributions to our worshipping life together.

In 2024 we began the process of looking at the proposals in Fit for Mission and continue to seek God's guidance in our discussions and decisions.

Another bonus of our anniversary was that we finished our beautiful mosaic (helped hugely by Shelagh McNicholas). It is standing in St Martin's chapel and speaks powerfully of the beauty and diversity of our community. However, I think there is even more resonance in the process of how it was made as so many people added their piece, their bit of colour to make up such a beautiful image. As we move on under God, living out his love and grace, building his kingdom in our little bit of his world, each one of us has our valuable, colourful contribution to make. I was reminded recently – "It's not our job to feed the 5,000; just to offer God the loaves and fishes that we have. "

Thank you for all you have offered and continue to bring!

The Church of St Nicholas Blundellsands
St Nicholas' CE Primary School Blundellsands
Belonging Believing Becoming

**St. Nicholas' Church,
Blundellsands**

Financial Statements of the
Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2024

Registered charity number 1158819

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Financial Review

2024 was a relatively quiet year for Church finances – in other words we plodded along, with the loss of £4,500 over the year much better than predicted. On the minus side we did not have the one-off good fortune of 2023 (the boundary change grant of £10,000) and little in the way of legacy income. However, the hall lettings continue to prop up the budget, rising from £32,600 to £38,800 this year. Soupa Thursday also went from strength to strength, attracting grants and producing income of £2,500 in donations towards church running costs. We also received grants of £2,000 from the Deanery to celebrate both Easter and our 150th birthday.

Expenditure was tightly controlled, increasing by only 1.3% this year. Parish Share increased by only £150 per month compared to the leap in 2023.

However our rainy-day reserves now stand at only £11,000 (in our special maintenance reserve) and the PCC acknowledges that balancing the books by undertaking only the most urgent of maintenance projects is not sustainable in the long run for the fabric of the building, and important work is now being undertaken to address the findings of our Quinquennial inspection report.

Reserves policy

The church maintains a number of reserve funds, some of which are restricted in nature where the PCC needs to use the funds as laid down by the donor of the funds, and some of which are unrestricted where the PCC has full discretion over their use. Attached in notes 9 (church restricted fund), notes 5 & 10 (church endowment fund) and notes 11 (school endowment fund) are full details of the funds, their history and some indication of the purpose for which they are held. This policy sets out the four reasons for the PCC holding the level of unrestricted reserves shown in the financial statements:

- (i) To assist with the maintenance of the church and hall which is a Grade II listed building. The 2024 quinquennial inspection report of the Church and hall has identified expenditure requirements well beyond the PCC's reserves. The PCC's response to the inspection report is to undertake the urgent repairs identified and continue to seek other sources of funds to assist with the major ongoing restoration needs.
- (ii) Therefore, the first call on unrestricted reserves is to undertake such urgent repairs as they arise.
- (iii) To undertake periodic refurbishments and upgrades to the internal fabric of both the church and the hall, such as redecoration, electrical maintenance or furniture replacements which are too large to be undertaken from the church's income.
- (iv) To be available for any major school projects where the church has a legal responsibility to contribute to the cost.

To be available should a budgetary deficit occur, a target figure of £15,000 has been set for the Special Maintenance Reserve as a contingency to cover deficits. For many years during the last two decades deficits have been incurred. Currently the total deposited in this account stands at just over £11,000.

Agent Transactions

The PCC acted as a financial agent for the following people and organizations:-

- £632 was received as Assigned Fees for weddings and funerals. £1925 was received in respect of organists and vergers and passed on to the appropriate individuals.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Performance of Investments

In 2022 the Mellor Bequest was drawn down and used towards the cost of the church heating. The performance of the remaining endowment investment has been static this year, with the church's endowment fund increasing in value slightly from £1049 to £1081.

Fundraising and Giving

Overall income from giving before tax recovery increased by 4%, compared to 3.5% the previous year. With inflation (RPI) amounting to 3.5% at the end of 2024 this represents a standstill position. Loose plate did, however, increase from £3,200 to £4,200 as the collection plate has gradually gained more prominence post-covid. Legacies of £500 were gratefully received.

Parish giving from unrestricted income continued to support the Church Missionary Society's work by £125 per month, with £25 per month also donated to Christian Aid. A further £968 was distributed to charitable causes from special collection giving, including a new link with Sefton Baby Baskets (who receive 50% of donations from Baptisms). £700 was raised during the year from our music festival, and £430 from other social events.

Insurance recoveries this year totalled over £6,187.

Approved by the PCC on 31st March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne Dobie (Churchwarden)

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of responsibilities of PCC members and Governors as Trustees of a charity

The Parochial Church Council, is a charity. As a charity, its members are trustees, its property is charitable and it is bound by charity law.

PCC members have full responsibility for the Charity and must:

- act together and in person and not delegate control of the Charity to others;
 - act strictly in accordance with the charity's governing document;
 - act in the Charity's interest only;
 - manage the Charity's affairs prudently and take a long-term as well as a short-term view;
 - not derive any personal benefit or gain from the Charity of which they are trustees; and
 - take proper professional advice on matters on which they are not themselves competent.
- PCC members are responsible for all of the operations of the Charity, especially in:
- managing the Charity's finances;
 - applying the Charity's income for charitable purposes only;
 - managing land or buildings;
 - investing funds;
 - employing people;
 - appealing for funds;
 - ensuring that all the Charity's property is under the control of the trustees;
 - and collection of all money owed or due to the charity.

The PCC is responsible for all parish finance, its management and control, including the appointment of a treasurer. While it may delegate some of its duties, this does not remove its legal responsibilities. These include:

a) Keeping 'proper accounting records', which must be sufficient to show and explain all the PCC's transactions. The records, together with the annual financial statements, must be preserved for at least six years from the end of the financial year to which they relate. These records must be sufficient to:

- show and explain all the PCC's transactions;
- disclose the PCC's financial position at any time with reasonable accuracy;
- enable the required accounts to be prepared;
- show on a day-to-day basis all receipts and payments and what they were for; include a record of all assets and liabilities.

b) Ensuring that the finances of the PCC are under its control and only delegated if the PCC can ensure that its wishes will be followed.

c) Preparing an annual account (financial statement) and report which shall be presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Church Representation Rules.

d) Arranging for a suitable independent examination of the financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Nicholas Church Blundellsands on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024, as set out on pages 6 to 14 of your Annual Accounts.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They 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 independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 accounts 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 material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act

Or the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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

L Marr ACA

9 Fewston Close
Bolton BL1 7BJ

6th May 2025

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	
					2024	2023
INCOMING RESOURCES		£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income	1(a)	71968	5397	-	77365	72484
Activities for generating funds	1(b)	41808	-	-	41808	36354
Income from investments	1(c)	242	-	-	242	196
Other incoming resources	1(d)	8292	651	-	8943	23677
		122,310	6,048		128,358	132711
RESOURCES EXPENDED		£	£	£	£	£
Cost of generation voluntary income	2(a)	-	-	-	-	-
Church activities	2(b)	123637	4844	-	128481	132695
Church management and administration	2(c)	2906	-	-	2906	3011
Church school	2(d)	293	-	-	293	320
Restricted funds - boiler expenditure	2(e)	-	-	-	-	2910
Restricted funds – organ restoration	2(e)	-	-	-	-	-
Special Maintenance reserve	2(e)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		126836	4844	-	131,680	138936
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES	-	(4526)	1,204	-	(3,322)	(6225)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	-	-	-	32	32	55
Transfer from Special Maintenance Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS		(4526)	1,204	32	(3,290)	(6170)
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1 JANUARY 2024(2023)		13,753	16,152	1049	30,954	37,125
Less v ariance – Special Maintenance interest adjustment (£150)			-150		-150	-1
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER 2024(2023)		9227	17,206	1,081	27,514	30,954

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments (endowment funds)	5	1081	1049
Debtors/ prepayments	7	2889	1564
Short term deposits		13,194	18003
Cash at bank and in hand		13,442	12933
		29,525	32,500
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	8	(3092)	(2595)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		26,433	29,905
TOTAL NET ASSETS		27,514	30,954
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted		9227	13753
Restricted	9	17206	16152
Endowment	10	1081	1049
		27,514	30,954

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 31st March 2025 and signed on its' behalf by:

Mrs Anne Dobie (Churchwarden)

Mrs E Sinker (Honorary Treasurer)

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Notes to the financial statements

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2005.

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

Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts of endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund.

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. The purpose of any restricted funds is noted in the accounts.

Incoming resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is recognised on a receivable basis. Revenue grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Capital grants are accounted for on a receipts basis but the capital commitment is disclosed by way of a note to the financial statements. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Resources expended

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

Fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by S 96(2) (a) of the Charities Act 1993. Moveable church furnishings, held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Subsequently no individual item has cost more than £1,000 per annum so all such expenditure has been written off when incurred. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Notes to the financial statements

Likewise, all expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or beneficed buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off.

Investments are valued at market value at 31st December.

Current assets

Amounts owing to the PCC as at 31 December in respect of fees or other income are shown as debtors less any provision for amounts that may prove uncollectable.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the Central Board of Finance or at the bank.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
1(a) Voluntary income				
Planned giving				
Gift aid	49133	-	-	49133
Income tax recoverable on gift aid	13542	-	-	13542
Pledges not subject to gift aid	1050	-	-	1050
Collections (open plate) at all services	4242	-	-	4242
Gift day and special collections	-	5397	-	5397
Sundry donations	925	-	-	925
Soupa Thursday	2576	-	-	2576
Legacies	500	-	-	500
	71,968	5397	-	77,365
1(b) Activities for generating funds				
Fetes and fundraising events*	1136	-	-	1136
Church Hall use	38869	-	-	38869
Fees	931	-	-	931
Fellowship teas*	395	-	-	395
Children's activities - Early Birds	477	-	-	477
	41,808	-	-	41,808
1(c) Income from investments				
Interest from deposits	-	-	-	-
Interest from endowments	242	-	-	242
1(d) Other incoming resources				
Organ fund income plus interest	-	2	-	2
Restoration fund – interest	-	1	-	1
Boundary Change Grant from Diocese	-	-	-	-
Restoration fund – sundry fundraising and donations	-	-	-	-
Grants	1375	-	-	1375
Special maintenance reserve	-	648	-	648
Special Purposes Fund	-	-	-	-
Sequestration Fund	-	-	-	-
Insurance recoveries	6187	-	-	6187
VAT recoveries	730	-	-	730
	8,534	651	-	9,185
Total incoming resources	122,310	6,048	-	128,358

*See note 2 for any corresponding expenditure

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
2(a) Cost of generation voluntary income					
Costs of fetes and fundraising events*	-	-	-	-	-
2(b) Church activities Charitable giving					
<u>Missionary</u>					
Christian Aid	300	54	-	354	500
CMS Mission Partner	1500	-	-	1500	1200
Mission and Growth Fund	-	41	-	41	96
Soupa Thursday	-	2179	-	2179	683
Vicar's Discretionary Fund	115	-	-	115	-
<u>Relief & Development Agencies</u>					
Children's Society Boxes and Candles	-	451	-	451	925
Christian Aid donation	-	-	-	-	-
Salvation Army	-	109	-	109	103
Foodbank	-	35	-	35	-
Ukraine Appeal International Aid Trust	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Home missions & Other Church Societies</u>					
Sefton Tree Grant	-	-	-	-	72
Streaming Services Equipment	-	-	-	-	276
Sefton Baby Baskets	-	258	-	258	-
Memorial Gardens	-	69	-	69	200
Heritage Sefton for Good Grant	-	124	-	124	36
Picnic Praise	-	24	-	24	-
Boiler replacement	-	-	-	-	8540
Church 150 th Birthday Celebrations	-	1500	-	1500	-
	1915	4844	-	6,759	12631
Other church activities					
Parish share	72,758	-	-	72,758	70968
Ministry:					
Vicar's expenses and phone	28	-	-	28	-
Council tax and water rates	4013	-	-	4013	3741
Vicarage maintenance	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting preachers	10	-	-	10	67
PAYE	1345	-	-	1345	1592
Parish Assistant	1832	-	-	1832	1824
Reader and curate incl housing	-	-	-	-	-
Church:					
Heat and light	9634	-	-	9634	12758
Liturgy wine and wafers	219	-	-	219	426
Other sundry expenses	558	-	-	558	239
Cleaning	981	-	-	981	575
Maintenance	8055	-	-	8055	3614
Organ maintenance	-	-	-	-	450
Water rates	1228	-	-	1228	1040
Fellowship teas*	56	-	-	56	71
Parish entertaining /events/gifts	257	-	-	257	462
Hall maintenance and broadband	2305	-	-	2305	2719
Caretaker	6276	-	-	6276	5980
Choir and organist, verger	2,225	-	-	2,225	1949
Insurance	8058	-	-	8058	9765
Hall secretary	1884	-	-	1884	1824
	121,722	-	-	121,722	120064

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

2 (c) Church management and administration

Printing and stationery	2706	-	-	2706	2811
Independent examiner	200	-	-	200	200
	2906	-	-	2906	3011

2 (d) St Nicholas' School

Leaver's gifts	293	-	-	293	320
	293	-	-	293	320

2(e) Restricted funds

Boiler expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Organ restoration	-	-	-	-	-
Special Maintenance Reserve	-	-	-	-	2910
	-	-	-	-	2910

Total resources expended	126,836	4844	-	131,680	138936
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3. STAFF COSTS

During the year the PCC employed an Organist, occasional Organists two Caretakers, a Hall Secretary and a Parish Assistant whose net earnings, after payment of employers' national insurance, were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Caretaker	6,276	5,980
Organist (and verger 2024)	2,225	1,949
Parish assistant	1,832	1,824
Hall secretary	1,884	1,824
	12,217	11,577

There were no other employees and therefore no employees earned £40,000 or more during the year. Together these employees equate to less than one full time employee.

4. PAYMENTS TO PCC MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES DURING 2023

	2024 £	2023 £
Nicola Jeens – Parish assistant	1,832	1,824
Elizabeth Sinker: Hall Secretary	1,884	1,824
	3,716	3,648

5. FIXED ASSETS

	2024 £	2023 £
Investments (endowment funds)		
Treasury stock 5.5% 2008/12 – CR Taylor Bequest	1081	1049
CBF Deposit funds – Mellor Bequest	-	-
	1081	1049

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

6. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
2024				
Fixed assets	-	-	1081	1081
Current assets	12,319	17206	-	29525
Current liabilities	(3092)	-	-	(3092)
	9227	17206	1081	27514
2023				
Fixed assets	-	-	1049	1049
Current assets	16348	16152	-	32500
Current liabilities	(2595)	-	-	(2595)
	13753	16152	1049	30954

7. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments	1,500	-
Other debtors	1,389	1564
	2,889	1564

8. LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Accruals	130	-
Other creditors	2962	2595
	3092	2595

9. RESTRICTED FUND

The restricted fund at 31st December comprises the following:

		2024 £	2023 £
Organ fund	-funds donated to refurbish the organ	2	1
Special maintenance reserve	-the original donor set down conditions that the fund could only be used at the discretion of the Treasurer and Finance Committee and with the formal approval of the PCC, for major unavoidable deficits and to assist with the PCC's contribution to major projects at St. Nicholas' School	11,107	10,609
Special purposes	-given by church organisations and individuals for special projects in the church	784	784
Memorial Thanksgiving	- funds given in memory of parishioners	771	771
Sequestration Fund	- fee for funerals and wedding during Interregnum	-	-
Restoration Fund	-funds collected for major restoration schemes	166	165
Special Collections	-funds donated during the year to specified charities	4,376	3,822
		17,206	16,152

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands
Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

10. ENDOWMENT FUND

The endowment fund at each year-end comprises the balances listed in note 5 above.
The CR Taylor bequest was provided in order to generate some income for the benefit of the Parish and its curate, but the income can be used whether or not a curate is in place. The stock is held by Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance (LDBF) as custodian trustee.

11. ENDOWMENT FUND – St Nicholas' School

The endowment fund represents the proceeds of the sale of the former school building at Warrenhouse Road. The investment in Treasury Stock is held by Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance as Custodian Trustee.

	2024 £	2023 £
Investment (endowment funds)		
Deposit fund – Control Board of Finance	1,189	1,189
Treasury stock % 2001 – Warrenhouse Road	6,080	5,902
	7,269	7,091

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Annex not forming part of the Financial Statements

Simplified income and expenditure account (unrestricted fund only) For the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Income		
Gift aid	49,133	48,767
Tax recovery	13,542	12,214
Pledges	1,050	212
Loose plate	4,242	3,205
Use of hall	38,869	32,624
Legacies	500	2,000
Fees	931	1,302
Early Birds Playgroup	477	-
Fundraising events	1,136	1,810
Diocese Grants	1,375	1,600
Boundary Change Grant	-	10,000
Warm Spaces Grant	-	1,336
Soupa Thursday donations	2,576	1,711
Interest and other income	1,498	2,369
Insurance recoveries	6,187	4,464
VAT reclaim	730	4,620
Total income	122,246	128,234
Expenditure		
Missional giving (out of income)	1,851	1,700
Parish share	72,758	70,967
Clergy, curate and reader expenses	4,090	3,741
Heat and light, internet	10,117	13,327
Maintenance of Buildings	9,878	6,215
Insurance	8,058	9,765
Caretaker, verger, organist and Parish admin	12,217	13,168
Visiting preachers	10	67
Other costs	7,793	6,144
Total expenditure	126,772	125,094
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(4,526)	3,140
Surplus brought forward	13,753	6,614
Add transfer from special reserve	-	4,000
Add previous year adjustment	-	-1
Surplus carried forward	9,227	13,753

**St. Nicholas' Church,
Blundellsands**

Financial Statements of the
Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31 December 2024

Registered charity number 1158819

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Financial Review

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Agent Transactions

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- £632 was received as Assigned Fees for weddings and funerals. £1925 was received in respect of organists and vergers and passed on to the appropriate individuals.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Performance of Investments

In 2022 the Mellor Bequest was drawn down and used towards the cost of the church heating. The performance of the remaining endowment investment has been static this year, with the church's endowment fund increasing in value slightly from £1049 to £1081.

Fundraising and Giving

Overall income from giving before tax recovery increased by 4%, compared to 3.5% the previous year. With inflation (RPI) amounting to 3.5% at the end of 2024 this represents a standstill position. Loose plate did, however, increase from £3,200 to £4,200 as the collection plate has gradually gained more prominence post-covid. Legacies of £500 were gratefully received.

Parish giving from unrestricted income continued to support the Church Missionary Society's work by £125 per month, with £25 per month also donated to Christian Aid. A further £968 was distributed to charitable causes from special collection giving, including a new link with Sefton Baby Baskets (who receive 50% of donations from Baptisms). £700 was raised during the year from our music festival, and £430 from other social events.

Insurance recoveries this year totalled over £6,187.

Approved by the PCC on 31st March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne Dobie (Churchwarden)

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of responsibilities of PCC members and Governors as Trustees of a charity

The Parochial Church Council, is a charity. As a charity, its members are trustees, its property is charitable and it is bound by charity law.

PCC members have full responsibility for the Charity and must:

- act together and in person and not delegate control of the Charity to others;
- act strictly in accordance with the charity's governing document;
- act in the Charity's interest only;
- manage the Charity's affairs prudently and take a long-term as well as a short-term view;
- not derive any personal benefit or gain from the Charity of which they are trustees; and
- take proper professional advice on matters on which they are not themselves competent.
- PCC members are responsible for all of the operations of the Charity, especially in:
 - managing the Charity's finances;
 - applying the Charity's income for charitable purposes only;
 - managing land or buildings;
 - investing funds;
 - employing people;
 - appealing for funds;
 - ensuring that all the Charity's property is under the control of the trustees;
 - and collection of all money owed or due to the charity.

The PCC is responsible for all parish finance, its management and control, including the appointment of a treasurer. While it may delegate some of its duties, this does not remove its legal responsibilities. These include:

- a) Keeping 'proper accounting records', which must be sufficient to show and explain all the PCC's transactions. The records, together with the annual financial statements, must be preserved for at least six years from the end of the financial year to which they relate. These records must be sufficient to:
 - show and explain all the PCC's transactions;
 - disclose the PCC's financial position at any time with reasonable accuracy;
 - enable the required accounts to be prepared;
 - show on a day-to-day basis all receipts and payments and what they were for; include a record of all assets and liabilities.
- b) Ensuring that the finances of the PCC are under its control and only delegated if the PCC can ensure that its wishes will be followed.
- c) Preparing an annual account (financial statement) and report which shall be presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Church Representation Rules.
- d) Arranging for a suitable independent examination of the financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Nicholas Church Blundellsands on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024, as set out on pages 6 to 14 of your Annual Accounts.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They 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 independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 accounts 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 material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act

Or the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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

L Marr ACA

9 Fewston Close
Bolton BL1 7BJ

6th May 2025

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	
					2024	2023
INCOMING RESOURCES		£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income	1(a)	71968	5397	-	77365	72484
Activities for generating funds	1(b)	41808	-	-	41808	36354
Income from investments	1(c)	242	-	-	242	196
Other incoming resources	1(d)	8292	651	-	8943	23677
		122,310	6,048		128,358	132711
RESOURCES EXPENDED		£	£	£	£	£
Cost of generation voluntary income	2(a)	-	-	-	-	-
Church activities	2(b)	123637	4844	-	128481	132695
Church management and administration	2(c)	2906	-	-	2906	3011
Church school	2(d)	293	-	-	293	320
Restricted funds - boiler expenditure	2(e)	-	-	-	-	2910
Restricted funds – organ restoration	2(e)	-	-	-	-	-
Special Maintenance reserve	2(e)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		126836	4844	-	131,680	138936
NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES	-	(4526)	1,204	-	(3,322)	(6225)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	-	-	-	32	32	55
Transfer from Special Maintenance Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS		(4526)	1,204	32	(3,290)	(6170)
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1 JANUARY 2024(2023)		13,753	16,152	1049	30,954	37,125
Less v ariance – Special Maintenance interest adjustment (£150)			-150		-150	-1
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER 2024(2023)		9227	17,206	1,081	27,514	30,954

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments (endowment funds)	5	1081	1049
Debtors/ prepayments	7	2889	1564
Short term deposits		13,194	18003
Cash at bank and in hand		13,442	12933
		29,525	32,500
LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	8	(3092)	(2595)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		26,433	29,905
TOTAL NET ASSETS		27,514	30,954
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted		9227	13753
Restricted	9	17206	16152
Endowment	10	1081	1049
		27,514	30,954

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 31st March 2025 and signed on its' behalf by:

Mrs Anne Dobie (Churchwarden)

Mrs E Sinker (Honorary Treasurer)

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Notes to the financial statements

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2005.

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

Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts of endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund.

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. The purpose of any restricted funds is noted in the accounts.

Incoming resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is recognised on a receivable basis. Revenue grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Capital grants are accounted for on a receipts basis but the capital commitment is disclosed by way of a note to the financial statements. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Resources expended

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

Fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by S 96(2) (a) of the Charities Act 1993. Moveable church furnishings, held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are inalienable property listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

Subsequently no individual item has cost more than £1,000 per annum so all such expenditure has been written off when incurred. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Notes to the financial statements

Likewise, all expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or beneficed buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off.

Investments are valued at market value at 31st December.

Current assets

Amounts owing to the PCC as at 31 December in respect of fees or other income are shown as debtors less any provision for amounts that may prove uncollectable.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the Central Board of Finance or at the bank.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
1(a) Voluntary income				
Planned giving				
Gift aid	49133	-	-	49133
Income tax recoverable on gift aid	13542	-	-	13542
Pledges not subject to gift aid	1050	-	-	1050
Collections (open plate) at all services	4242	-	-	4242
Gift day and special collections	-	5397	-	5397
Sundry donations	925	-	-	925
Soupa Thursday	2576	-	-	2576
Legacies	500	-	-	500
	71,968	5397	-	77,365
1(b) Activities for generating funds				
Fetes and fundraising events*	1136	-	-	1136
Church Hall use	38869	-	-	38869
Fees	931	-	-	931
Fellowship teas*	395	-	-	395
Children's activities - Early Birds	477	-	-	477
	41,808	-	-	41,808
1(c) Income from investments				
Interest from deposits	-	-	-	-
Interest from endowments	242	-	-	242
1(d) Other incoming resources				
Organ fund income plus interest	-	2	-	2
Restoration fund – interest	-	1	-	1
Boundary Change Grant from Diocese	-	-	-	-
Restoration fund – sundry fundraising and donations	-	-	-	-
Grants	1375	-	-	1375
Special maintenance reserve	-	648	-	648
Special Purposes Fund	-	-	-	-
Sequestration Fund	-	-	-	-
Insurance recoveries	6187	-	-	6187
VAT recoveries	730	-	-	730
	8,534	651	-	9,185
Total incoming resources	122,310	6,048	-	128,358

*See note 2 for any corresponding expenditure

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
2(a) Cost of generation voluntary income					
Costs of fetes and fundraising events*	-	-	-	-	-
2(b) Church activities Charitable giving					
<u>Missionary</u>					
Christian Aid	300	54	-	354	500
CMS Mission Partner	1500	-	-	1500	1200
Mission and Growth Fund	-	41	-	41	96
Soupa Thursday	-	2179	-	2179	683
Vicar's Discretionary Fund	115	-	-	115	-
<u>Relief & Development Agencies</u>					
Children's Society Boxes and Candles	-	451	-	451	925
Christian Aid donation	-	-	-	-	-
Salvation Army	-	109	-	109	103
Foodbank	-	35	-	35	-
Ukraine Appeal International Aid Trust	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Home missions & Other Church Societies</u>					
Sefton Tree Grant	-	-	-	-	72
Streaming Services Equipment	-	-	-	-	276
Sefton Baby Baskets	-	258	-	258	-
Memorial Gardens	-	69	-	69	200
Heritage Sefton for Good Grant	-	124	-	124	36
Picnic Praise	-	24	-	24	-
Boiler replacement	-	-	-	-	8540
Church 150 th Birthday Celebrations	-	1500	-	1500	-
	1915	4844	-	6,759	12631
Other church activities					
Parish share	72,758	-	-	72,758	70968
Ministry:					
Vicar's expenses and phone	28	-	-	28	-
Council tax and water rates	4013	-	-	4013	3741
Vicarage maintenance	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting preachers	10	-	-	10	67
PAYE	1345	-	-	1345	1592
Parish Assistant	1832	-	-	1832	1824
Reader and curate incl housing	-	-	-	-	-
Church:					
Heat and light	9634	-	-	9634	12758
Liturgy wine and wafers	219	-	-	219	426
Other sundry expenses	558	-	-	558	239
Cleaning	981	-	-	981	575
Maintenance	8055	-	-	8055	3614
Organ maintenance	-	-	-	-	450
Water rates	1228	-	-	1228	1040
Fellowship teas*	56	-	-	56	71
Parish entertaining /events/gifts	257	-	-	257	462
Hall maintenance and broadband	2305	-	-	2305	2719
Caretaker	6276	-	-	6276	5980
Choir and organist, vergers	2,225	-	-	2,225	1949
Insurance	8058	-	-	8058	9765
Hall secretary	1884	-	-	1884	1824
	121,722	-	-	121,722	120064

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

2 (c) Church management and administration

Printing and stationery	2706	-	-	2706	2811
Independent examiner	200	-	-	200	200
	2906	-	-	2906	3011

2 (d) St Nicholas' School

Leaver's gifts	293	-	-	293	320
	293	-	-	293	320

2(e) Restricted funds

Boiler expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Organ restoration	-	-	-	-	-
Special Maintenance Reserve	-	-	-	-	2910
	-	-	-	-	2910

Total resources expended	126,836	4844	-	131,680	138936
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3. STAFF COSTS

During the year the PCC employed an Organist, occasional Organists two Caretakers, a Hall Secretary and a Parish Assistant whose net earnings, after payment of employers' national insurance, were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Caretaker	6,276	5,980
Organist (and verger 2024)	2,225	1,949
Parish assistant	1,832	1,824
Hall secretary	1,884	1,824
	12,217	11,577

There were no other employees and therefore no employees earned £40,000 or more during the year. Together these employees equate to less than one full time employee.

4. PAYMENTS TO PCC MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES DURING 2023

	2024 £	2023 £
Nicola Jeens – Parish assistant	1,832	1,824
Elizabeth Sinker: Hall Secretary	1,884	1,824
	3,716	3,648

5. FIXED ASSETS

	2024 £	2023 £
Investments (endowment funds)		
Treasury stock 5.5% 2008/12 – CR Taylor Bequest	1081	1049
CBF Deposit funds – Mellor Bequest	-	-
	1081	1049

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

6. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
2024				
Fixed assets	-	-	1081	1081
Current assets	12,319	17206	-	29525
Current liabilities	(3092)	-	-	(3092)
	9227	17206	1081	27514
2023				
Fixed assets	-	-	1049	1049
Current assets	16348	16152	-	32500
Current liabilities	(2595)	-	-	(2595)
	13753	16152	1049	30954

7. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments	1,500	-
Other debtors	1,389	1564
	2,889	1564

8. LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Accruals	130	-
Other creditors	2962	2595
	3092	2595

9. RESTRICTED FUND

The restricted fund at 31st December comprises the following:

		2024 £	2023 £
Organ fund	-funds donated to refurbish the organ	2	1
Special maintenance reserve	-the original donor set down conditions that the fund could only be used at the discretion of the Treasurer and Finance Committee and with the formal approval of the PCC, for major unavoidable deficits and to assist with the PCC's contribution to major projects at St. Nicholas' School	11,107	10,609
Special purposes	-given by church organisations and individuals for special projects in the church	784	784
Memorial Thanksgiving	- funds given in memory of parishioners	771	771
Sequestration Fund	- fee for funerals and wedding during Interregnum	-	-
Restoration Fund	-funds collected for major restoration schemes	166	165
Special Collections	-funds donated during the year to specified charities	4,376	3,822
		17,206	16,152

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands
Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

10. ENDOWMENT FUND

The endowment fund at each year-end comprises the balances listed in note 5 above.
The CR Taylor bequest was provided in order to generate some income for the benefit of the Parish and its curate, but the income can be used whether or not a curate is in place. The stock is held by Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance (LDBF) as custodian trustee.

11. ENDOWMENT FUND – St Nicholas' School

The endowment fund represents the proceeds of the sale of the former school building at Warrenhouse Road. The investment in Treasury Stock is held by Liverpool Diocesan Board of Finance as Custodian Trustee.

	2024 £	2023 £
Investment (endowment funds)		
Deposit fund – Control Board of Finance	1,189	1,189
Treasury stock % 2001 – Warrenhouse Road	6,080	5,902
	7,269	7,091

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas' Church, Blundellsands

Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Annex not forming part of the Financial Statements

Simplified income and expenditure account (unrestricted fund only) For the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Income		
Gift aid	49,133	48,767
Tax recovery	13,542	12,214
Pledges	1,050	212
Loose plate	4,242	3,205
Use of hall	38,869	32,624
Legacies	500	2,000
Fees	931	1,302
Early Birds Playgroup	477	-
Fundraising events	1,136	1,810
Diocese Grants	1,375	1,600
Boundary Change Grant	-	10,000
Warm Spaces Grant	-	1,336
Soupa Thursday donations	2,576	1,711
Interest and other income	1,498	2,369
Insurance recoveries	6,187	4,464
VAT reclaim	730	4,620
Total income	122,246	128,234
Expenditure		
Missional giving (out of income)	1,851	1,700
Parish share	72,758	70,967
Clergy, curate and reader expenses	4,090	3,741
Heat and light, internet	10,117	13,327
Maintenance of Buildings	9,878	6,215
Insurance	8,058	9,765
Caretaker, verger, organist and Parish admin	12,217	13,168
Visiting preachers	10	67
Other costs	7,793	6,144
Total expenditure	126,772	125,094
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(4,526)	3,140
Surplus brought forward	13,753	6,614
Add transfer from special reserve	-	4,000
Add previous year adjustment	-	-1
Surplus carried forward	9,227	13,753