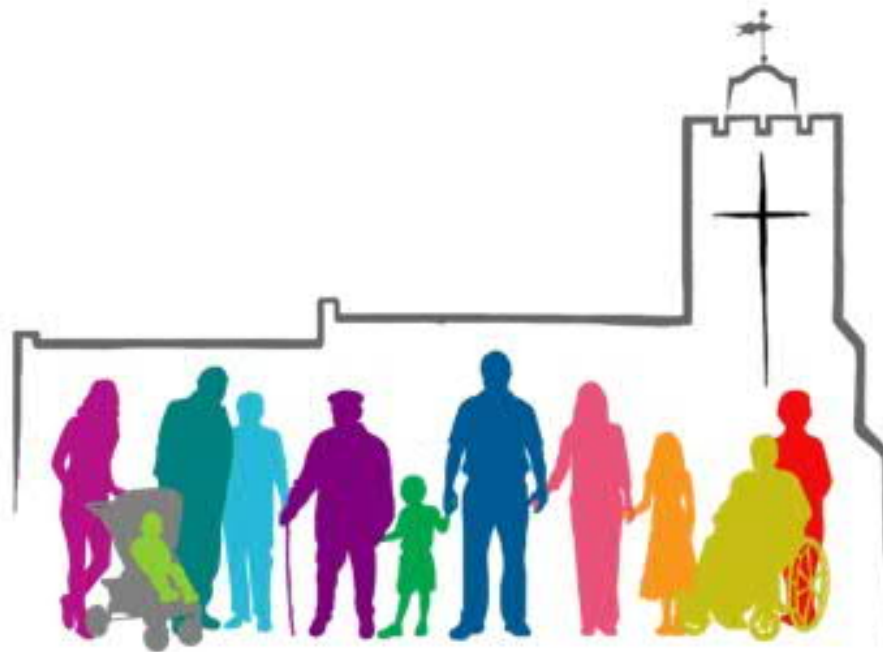


# ST. MARY'S CHURCH

## ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2023



**St. Mary's PCC, Wivenhoe**  
**Registered Charity Number 1165660**

**The Annual Parochial Church meeting will take place on  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 12 noon in church.**

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023**
- 3. Election of members to the Parochial Church Council**
- 4. Election of Churchwardens**
- 5. The Annual Report**
- 6. Report on the changes to the Electoral Roll since the last annual  
Parochial Church Council meeting and the numbers entered on the Roll.**
- 7. Annual Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church**
- 8. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod**
- 9. Acceptance of the accounts**
- 10. Appointment of an Independent Examiner**
- 11. Any Other Business**

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**St. Mary the Virgin, Wivenhoe**  
**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting**  
**held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in church**

The Meeting opened at 12.00 noon with a prayer read by the Revd. Erwin Lammens which referred to discipleship. Revd. Erwin Lammens in the chair welcomed the 33 people present.

Erwin spoke about John Driver who had recently passed, he was a much-valued member of the church and as a retired member of the clergy occasionally took services at St Mary's.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Suzanne Jones; Barry & Lyn Smith; Eric & Mary Jakens; Graeme & Carolyn Martin; Glyn & Jane Stanway; Sandra Osborne; Greg Butler
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022** shown on pages 4 and 5 of the annual report were proposed by Marika Footring and seconded by Sara Batts Neale. It was unanimously agreed by those present that the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were a true record.
3. **Election of members to the Parochial Church Council**

Erwin thanked **Sandra Osborne** for her time and commitment as a member of the PCC.

The following candidates for were put forward for election to the PCC –

- **Hannah Cole** was proposed by Ann Hanagan and seconded by Greg Butler
- **Suzanne Jones** was proposed by Graeme Martin and seconded by Carolyn Martin
- **Gary Ranford** was proposed by William Eborn and seconded by John Williams

There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role.

4. **Election of members of the Deanery Synod**

Erwin thanked Rick, Heather and Nick for their commitment to the Deanery Synod and was pleased to say that they were prepared to stand for election again.

The following candidates were put forward for election to the Colchester Deanery Synod:

- **Richard Cawley** was proposed by Eric Jakens and seconded by Margaret Allison
- **Heather Edwards** was proposed by Jennifer Heaps and seconded by Kerry-Anne Rooke
- **Nicholas Gustard** was proposed by Carolyn Martin and seconded by Ann Hanagan

There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role.

5. **Election of Churchwardens**

Erwin thanked Douglas McCormick and Sue Jones for their work during the year. Douglas was prepared to stand for election again. Graeme Martin and Greg Butler were also thanked for the duties they have undertaken as assistant churchwardens.

The following candidates were put forward for election as Churchwardens -

**Douglas McCormick** was proposed by Bonnie Hill and seconded by Carolyn Martin

**Mary Jakens** was proposed by Gill Black and seconded by Peter Black

There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role.

6. **The Annual Report**

Erwin reviewed the annual report, highlighting and thanking people for their contribution to the life and work of the parish. He apologised in advance just in case he forgot to thank individuals during his verbal report. The figures for church attendances were rising and although numbers had not fully recovered from pre-Covid levels they were rising. Numerous people both clergy and lay had contributed to church life which made St Marys so special and they were thanked for their contribution of leadership, skills and personal time. Those present were reminded that although there was in most cases only one name beneath a report there were many others contributing. The young people attending church is increasing steadily with both the Sunday Club and The Way attendances rising which is promising for the future.

Erwin then spoke to a slide presentation showing the difference that the transformation project has made (the nave, annexe and Carolin garden) and how the usage of our church has changed with many groups using the building which ensures that St Mary's is at the heart of the community. There had been many events organised by church committees and those associated with the church such as the St Mary's Music Society and Friendly Club. Special services such as Christingle and the visit from St Nicholas had been extremely well attended and the new nave layout had made a real difference to the number of those who could be accommodated.

**7. Report on the changes to the Roll since the last Annual Parochial Church Council meeting and the numbers entered on the Roll.**

Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the Annual Report. 118 names were on the 2022 electoral roll. Some members of the congregation had sadly passed away or moved away.

**8. Annual Report on the fabric and goods and ornaments of the church**

Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the Annual Report. Douglas explained that the redecoration of the church nave was still outstanding and as this was so expensive this had not been scheduled. The Quinquennial report had reported that stonework and roof repairs were required and needed to be undertaken. The Fire Alarm had been installed in the nave and now all parts of the church will be covered. Livestreaming of services had also been installed.

**9. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod**

Erwin referred those present to page 5 of the Annual Report. An overview had been given of the three meetings which had taken place during the year.

**10. Acceptance of accounts**

Douglas presented the accounts. He reported that the finances were in good shape and gift aid had provided a good sum and he thanked those who had signed up to that. Utility bills for gas and electricity were going up but unfortunately offerings were going down. Douglas thanked Bill and Vivien who were of great assistance on a weekly basis and that of Ian Dimmock who until recently prepared the accounts.

Douglas referred to page 13 in the report where it stated that the accounts were not fully compliant – the reason was he did not include the debtors and creditors figures although a note had been submitted with the accounts when they went for examination. The debtors were HMRC and creditors were the final payments for the transformation project.

The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Bill Eborn, seconded by Austin Baines and unanimously agreed.

**11. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Peyton Tyler Mears, having agreed to act as Independent Examiners were proposed by Douglas McCormick, seconded by Bill Eborn and unanimously agreed that they be appointed for 2023/2024 by the meeting

**12. Other matters**

a) A comment was made about the impact that the reordering and new annexe had had on church and community life. The new activities and interactions wouldn't have been possible if the pews hadn't been removed, a new nave floor and the annexe added.

b) It was felt that with everything going on in church it was important that the purpose of the building is not lost and it was disappointing that Holy Ground was not continuing. Also there is a need to get people to respect the church as a holy place before and during services - there is a need for silence and ways to ensure that everyone settles when taking their seats after communion.

c) St Marys was congratulated upon the welcome that was received by a newer member of the congregation which was very warm and encouraging.

d) Erwin was thanked for his work at St. Mary's and it was important to acknowledge that.

**13. Erwin closed the meeting at 13.05.**

## **Deanery Synod**

Lay representatives plus clergy from all the Anglican churches in the Colchester Deanery meet three times a year, to hear what's going on in the Deanery, Diocese and nationally, and to discuss and share ideas about how we can work together more effectively across Colchester. We give below a short report on the Deanery Synod Meetings held during 2023.

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2023** – *At St. Botolph's Church, St. Botolph's Street, Colchester, CO2*

Our speaker for this Synod was Karen Loring from Night Stop Essex, a charity run by Korban which aims to prevent homelessness in 16–24-year-old age group. Karen talked about the charity and the work that it does here in Colchester.

This was also the last Synod meeting of the triennium and the last Synod Meeting that Canon Roger Ennals was to reside as Lay Chair, following his decision to step down after 15 years of service. Revd Erwin Lammens, Area Dean, extended Synod's thanks to Roger for his service, commitment, and friendship to the Deanery.

A welcome was extended to our new Deanery Treasurer – Adrian Jones, whom Revd Erwin Lammens also thanked for agreeing to take on the role.

### **5<sup>th</sup> July 2023** – *At St. Matthew's Church, Harwich Road Colchester*

Prior to the main Synod meeting an election for the new Lay Chair took place. A nomination had been received for Lynne Gettings (St. Luke's Church, Highwoods), proposed by Diane Benge-Abbot (St. Luke's, Highwoods) and seconded by Martin Roscoe (Greenstead with St. Anne). No further nominations were made from the floor on the evening and Lynne Gettings was duly elected as the new Lay Chair for the Deanery of Colchester by a unanimous vote, with no abstentions or objections.

DSPC members from the Houses of Laity and Clergy were elected by postal vote.

The main Synod meeting then took place. Our speaker for this Synod was Beccy Hills, Diocesan Parish Giving Advisor for the Diocese of Chelmsford. Beccy spoke about her role and also gave an overview of the Parish Giving Scheme. Beccy also informed Synod that the Chelmsford Diocese are making a £1.25million investment in supporting the rollout and adoption of contactless financial giving by bank card, with the aim of having this in place in 2000 churches by the end of 2024.

### **12<sup>th</sup> October 2023** – *St. Leonards Church, Lexden, Colchester*

Our speaker for this Synod was Revd Canon Pauline Scott who spoke about the Tendring Border Colchester Garden Community – a major new development which will be constructed in the area to the East of Colchester, between Colchester and Elmstead Market, comprising of between 7,500 and 9,000 homes.

Following on from Revd Canon Pauline Scott's talk, there was a short introductory talk by Karen Clifton, the newly appointed Environmental Advocate for the Deanery of Colchester.

Heather Edwards, Rick Cawley, Nick Gustard

## **Electoral Roll**

On 31 December 2023 there were 121 names on St Mary's Electoral Roll.

Having your name on the Electoral Roll entitles you to attend and vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and to hear about all that has happened in the last year. A list of the names on the Electoral Roll can be found at the back of Church.

Vivien Eborn, Electoral Roll Officer

## **Fabric Report**

The following matters were considered by the fabric committee during the year:

- **Roof, etc** – following the Quinquennial inspection the roof lead gutters, areas of tiles loose or missing and high-level stonework all require attention. The North Aisle Roof repair was completed early in 2023. In consultation with the Archdeacon for further works, the employment of an Architect and preparation of tenders for what is expected to be extensive work is required. This is in progress and it is hoped to have this work completed before winter 2024. It is expected that this will be expensive and funds are likely to require some special fund-raising.
- **Phased decoration of the Church** - once the work to the roof, etc is complete and the balance of our funds is known the phased redecoration of internal areas of the Church will be investigated, starting with the Chancel where most "bossing" of the plasterwork is visible. It is then intended to progress to other area of the Church as funds allow.
- **Path around Annexe and access steps to Churchyard** – this is scheduled for consideration following completion of items 1 and 2 above. The Wivenhoe Community Trust have donated £1500 towards the steps to the Churchyard.
- **Lights in the Annexe** – the battery pack in one of the lights has been replaced. The electrician is investigating the intermittent fault with the other light fitting.
- **Gardening and the Churchyard** – huge thanks to Peter Terry and his team of volunteers who have done an enormous amount of work to tidy the Churchyard and plant new stock to add variety in various locations around the Churchyard. Thanks too to Peter and Sandra who raised over £500 with their Christmas light display which is funding much of the work to date.  
The railings to the perimeter of the Churchyard will be painted in the Spring '24 with paint paid for by the Council and help from the WTC Estate workers and volunteers.  
It is expected that the walls to the Churchyard will be repointed in the Spring '24.
- **Fire Alarm System** – the fire alarm system was extended to cover the main Church as well as the Annexe in April 2023.
- **Live Streaming** – the live streaming system was installed in March 2023 and the use of the system, as people are trained, has been increasing through the year. Thanks particularly to Adam Terry whose expert help, along with Marika, Rick and other volunteers have made this successful.

There is still room for others who may wish to help to be trained. There is a Livestreaming and Operational Policy in place.

The system has been linked to the television screen in the Annexe to allow overflow and participation in the Church when capacity does not allow everyone to be in the main Church.

- **General maintenance** – the servicing of the Church clock, the drainage pumping system, the heating boilers, smart meters, fire extinguishers, broken windows, PAT testing, chair replacement, roof alarm, wood worm treatment, etc, etc have all been managed throughout the year.
- **Thank You** – thank you, in addition to those already mentioned, to the members of the fabric committee and others who attend to these many matters, most of which are invisible to the congregation, and selflessly give their time and attention to keeping the Church premises safe and running smoothly.

Huge thanks to Linda Panton and volunteers who keep the Church clean and tidy.

Many thanks to Wivenhoe Music Society who donated their surplus funds of just under £3000 to the fabric fund. It costs about £400 per day to run St Marys and this contribution helps with the ever-increasing costs of stewardship of this marvellous building.

Mary Jakens and Douglas McCormick, Churchwardens

## Health & Safety

There have been no significant issues reported in terms of the health, safety or welfare of any volunteers or visitors to the church premises during the year.

We were advised last year that due to formal advice released by the HSE in November 2021 in respect to organisations which are largely dependent on volunteers, many of the requirements in terms of Health and Safety no longer apply to St Mary's. This lessens the burden in terms of the Health and Safety Management Systems and records which are required to be kept up to date. The management of H&S in a church where there are no employees is greatly reduced. Risk Assessments for activities run by the fundraising team and other events can be informal as this is not a workplace.

As a result of the advice received various documents were retired and replaced with the 'St Mary's Health and Safety Overview' document and a simplified fire risk assessment.

## Rectors Report

This is my 14<sup>th</sup> year as Rector at St Mary's. When I arrived here I looked at the board in church with the names of previous Rectors and discovered that the last and last but one Rector, David Thomas and the late Stephen Hardy, stayed in post at Wivenhoe for 16 years. At my arrival I teased you when I said that you should not expect me to stay here for such a long time. But to my surprise I am nearly there and there is no sign that I will be moving in the next couple of years, that is if health allows me to serve you a bit longer. After years in ministry and service every new day still requires energy and each task should feel fresh and inviting. This is not only true for a minister but for all involved in the life of this church. Therefore I pray that you may be blessed with good health, energy and enthusiasm.

In the summer of 2022 I accepted the role of Area Dean of the Colchester Deanery for a period of 5 years. This is a rather busy commitment which takes nearly half of my time. In these new circumstances I praise the flexibility and willingness of all those helping building God's church in our community. Without you we wouldn't be the thriving church that is reaching out to so many people in Wivenhoe and beyond. Thank you.

## Promising signs

It is the third year in a row that we see growth in numbers and activities at St Mary's. Our church seems to have recovered well after the pandemic but Sunday figures are still not where they were before Covid, except for the under 16s. However, spiritually, numerically and in reaching out to the community growth is noticeable. We can be optimistic about the spiritual and missional health of our church thanks to the willingness of many to be involved in church life.

Not only the Sunday attendance is promising, but also figures at Christmas were good (about the same as in 2022 and much better than in 2021), Advent services were up and Easter attendance had reached pre-Covid figures. Several young families have joined; Sunday Club and The Way youth group are flourishing.

### Sunday and Wednesday services

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
8am/9am	10	11	11	12	14	12	10	11	11		10	9	7
10.30am: under 16	7	7	7	6	6	5	6	5	8		6	11	10
10.30 am: adults	77	79	79	76	76	72	72	62	67		51	52	54
Evensong	17	16	16	17	17	14	16	12	11		N/A	5	14
7 past 7	10	11	11	11	12	11	12	8	8		6	7	7
Taizé	18	12	25	34	28	18	27	26	21		16	15	14
Holy Ground							9	12	12		N/A	5	5

No figures for 2020 as there were only a limited number of services held because of several lockdowns. 2021 figures are from June onwards when the church reopened; there were no Sunday evening services in 2021. From 2022 there was no suspension of church services.

### Pastoral and initiation services

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Baptisms	15	18	30	20	27	14	21	18	18	9	4	6	2	13
Confirmations	0	4	8	0	6	8	0	6	0	8	0	0	5	1
Weddings	7	12	19	13	6	10	15	8	6	5	3	5	7	1
Renewal of vows	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Funerals in church	-	21	20	18	20	20	10	14	6	10	10	8	15	12
Cremation services	-	8	13	9	8	4	15	10	9	16	17	9	6	8

While, in 2023, we had reached the highest number of baptisms in the last five years, the number of weddings was exceptionally low. This follows the national trend.

If we measure growth not just in the Sunday figures but also in the number of activities taking place at the church, with confidence we may say that this church has not only seen a physical



transformation in the last few years but it has grown as a significant venue in the community for outreach, education, culture and fellowship.

### Ministry Team

We have a great ministry team with a complementary diversity of skills. I would like to thank Associate Priest Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale, Reader Dr Glyn Stanway, Authorised Local Preachers Helena Hughes and Douglas McCormick, and Revd Janet Driver. And what a blessing it is that Curate Revd Emma Smith joined us in September.

It was with immense sadness that we had to say farewell to Revd John Driver in June 2023. He was a fine colleague, great preacher, a caring person who was always ready to give support and advice, a disciple of Christ who put into practice his Lord's words, and a loving companion for Janet. Thank you, John, for your kindness and all you've done in the service of God's church.

### Communication and live streaming

We hope that people can easily access any church information that they may need. We have a well-maintained and updated website, electronic mailings, Facebook, YouTube channel and of course the monthly magazine in newsletter style, Tidings, which is posted free to 210 subscribers. Very regularly we offer live streamed Sunday services and funerals and make use of the screen for PowerPoint. With thanks to Marika Footring, Rick Cawley, Edward Cole, Sue Clement, Bob Newell and Bonnie Hill.

### Worship

The best news of all is that our congregation is getting younger with more families attending – this is so encouraging.

As explained above, most services are well attended with the exception of 8.00am communion and 7.07pm Midweek reflection. Unfortunately after two years of low attendance, we had to stop our monthly Holy Ground service on a Sunday evening. But in the same period numbers at Evensong have gone up; they nearly tripled compared to the year before.

Thank you to all who help with the liturgy: churchwardens, our loyal choir members and organist and director of music Graham Wadley, colleagues, readers, intercessors, communion assistants, sides persons, audio-visual team, flower team, coffee team, the person responsible for linen and brass, and many others.

### Standing Committee

A modern church involves piles of administration and efficient management. The members of our Standing Committee are the key people in overseeing the numerous aspects of running a church: churchwarden and treasurer Douglas McCormick, churchwarden and vergers Mary Jakens and PCC secretary Bonnie Hill. A part of the burden is taken up by those who assist them: assistant churchwardens, assistant treasurer, PCC and committee members, administrator, bookings administrator, baptism officer, safeguarding and DBS officers, fundraising coordinator, catering coordinator, caretaker, cleaning team coordinator, and many others.

### Building and churchyard

The Standing Committee, PCC and Fabric committee oversee the maintenance and repairs of the church building. Last year a team of volunteers led by Peter Terry took it on their shoulders to clear and maintain the churchyard with areas for planting, lawn and wild life.

### Cost of running a church

Running a church like ours is costly and in 2023 most bills had increased because of the cost-of-living crisis. We can't do without the commitment and the support of many. This support has many facets: praying, giving one's time, sharing one's skills, and donating financially. The running costs have gone up but the income hasn't followed. Please have a look at the treasurer's report and accounts, and give it your consideration as to how we can reverse our monthly, small but worrying, deficit.

### Fundraising

The above item brings us neatly to fundraising. The Fundraising team is led by Heather Edwards assisted by other team members and catering coordinator Susan Potter. They organise several events including the Christmas and June Markets.

The Friends of St Mary's (FOSM) give support towards the cost of the maintenance of the church building. FOSM takes part in several events in the church and community where they sell the much-loved St Mary's Wivenhoe design articles. It is run by Vivien and Bill Eborn and a team of helpers. Please do support their work.

### Nave and annexe use

In 2023 the church calendar seemed busier than ever before with many bookings of the annexe and nave. Not only church groups such as St Mary's Singers and Café Chill make use of the premises but many other community groups, organisations, families and individuals also, such as The Friendly Club and St Mary's Wivenhoe Music Society - I extend my thanks to Peter Hill and a large team of volunteers for these last two activities.

### Children's ministry

The Sunday Club and The Way leaders' team are coordinated by Teresa Warren and supported by a group of enthusiast leaders. They run the weekly gatherings and special events such as Easter activities for children, Nativity Play, Sunday Club Christmas party, and participate in the Free Family Fun Festival. Different sub-teams organise All Together Sunday, St Nicholas' visit and Christingle.

### Teaching

Preaching and teaching on Sunday mornings and at Evensong are Bible-based and relevant for people's everyday life. The contextual and exegetical exploration of the gospels leads to an understanding that God is loving and welcoming without condition and regardless of one's background. We can be who we are and grow together in our belonging to Jesus Christ. The Lectio Divina and Bible Study group (which will resume in 2024) bring participants to an encounter with our welcoming God.

### Pastoral

Our pastoral visitors group coordinated by Gill Strudwick regularly meet people in the Parish who have asked for a visit. Around Christmas and Easter holy communion is brought to those who are housebound. St Mary's also organises a monthly house communion at which everyone is welcome.

If you wish me to visit someone who is in need or ill, just let me know. Likewise if you would like to be prayed for, whether or not you like to be included in the prayer list, let me know as well.

Several members of St Mary's visit friends and neighbours in an informal way. Because some people receive a lot of visits while others don't, we have set up this pastoral visitors group in 2011 to make sure that no one gets overlooked. If you know of anyone who seems to have fallen between two stools, please flag this up with the pastoral visitors team.

### The bigger picture

St Mary's is not an island. We are a part of the wider entourage of Churches Together, Mission and Ministry Partnership (MMP), Colchester Deanery, Chelmsford Diocese, Church of England and God's universal church. We are linked in prayer and action with the community of Namalemba in Uganda through the work of the Christian women (Mothers' Union) at St Andrew's church with thanks to our link persons Rosemary Murchie in Wivenhoe and Rachel Butterfield in Uganda.

### Thank you

Numerous other people, workers behind the scenes, members of committees, teams and church groups, organisers of events, and those who pray for the church's growth and our spiritual well-being may not have been mentioned here but I hope that these people appreciate how grateful I am for what they do.

Before closing my report, I wish to thank three people who, every day again, give me great support and encouragement: An, Jonas and Mieke who generously share me with many others in the Parish, the Deanery and Diocese.

Revd Erwin Lammens, Rector

3 February 2024

In the Christian calendar we commemorate and celebrate today Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg and missionary in Denmark and Sweden. He died and was welcomed by the risen Lord on this day in 865.

## Safeguarding Report

- After being in post since summer 2022, I now feel much more confident in my role as PSO (Parish Safeguarding Officer). This is due to the support and encouragement I have received from Erwin and guidance from the Diocese.
- I have now completed my Leadership Safeguarding training.
- I have had 4 face to face meetings with Erwin plus many telephone conversations.
- Safeguarding posters are now in Church and also inside the toilets. The Safeguarding folder is situated at the back of the Church.
- Last March we held Safeguarding training in Church with seven people attending and support helpers.
- A number of people have contacted me informing me of the recent training they have carried out on-line.
- I also attended a PCC meeting to emphasise the importance of 'Safer Recruitment training' and understand that the appropriate Church members have undertaken this.
- Late last year and early this year 2 people have contacted me with concerns of Safeguarding issues. One was simply to inform me of concerns from Erwin and some other Church members, this was noted and the matter resolved itself. The other (with the person's permission) was discussed with Erwin as it had wider implications and actions were taken.
- It is important to remember that Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. I look forward to further developing my role as the Church and Annexe are now being used by a wider diversity of groups.

Gill Black, Safeguarding Officer

## Secretary to the PCC Report

The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC (Powers Measure 1956) states that "the PCC is to co-operate with the Minister in promoting in the Parish the whole Mission of

the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.” The PCC is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the church building of St Mary the Virgin, and for the “movables” in the church. When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity 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; developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- 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 Mary's, Wivenhoe. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, co-opted, appointed or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the 2020 Church Representation Rules. The following have served as members of the PCC during 2023

<b>Incumbent</b>	The Revd. Erwin Lammens	Chairman
<b>Licensed Clergy</b>	Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale	
<b>Reader</b>	Emeritus Professor Dr. Glyn Stanway	
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Douglas McCormick	
	Mary Jakens	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Douglas McCormick	
<b>Secretary</b>	Bonnie Hill	
<b>Deanery Synod Representatives</b>	Rick Cawley	
	Dr. Nick Gustard	
	Heather Edwards	
<b>Elected Members</b>	Greg Butler	
	Jane Taylor	
	Eric Jakens	
	Graham Wadley	
	Claudia Alsdorf	
	Margaret Allison	
	Hannah Cole	
	Gary Ranford	
	Sue Jones	

Since the last Annual Meeting the PCC have met on 10 occasions. The PCC members above have worked together to ensure that St Marys Church continues to develop and grow both spiritually and within the local community.

The PCC receive monthly reports from not only the Treasurer, but also the Churchwardens, Fundraising Team, Catering Team, Fabric Group, Worship Group, our Colchester Deanery Synod representatives, Wivenhoe Churches Together, Safeguarding, FOSM and information on the Children's Ministry, youth work and young adults. This gives an excellent view of what is current, what needs to be addressed and promotes discussion.

The Standing Committee meets regularly to prepare for the PCC meeting.

The PCC meeting minutes are available at the back of the Church, in a folder, or can be accessed from the St. Mary's Church website, if there are issues arising from the Minutes, or other matters, please do speak to a council member. PCC members continue to represent all those involved with Church life.

Bonnie Hill, PCC Secretary

## Communication

### Presentations

It is gratifying that younger people, at present limited to Edward Cole, have come on board to help with making and showing PowerPoint presentations.

In fact, the development could be described as the opposite of the Magician's Apprentice story as the 'apprentice' has had things to teach the supposed magicians - surely a situation to be actively encouraged!

## **Streaming**

Adam Terry, a professional camera man living locally, had offered his assistance with getting to grips with the camera work and streaming. He knows our vMix software having used it professionally himself. Adam has been very helpful over a period of months in familiarising us with the software and we have been able to extend our use of the streaming computer from just pointing a camera, to knowing how to incorporate hymn text and name overlays, and using custom made graphics.

Adam also revised the existing pre-sets to make it easier to choose the wanted shots, and further helped by automating some of the processes so that they can be done from home rather than requiring visits to the church.

All these augmentations will hopefully lead to a point when streaming will come within the capability of those who still feel hesitant about volunteering to take part in it. Please don't be unduly daunted: we promise not to throw you in at the deep end if you wish to have a stab at it.

## **Online presences**

(YouTube)

It is beyond the wit of this author to make sense of the analytics on YouTube and so, although questions have been asked about viewing figures, the most that can be reported with any certainty is that funeral services attract significant attention (in the 100s-1000s) especially when they concern well-known (or local) personages. It is establishing the duration of views that presents difficulties.

The Remembrance Day service with the RBL also saw views rise, as did the Civic Service and the Christmas Eve Midnight service.

(Website & Facebook)

Both platforms have regular visitors and are outlets that come without any financial cost to the church.

The website has approx. 360 followers who can all receive notifications of newly posted material.

Rev Sara has recently been made a co-editor

## **GDPR**

An audit was attempted mid-2023 with only moderate success. Those who deigned to reply generally had no compliance issues.

It is intended to repeat the exercise in 2024 when hopefully a fuller picture will emerge.

## **Licensing**

We maintain licences for podcasting music in connection with religious services from both CCLI and OneLicence of music covered in their catalogues, and a Film licence with certain limitations from CCLI.

Marika Footring, Communications Officer

## **Tidings**

In 2023 our pattern of compulsory remote editorial meetings happily came to an end, so Erwin and I can decide to meet up in person or by telephone, depending on our circumstances.

The Annexe's popularity continues to grow, which means that we have been able to advertise, and report on, the events taking place there.

One advertiser has pulled out (Vinyl Hunter), which has been replaced by Business Time in Essex. Advertising costs remain the same for 2024, the revenue for which covers all printing costs. The four-page content has continued; however, the number of flyers included in the mailing envelope with Erwin's letter is increasing, which is an indication of Tidings' popularity. We almost always have more than enough copy to exceed four pages, but not enough for eight. An increase in pages would entail more work and an increase in costs, neither of which is currently viable.

In order to be fair to all contributors, as a general rule we decided to offer an editorial space in Tidings if possible, in which case a flyer will not be included within the mailing envelope. If space in Tidings is unavailable, then we will include a flyer. This system now seems to be working very well, as long as I give Bonnie enough advance warning.

We have also continued to produce ten, rather than twelve issues per year to enable the rector, editor and designer to take annual leave. There is usually a limited amount of news around Christmas and summer holidays so it seems sensible to take a break at these times.

In 2023 Tidings has continued to be mailed out by PCC secretary Bonnie Hill and this will be the distribution system for the foreseeable future.

Erwin, Bob (our designer) and I have a robust working pattern in place, and I am grateful that contributors now seem confident in approaching me as much as Erwin. This eases the time pressures put on Erwin, and I can always rely on Bob to achieve the impossible with some of the pictures and copy!

As always, a huge personal thank you also goes to everyone who willingly helps out with photos and contributions, which makes my job as Tidings editor as straightforward as possible, and Tidings a popular publication within St Mary's and Wivenhoe in general.

Sue Clement, Editor

## **Treasurer**

### **REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

I am pleased to be able to report that, thanks to the generosity of many, our Parish Share and all our bills were paid in full for 2023.

Overall, our total funds have decreased in the period by £31,875, as the difference between our income and expenditure. In the medium term, this is a concern as we are using our reserves to prop up the running costs of the Church. This comes into particular focus as we implement some of the Quinquennial Inspection Report, in respect of repairs to the roof and to high level stonework. This work is expected to be undertaken in 2024 and is likely to cost tens of thousands. Scoping of the works and preparation of tenders is in progress.

The majority of our regular income comes from monthly standing orders; committed giving envelopes; and loose collections. This is gratefully acknowledged and where we are able gift aid is claimed. In 2023 gift aid was worth more than £18,000, which was slightly less than expected.

The objective to create space for the community with the transformation project continues to be realised with many groups using the facilities throughout the week as well as the activities of the Church. The revenue this generates covers the costs and adds to our financial viability.

Fundraising events such as the June and December markets, the concerts held by Wivenhoe Music Society, to mention just a few also contribute to our funds and we are grateful to all who expend great efforts to make these occasions successful.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to Bill and Vivien Eborn who, despite Bill retiring as Treasurer at the end of 2021, continue together to collect, count and bank all the monies received and dual authorise our bank payments. I would also like to thank Ian Dimmock for managing Gift Aid on our behalf in 2023.

The full accounts, which appear on pages 17 to 33 have been prepared in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice and have been Independently Examined by Larking Gowen LLP, Chartered Accountants. Their certificate appears on page 16.

Douglas McCormick, Treasurer

## **Aim and purposes**

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

## **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 Marys. 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 Charity 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; teaching Scripture; developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St Marys and the environs.

## **Achievements and performance**

The achievements and performance of the church of St Mary's is set out on pages 34 - 41 of the Annual Report.



## **Financial review**

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £106,110, of which £72,995 was unrestricted planned voluntary donations, including a net Gift Aid figure of £7,399. Restricted grants and donations of £5,069 were also received.

The planned giving through envelopes and banker's orders decreased significantly in the year following completion of the transformation project. It was good to see that the use of Gift Aid envelopes continues, although much reduced and the regular giving by standing order with gift aid is consistent throughout the year.

During the year, the total fund balances decreased from £233,693 to £201,818, of which £115,272 is unrestricted.

## **Reserves policy**

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets) which equates to at least three months unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £34,000. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of the free reserves at the year end was £115,272 which is significantly higher than this target, largely due to legacies received over time. Currently £53,665 is held in the short term deposit fund with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund.

## **Structure, governance and management**

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, the reader 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 10 times during the year with an average level of attendance of 82%. 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, mission and outreach and fabric and finance, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly, minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

## **Administrative information**

St. Mary's Church is situated on High Street, Wivenhoe, CO7 9BD. It is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England. Registered charity number 1165660.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2023 are as detailed on page 12 of this Annual Report.

### **Address for correspondence:**

16 Colchester Road  
Wivenhoe  
Colchester  
CO7 9EU

### **The PCC's bankers:**

Barclays Bank UK PLC  
Leicester  
LE87 2BB

### **Independent examiner of the PCC's accounts:**

Larking Gowen LLP  
1 Claydon Business Park  
Great Blakenham  
Ipswich  
IP6 0NL

Approved by the PCC on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and signed  
on their behalf by the Reverend Erwin Lammens (PCC Chairman). .....



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## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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#### **Independent examiner's report to the members of the Parochial Church Council ("the Trustees") of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe ('the Charity')**

I report to the Charity's Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 17 to 33.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the Trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed:

Dated: 25 March 2024

Giles Kerkham FCA DChA

#### **Larking Gowen LLP**

Chartered Accountants  
1 Claydon Business Park  
Great Blakenham  
Ipswich  
IP6 0NL



PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Voluntary income	2	1,682	72,955	74,637	159,537
Activities for generating funds	3	3,387	15,325	18,712	12,192
Income from investments	4	-	2,380	2,380	482
Church activities	5	-	15,450	15,450	17,450
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>5,069</b>	<b>106,110</b>	<b>111,179</b>	<b>189,661</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Costs of generating voluntary income	7	-	7,795	7,795	3,678
Church activities		17,668	117,591	135,259	141,817
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>17,668</b>	<b>125,386</b>	<b>143,054</b>	<b>145,495</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>		<b>(12,599)</b>	<b>(19,276)</b>	<b>(31,875)</b>	<b>44,166</b>
Transfers between funds	12	(32,500)	32,500	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(45,099)</b>	<b>13,224</b>	<b>(31,875)</b>	<b>44,166</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		131,645	102,048	233,693	189,527
Net movement in funds		(45,099)	13,224	(31,875)	44,166
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>86,546</b>	<b>115,272</b>	<b>201,818</b>	<b>233,693</b>

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 19 to 33 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

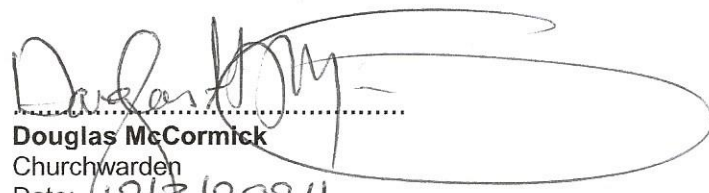
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	10,000	21,000
FOSM Current Account		9,745	8,686
Transformation Appeal Account		5,851	16,469
Short Term Deposits		53,665	53,665
PCC Current Account		110,804	137,193
Transformation Appeal Deposit Account		15,329	10,010
		<u>205,394</u>	<u>247,023</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(3,576)	(13,330)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>201,818</u>	<u>233,693</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><u>201,818</u></u>	<u><u>233,693</u></u>
<b>Charity funds</b>			
Restricted funds	12	86,546	131,645
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	12	42,779	8,029
General funds	12	72,493	94,019
		<u></u>	<u></u>
Total unrestricted funds	12	115,272	102,048
<b>Total funds</b>		<u><u>201,818</u></u>	<u><u>233,693</u></u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Parochial Church Council and signed on their behalf by:

  
.....  
**Rev Erwin Lammens**  
Chairman

  
.....  
**Mary Jakens**  
Churchwarden

  
.....  
**Douglas McCormick**  
Churchwarden  
Date: 12/3/2024

The notes on pages 19 to 33 form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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**1. Accounting policies**

**1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011, and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. 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 which are informal gatherings of church members. The Friends of St Mary's and Wivenhoe St. Mary's Music Society have agreed with the PCC that they produce separate financial statements.

Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Wivenhoe meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

**1.2 Income**

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Planned giving, collections and similar donations are recognised when received. Grants are accounted for when the PCC is entitled to use of the resources, their ultimate receipts are considered reasonably certain and the amounts due are reliably quantifiable. Dividends are also accounted for when declared receivable, and interest as and when accrued by the payer. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid is recognised at the time of the donation.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.3 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the Charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

**1.4 Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

**1.5 Consecrated and benefice property**

In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of 'charity' by Section 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

**1.6 Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**1.7 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**1.8 Liabilities and provisions**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

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## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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#### 1. Accounting policies (continued)

##### 1.9 Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

##### 1.10 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the PCC and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the PCC for particular purposes. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

#### 2. Voluntary income

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
<b>Planned giving:</b>			
Gift aid donations	-	48,358	<b>48,358</b>
Income tax recoverable	-	7,399	<b>7,399</b>
Other	-	223	<b>223</b>
	-	55,980	<b>55,980</b>
Collections at all services (open plate)	-	7,344	<b>7,344</b>
Legacies	-	2,013	<b>2,013</b>
Grants	-	760	<b>760</b>
Sundry donations and appeals	1,682	6,858	<b>8,540</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>16,975</b>	<b>18,657</b>
	1,682	72,955	<b>74,637</b>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**2. Voluntary income (continued)**

	<i>Restricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
<b>Planned giving:</b>			
Gift aid donations	-	88,247	88,247
Income tax recoverable	-	21,339	21,339
Other	-	239	239
	<hr/> -	<hr/> 109,825	<hr/> 109,825
Collections at all services	-	8,663	8,663
Legacies	32,500	4,582	37,082
Sundry donations and appeals	-	3,967	3,967
	<hr/> 32,500	<hr/> 127,037	<hr/> 159,537
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**3. Activities for generating funds**

**Income from fundraising events**

	<b>Restricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Parish magazine (advertising)	-	364	364
June and December markets	356	3,217	3,573
Fundraising	3,031	11,744	14,775
	<hr/> 3,387	<hr/> 15,325	<hr/> 18,712
<b>Total 2023</b>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**3. Activities for generating funds (continued)**

**Income from fundraising events (continued)**

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Parish magazine (advertising)	1,295	1,295
September and December markets	2,951	2,951
Fundraising	7,946	7,946
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>12,192</u>	<u>12,192</u>

**4. Investment income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Dividends on CBF Investment Fund	19	<b>19</b>
Bank and CBF Deposit Fund Interest	2,361	<b>2,361</b>
	<u>2,380</u>	<u><b>2,380</b></u>

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Dividends on CBF Investment Fund	322	322
Bank and CBF Deposit Fund Interest	160	160
	<u>482</u>	<u>482</u>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**5. Income from Church activities**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Fees from weddings and funerals	9,108	<b>9,108</b>
Parish Magazine (sales)	135	<b>135</b>
Church lettings: local community use	6,207	<b>6,207</b>
<b>Total 2023</b>	<u>15,450</u>	<u><b>15,450</b></u>

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Fees from weddings and funerals	12,844	12,844
Parish Magazine (sales)	847	847
Church lettings: local community use	3,629	3,629
Insurance claims	130	130
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>17,450</u>	<u>17,450</u>

**6. Analysis of expenditure by activities**

	<b>Charitable Activities 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Church Activities	128,510	<b>128,510</b>
Missionary and charitable giving - Overseas	3,173	<b>3,173</b>
Governance Costs	3,576	<b>3,576</b>
	<u>135,259</u>	<u><b>135,259</b></u>



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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)**

	<i>Charitable Activities 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Church Activities	131,628	131,628
Missionary and charitable giving - Overseas	9,469	9,469
Governance Costs	720	720
	<u>141,817</u>	<u>141,817</u>

**Charitable Activities**

	<b>Church Activities 2023 £</b>	<b>Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2023 £</b>	<b>Governance Costs 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Relief and Development Agencies	-	720	-	720
Home Missions	-	365	-	365
Secular Charities	-	2,088	-	2,088
Ministry Costs: Diocesan Parish Share	73,247	-	-	73,247
Other Ministry Costs	2,613	-	-	2,613
Church Maintenance	4,598	-	-	4,598
Church Running Expenses	9,152	-	-	9,152
Upkeep of Services	2,371	-	-	2,371
Organ and Organists	1,602	-	-	1,602
Vergers	520	-	-	520
Major Repairs: Structural Renewal	25,238	-	-	25,238
Parish Magazine Costs	2,196	-	-	2,196
Assigned Fees to the Diocese	3,379	-	-	3,379
Administration	3,094	-	-	3,094
Bank Charges	500	-	-	500
Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	3,576	3,576
	<u>128,510</u>	<u>3,173</u>	<u>3,576</u>	<u>135,259</u>

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)**

**(continued)**

	<i>Church Activities 2022 £</i>	<i>Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2022 £</i>	<i>Governance Costs 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Relief and Development Agencies	-	7,476	-	7,476
Home Missions	-	462	-	462
Secular Charities	-	1,531	-	1,531
Ministry Costs: Diocesan Parish Share	69,758	-	-	69,758
Other Ministry Costs	2,689	-	-	2,689
Church Maintenance	5,022	-	-	5,022
Church Running Expenses	8,281	-	-	8,281
Upkeep of Services	1,102	-	-	1,102
Organ and Organists	3,714	-	-	3,714
Vergers	750	-	-	750
Transformation Project	11,676	-	-	11,676
Major Repairs: Structural Renewal	19,221	-	-	19,221
Parish Magazine Costs	1,118	-	-	1,118
Assigned Fees to the Diocese	4,762	-	-	4,762
Administration	2,964	-	-	2,964
Bank Charges	571	-	-	571
Including Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	720	720
	<u>131,628</u>	<u>9,469</u>	<u>720</u>	<u>141,817</u>

**7. Expenditure on raising funds**

**Generation of Voluntary Income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2023 £</b>
Fundraising costs	<u>7,795</u>	<u>7,795</u>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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7. Expenditure on raising funds (continued)

Generation of Voluntary Income (continued)

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Fundraising costs	3,678	3,678

8. Independent examiner's remuneration

	<i>2023 £</i>	<i>2022 £</i>
Fees payable to the Charity's independent examiner for the independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts	2,380	720
Fees payable to the Charity's independent examiner in respect of: All other services not included above	600	-

9. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2022 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 December 2023, expenses totalling £2,613 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2022 - £2,289 to 1 Trustee). These were in relation to the Trustees expenses incurred as their role as the incumbent.

10. Debtors

	<i>2023 £</i>	<i>2022 £</i>
<b>Debtors less than one year</b>		
Tax recoverable	10,000	21,000
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>21,000</b>

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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11. Creditors: Amounts falling due in less than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other creditors	-	13,330
Accruals and deferred income	3,576	-
	<u>3,576</u>	<u>13,330</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

12. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Sheila Carrick Legacy	500	-	-	-	500
Hugh Brogan Legacy	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Janet Richardson Legacy	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Sunday Club	1,529	1,250	-	-	2,779
Doris Robinson Legacy	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Delia Schafle Legacy	-	-	-	22,500	22,500
Jane Cole Legacy	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
	<u>8,029</u>	<u>2,250</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>32,500</u>	<u>42,779</u>
<b>General funds</b>					
General	<u>94,019</u>	<u>103,860</u>	<u>(125,386)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>72,493</u>
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>102,048</u>	<u>106,110</u>	<u>(125,386)</u>	<u>32,500</u>	<u>115,272</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Bell	12,035	70	-	-	12,105
Choir	800	-	-	-	800
Fabric - General	4,856	108	-	-	4,964
Fabric - Ashton Legacy	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Jane Cole Legacy	10,000	-	-	(10,000)	-
Delia Schafle Legacy	22,500	-	-	(22,500)	-
Flower	719	-	-	-	719
FOSM	8,686	1,159	(100)	-	9,745
Maintenance	2,415	120	-	-	2,535
Transformation Project	58,231	-	(17,568)	-	40,663
Organ	370	-	-	-	370
Wiv St Mary's Music Society	1,033	3,612	-	-	4,645

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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12. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - current year (continued)

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
	<u>131,645</u>	<u>5,069</u>	<u>(17,668)</u>	<u>(32,500)</u>	<u>86,546</u>
<b>Total of funds</b>	<b><u>233,693</u></b>	<b><u>111,179</u></b>	<b><u>(143,054)</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>201,818</u></b>

A transfer has been made from Restricted Funds to Designated Funds in the year of £32,500. This reflects that the trustees have reviewed the legacy conditions and concluded that these legacies have no restrictions.

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**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE**

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**12. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Statement of funds - prior year**

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2022 £</i>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Sheila Carrick Legacy	500	-	-	-	500
Hugh Brogan Legacy	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Janey Richardson Legacy	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Sunday Club	979	-	-	550	1,529
	<u>7,479</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>550</u>	<u>8,029</u>
<b>General funds</b>					
General	77,412	157,161	(133,819)	(6,735)	94,019
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>84,891</u>	<u>157,161</u>	<u>(133,819)</u>	<u>(6,185)</u>	<u>102,048</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Bell	11,915	-	-	120	12,035
Choir	755	-	-	45	800
Fabric - General	3,242	-	-	1,614	4,856
Fabric Ashton Legacy	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Jane Cole Legacy	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Delia Schafle Legacy	-	22,500	-	-	22,500
Flower	1,023	-	-	(304)	719
FOSM	7,558	-	-	1,128	8,686
Maintenance (Cory)	2,115	-	-	300	2,415
Transformation Project	65,598	-	(11,676)	4,309	58,231
Organ	370	-	-	-	370
Wiv St Mary's Music Soc	2,060	-	-	(1,027)	1,033
	<u>104,636</u>	<u>32,500</u>	<u>(11,676)</u>	<u>6,185</u>	<u>131,645</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

12. Statement of funds (continued)

Total of funds	189,527	189,661	(145,495)	-	233,693
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13. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
Designated funds	8,029	2,250	-	32,500	42,779
General funds	94,019	103,860	(125,386)	-	72,493
Restricted funds	131,645	5,069	(17,668)	(32,500)	86,546
	233,693	111,179	(143,054)	-	201,818

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 January 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2022 £
Designated funds	7,479	-	-	550	8,029
General funds	77,412	157,161	(133,819)	(6,735)	94,019
Restricted funds	104,636	32,500	(11,676)	6,185	131,645
	189,527	189,661	(145,495)	-	233,693

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Current assets	86,546	118,848	205,394
Creditors due within one year	-	(3,576)	(3,576)
Total	86,546	115,272	201,818



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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14. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	<i>Restricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Current assets	144,255	102,768	247,023
Creditors due within one year	(12,610)	(720)	(13,330)
<b>Total</b>	<u>131,645</u>	<u>102,048</u>	<u>233,693</u>

15. Related party transactions

During the year, Graham Wadley was remunerated in his role as Organist for a total of £780 (2022: £1,120). Mary Jakens was also remunerated for her role as Verger for a total of £340 (2022: £Nil). Both Graham and Mary were Trustees during the year.

## **All Together Worship**

The core team consists of Teresa Warren, Rev. Erwin Lammens, Sue Jones and Hannah Cole. Ordinarily we have shared out tasks, leading talks and demonstrations. We usually receive great comments and support/encouragement from the congregation. We still hope for larger numbers of attendees. Numbers of children attending on these services are less than days when Sunday club is running.

However, we do have good attendance in general and the less complicated and inclusive themes seem to be enjoyed. We had a variety of themes, as follows- January Epiphany, February Be like salt and light, March Journey in Lent. In July we had an All Together service with First Communion. September theme was new beginnings and an especially good service was the Harvest one. The theme was about working together like Bees. We had all the Wivenhoe schools involved and a talk by Revd Emma Smith and Carol Mitchell. November's theme was Let your light shine, ending the year in December with Keep awake!

We will continue to work on trying to make these services as enjoyable, and as inclusive as possible. Kerry Rooke is joining our planning team.

Teresa Warren

## **Bellringers Report**

The past year has been a fairly "quiet" year, with only the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May giving us the opportunity to ring the bells to celebrate a historic national event. Wivenhoe was featured in an episode of "Love Your Weekend with Alan Titchmarsh" as part of their "Ring for the King" theme. Filming took place on a cold grey day in February and the programme was broadcast on Sunday 2 April. The programme is available on ITVX for those of you who missed it!

We have rung for Sunday services and held our Wednesday practice evenings consistently each week. Wivenhoe is still one of the few towers in the area that has been able to ring regularly, many local towers still struggle to ring for Sunday services and to hold a practice evening without combining with ringers from several other towers. We are of course available to ring for weddings and toll for funerals.

Our team of ringers is shrinking for various reasons, and we will be looking to recruit some learners shortly. So if anyone would like to find out more about becoming a bell ringer then please contact me, or indeed any of our team.

It is over 25 years since the bells were restored, and there is some work that will need to be undertaken, the paintwork on the metal parts is starting to deteriorate and will need to be refreshed in the not-too-distant future. The bells themselves are not painted and are in good condition and are checked regularly for wear and tear.

Adrienne Wood, Tower Captain

## **Café Chill**

In September 2022 Teresa and Mike started up 'Café Chill' in The Annexe. This is a once-a-month community café run from the annexe. The intention is to welcome members of the community into the annexe and provide a calm, friendly and affordable place for people to come on a Sunday afternoon. There is a book lending table with Christian themed books and CDs but also a selection of novels and books of other interests. Music plays in the background and there are games provided for those who wish to play, such as scrabble, Uno and chess.

Hot drinks and cakes and biscuits are for sale at great prices such as £1.50 and £1 with free refills of hot drinks!

The Wi-Fi is available and the annexe is lovely and warm when people may be struggling with the rising costs at home. The café is currently taking place usually on the third Sunday of the month and starts straight after church during the coffees. The congregation can enjoy the atmosphere of the café by using the games and looking at the books. It then officially becomes the café from 12.30pm when we start charging!

All charges are technically a donation and no one will be turned away if they have forgotten their money or haven't quite got enough. The card donation machine in church is sometimes used. From April - August we stayed open until 4.30pm.

In June the café was busy as we ran alongside a pre-loved clothing sale in the church and in November we were also busy as it was the Wivenhoe Art trail. Apart from these dates on all the other sessions a total of 194 people used the café. Some days are very quiet and others it can be bustling. Either way it shows that it is worth having as an additional fund raiser and service to the community.

Donations of cakes are always welcome, see Teresa.

Teresa Warren

## **Catering Report**

Since taking over from Mary last June we have had a timetable of successful events.

Starting with the annual summer barbecue which was sold out and blessed with good weather. September was a very busy month starting with the Scruffs Dog Show when for the first time a barbecue was introduced which proved a great success especially with our dog guests as dog treats and sausages were free.

We entertained the Bishop for a supper event, the PCC and several other functions.

Harvest Lunch was again sold out and very enjoyable. (This year we are planning a candlelit supper in December to add to our events following the success of the harvest lunch and with the hope that some younger members of the church will attend).

I have been unable to form a catering committee....people are happy to help at functions but do not wish to make a commitment. As always, it is just a few very kind and willing people I have to ask without whom these events would not be possible to run

Susan Potter

## **Cleaning Team Report**

We thank the small but loyal team of weekly volunteers who clean the chancel area of the church and who have maintained their duties throughout the year. We are also very grateful to Linda our caretaker who takes care of the remaining areas of the church and annexe, working together we ensure that all areas are fit for purpose.

Sandra Osborne

## **Churches Together Wivenhoe**

2023 brought a change of Chair – Phil Bingham stepped down and Tom Cameron took on the task. Phil was thanked for the time and effort he had given to the post and was congratulated on his 50 years as a Methodist preacher.

We all came together for a Lenten Lunch held at the Methodist Church, a Lent film at St Mary's, talks about the Bible in Art at various locations and the now usual Walk of Witness which was extremely well attended.

Pentecost was celebrated in May with tea/coffee and cake at St Mary's and the Churches Together Wivenhoe covenant was signed. This proved to be a very successful event.

As usual wreaths were laid on Remembrance Day and representatives of the different churches were offered the opportunity to participate in the service.

To round off the year the Christmas Cards with all the service details on were printed and distributed to every home in Wivenhoe and Carols on the Quay was really well attended.

Rick Cawley

## **Flower Report**

The Flower team have enjoyed trying a few new things this year. The Wivenhoe River installation in the autumn provided a backdrop for church services including the Civic Service plus a concert, a book launch and a talking point for The Friendly Club.

Christmas started early Dec 7th and we were pleased that with careful tending they stayed fresh until Jan 8th.

We have an eye to economy . The cost is about £900 a year and we have had some kind donations.

Foliage is as important as the flowers so we would ask with people with gardens to get in touch next time they prune please.

Many thanks to all the team .

Carol Mitchell

## **Friendly Club & Café**

The Friendly Club & Café is now two and a half years old. It is clearly fulfilling a need and has a reputation beyond Wivenhoe with people coming to it from Alresford, Colchester and even Fordham.

Almost every week it seems we get someone new coming to an afternoon with us where everyone is immediately accepted and can join in a conversation, or a quiz or just enjoy the music. It will be either Jan or Stella playing the piano, or Sylvia playing the keyboard. We often have someone come and sing for us, as well as Joe from the Microgym to lead a session of chair-based exercises which always seems to go down well.

We have quite a lot of people who have been diagnosed with dementia but many are either carers or people wanting social contact. Importantly, everyone gets treated the same.

Of the 60 – 70 people who are there every week, are some 20 - 25 or so volunteers who to take £2 from each of all of the visitors, keep everyone refreshed with unlimited tea, coffee and biscuits, host tables and make sure no-one gets left out. It helps that we all wear name badges.

Morag Willis and Ann Hanagan do a sterling job each week using Wivenhoe's Community Minibus to bring up to 12 people to the Church who otherwise would not be able to leave their home.

Alison runs the knitting table which is popular, and invariably it has several people sitting at it with their wool and knitting needles, for it is really the knit and natter table!

We never miss an opportunity to make a Thursday afternoon a bit special. Anything can be a cause for celebration such as Christmas when everyone got a present, or the anniversary of our founding when we gave everyone an ice-cream. We encourage everyone to bring cakes on their birthday of course! We are planning to give everyone an Egg at Easter along with plenty of hot-cross buns on each table too.

It is always lovely to see Rev Erwin Lammens at the Friendly Club and we appreciate he has a busy diary especially these days.

The Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group continues to provide all of the administrative support to the Friendly Club & Café. In return for the support of the PCC, we are pleased to share the £2 entrance fee 50/50 with St Mary's. This meant that in 2023 we gave £1,671 to the Treasurer for the use of the Church.

My aim is to make sure that everyone enjoys the afternoon with us, whether as a visitor or a volunteer. I am grateful to all of the volunteers for their continuing help and support in running the Friendly Club and most especially Brian and Jan Sinclair who, in 2024, have taken on the responsibility for organising the weekly social programme.

Peter Hill, Chairman, Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group.

## **Friends of St Mary's Report**

Two years ago Vivien and Bill Eborn took over running Friends of St Mary's to save it from closure. The object of FOSM is to raise funds to help maintain the Church building. We have a membership and have in the past received generous legacies. The FOSM goods are selling well and Vivien and Bill are willing to continue to supply Wyvern Stores and to take the sales table to church and other local events.

However, they do not wish to do additional fund raising solely for FOSM.

This is their plan for the future unless anyone would like to take it over.

The sale of FOSM goods has been amazing this year and after Christmas will have to reorder. My thanks to everyone who has helped on our stalls.

Vivien Eborn, Chair

## **Fundraising Report**

Marika Footring alongside our team ran the annual Quiz Night on February 11<sup>th</sup> 2023. All the tables were booked, which filled the church with lighthearted quiz enthusiasts. The winners were happy to display their well-deserved trophy.

We had a lot of the community come down to the church to watch on the big drop-down screen the coronation of our King Charles III on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2023. With refreshments and activities for the children; it really was a lovely, sociable time with much flag waving.

When Mary Jakens wished to step down from catering, Susan Potter came forward and between them a smooth and busy transition followed. This was evident at the June Market on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 with all stall spaces taken up inside the church and a great many more outside. With the whole team working hard alongside other members of the church, with a lovely Hamper donated for the raffle, the community came out and supported us very well on a warm dry day where the mild breeze played with the bunting. The funds raised from the stalls and the fantastic amount raised by St Mary's stalls was heartwarming. Feedback showed that more and wider advertising was needed.

The Bug Hunt in the church grounds on 15<sup>th</sup> July had added attractions with bug printing stamping cards to make, alongside posters, comics and colourful stickers and a few magnifying glasses, bird seed bags to take home: plus, the wonderful cakes and buns. Chris Gibson, our wildlife leader who came to show the children and families around, commented that 'the quality of the event amazing, sadly the quantity of the turnout was low'. Again, feedback reported that more and wider advertising was needed.

Soon after we had Lammas day at the Rectory on 29<sup>th</sup> July. Rev Erwin Blessed the Lammas Day Bread, which was delightfully donated by a local baker, and shared with everyone. With an assortment of gazebos, tables and chairs, folk came along to enjoy a wonderful summer's day. With a BBQ that was stubborn to light, a homemade delicious curry (with vegetarian option) and rice, enough salad for everyone with an appetite and yet still managed to savor the wonderful cakes and puddings on offer. Games were available for children and even a lot of the adults joined in with encouragement. And of course, lots of bunting.

Lucy Crocker joined our small team to assist with advertising and has redesigned the Excel sheet to aid our efforts and was certainly made most welcome.

We enjoyed our Scruffs dog show on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, in pleasant weather. We registered owners and dogs to go on the designated traffic free dog walk. A photographer was on hand to take great pictures of owners and dogs with their walk certificates afterwards. For the first time this year we had half a dozen stalls with Dog related items and ran a BBQ on the Carolin Patio by the church Annexe, all of which proved popular, whilst everyone also gathered for the two fun classes of dog of waggiest tail and dog most like its owner. Winners won rosettes and donated prizes as well as having more photographs taken. Again, so many people came with their dogs to help raise money for the church.

At the end of September, tickets we sold for our annual Harvest Lunch. We all enjoyed the amazing and beautifully decorated tables and an excellent menu with a glass of Sherry. Our new caterer and her small team worked incredibly hard to put this together. The serving and clearing worked like clockwork and Susan's team were heartily congratulated. Also, a local baker donated a Harvest Sheaf for us.

On a dark and stormy night! The Christmas Market was held. Inside, the church was brilliantly lit with packed out stalls and colourful Christmas lights and decorations. Whilst outside the rain rained and the wind blew cold and hard, However, while a hardy few marshals helped Gazebos to stay put, a large number of our community came out in force to join in with the great countdown for the village lights, to be switched on by our Town Mayor aided by our Town Crier. The church bells rang out and more colourful lights came on. There was a joyous atmosphere that reflected the coming of Christ at Christmas. Another beautifully wrapped up Hamper was donated, which

helped raise the much-needed funds for St Mary's. We are asking in our prayers for not such rough weather for our next Christmas Market.

As with all the fundraising events we also help out with non-fundraising events, and we are quite a jolly team. Fancy joining us? Susan and Lucy did, and they have proved a wonderful addition. Just come along to any of our events and share a coffee to find out how you can help us to bring the community to not just St Mary's church, but to Christ as well.

With many thanks to all our event helpers and the main team.

[fundraisingwivstmarys@gmail.com](mailto:fundraisingwivstmarys@gmail.com)

Heather Edwards – Fundraising Team Co-ordinator

## **Lectio Divina Report**

Lectio Divina is a small group which meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 7, West Quay. A Bible passage is chosen each month by a member of the group. The passage is read, meditated upon and then read again. There is then a discussion on how the passage reflects on our lives and what we can learn from it. This is followed by prayer.

If this interests you, please come along. Erwin will be happy to give you details.

Blessings.

Ann Evershed

## **Music at St Mary's Report**

2023 returned to some sort of normality on the music front after all the covid related issues but nevertheless leaving things in a much more depleted state than previously. Most services now have the full musical content with our small choir..

Taize services were held with thanks to instrumentalists Hilary Cook (clarinet) and Karen Cakebread (flute) with Jonathan Timms- Bruno adding a cello for the November service.

A Civic Service was held in October. Hilary and Lucy sang a very effective piece by Will Todd and we were joined by a Gospel singer 'Gold' invited by the Mayor.

St Mary's Singers presented a very moving and high standard programme of music for Good Friday and Remembrance, although very few people came to listen. John Dowden accompanied the rehearsals and the soloists were drawn from within the group. John Rippin as always accompanied on the night and added some organ pieces to the programme.

SMS is now a small chamber choir group of about 12 to 15 singers working to a very high standard. After that we moved on to the Carol Service with traditional carols and choir carols by Bob Chilcott and Philip Stopford.

Carols on The Quay took place on the Quay again this year with Geoff Osborne conducting the band and Pam Garland arranging the music. There was a good attendance.

Thanks to everyone who supported our musical efforts particularly John Dowden and Hilary Cook who have played and directed rehearsals during my occasional absences.

Graham Wadley, Director of Music

## **Pastoral Report**

Supported by Ann Barrowman, Jackie Hopkins, Stef Goodman and recently Chris Amos.

The last meeting of the group with Erwin Lammens and his guidance present, was held on November 8th at the Rectory and the next meeting has been arranged for March 6<sup>th</sup> at 10am. A confidential discussion was held about the people being visited or phoned at the present time. Erwin usually suggests people who we might be able to help.

The main concern is knowing when to inform the family when we observe the more vulnerable who are finding everyday life difficult. It is difficult to discuss problems with family members when usually you haven't met them, so this is only done in serious situations. Most have family who do not live in Wivenhoe.

Erwin has a confidential list of people involved and their contact numbers and family members when known.

Since taking over this job in August 2022 I have been creating contact details for all those involved.

Gill Strudwick

## **St Mary's Link with Uganda**

Our link with St Andrew's Church, Namalembe, Uganda has continued somewhat spasmodically during 2023. There has been occasional exchange of news and greetings by email and as usual, part of St Mary's Christmas charity appeal was for funds to help the Church in Namalembe provide Christmas "Bowls of Blessings" for the less fortunate members of their community. A total of £575 has now been sent. This sum includes an accrued monthly donation from one member of our congregation. We received a series of photos of the happy recipients which were displayed via the overhead screen at a 10.30 service at St Mary's.

In last year's report it was suggested that links between our young people and their equivalent in Namalembe might be established but so far this has not materialised. I also requested that someone be found to take over from me as the channel of the Link. My home circumstances now make it impossible for me to give adequate attention to the fostering of the link and I really would like to hand over the responsibility to someone else.

Rosemary Murchie.

## **St Mary's Music Society**

Our aim continues to be one of putting on a programme varied and diverse concerts as well as raising money for the maintenance of the church building.

We have had another very successful year, organising 8 concerts and providing a bar at a Roman River Concert. We were very pleased to say that half of these concerts were 'sell-outs' and those which weren't achieved the objective of bringing a diverse and varied range of music to Wivenhoe and only one make a loss and that was just £21.

We continue to run the Music Society with a reserve of £1,000 so that we can afford to take a risk and afford a loss if that risk doesn't pay off.

As a result of these concerts, we are pleased to say that the Music Society was able to give £2,721.23 to the St Mary's Church Fabric Fund.

So far, for 2024, we have 5 concerts planned and have an idea for a sixth one.

Peter Hill, Chairman, Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society

## **Sunday Club Report**

The Sunday club is supported and run by a team of volunteers. This included the following-

Teresa Warren

Sue Jones

Heather Edwards

Cora Dai

Ceri Law

Hannah Cole

Fran Bailey

The Sunday club is doing very well, and we continue to have a core group of children that attend on and off most weeks. We are all getting to know each other very well.

The Easter workshop took place and was supported by at least 12 volunteers. There were 47 children that attended with their families. The afternoon started with a mini film showing the Easter story then there was free time for the children to take part in one of the craft activities, or help create the Easter Garden, or follow the story trail around the inside of the church. We also had an Easter egg picture hunt in the church yard and the annexe was turned into an Easter café! The children were able to go in there and help themselves to a drink and some tasty treats. Everyone left with their bag of crafts they had made, as well as an Easter comic and of course a Belgian chocolate egg..... handed out by the Belgian Easter bunny himself! Erwin!

Teresa and Sue led a stall at the June Market with toys and books for children. This is always a nice event, and we had many donations of items to sell. The things that were left were saved for our stall at the Free Family Fun Festival.

In September we attended the 'Free Family Fun Festival' in Colchester Castle Park. This was our third time and it was an excellent event. We had a stall, and it was led by Teresa, Erwin, Heather and Sue. This year we were delighted that Hannah, Cora and Ceri also came at different times to help and brought their children too so that they could enjoy the festival. We handed out information about our childrens and families services and events at St Marys. We also had a free raffle with books and toys as prizes. This was hugely popular as the previous year. Next year we will need more prize donations! We also had a ping pong game where points were scored, and sweets were won!

The Nativity play this year was led by Sue and Hilary and it was based on the Nicholas Allen story a version of the Nativity with a grumpy and funny inn keeper! The chairs were set out differently so that the congregation were facing into the middle more and could see as the children walked up and around to get to their spot in the scene.

Afterwards there was a party in the annexe for all the children. Heather led games. Then they all sat for a lunch/treats party with Christmas music playing. Gift bags were handed out as the children left.

There is an email address for Sunday club and this is monitored by Teresa. [wivstmaryssundayclub@gmail.com](mailto:wivstmaryssundayclub@gmail.com)

We are really hopeful that we can now continue to build on our Sunday club and that more children will join us in 2024. We have a new volunteer joining our team Louise Harrison.

Teresa Warren

## **The Way Report**

In May 2022 we started up a youth club called 'The Way'. It stands for Wivenhoe Affable Youth. The Way is carried out in The Annexe. It is intended to be a friendly group for 11–16-year-olds, where activities, fun and laughter can be shared. The sessions are twice a month on a Tuesday evening from 7-8.30pm and the teenagers bring a voluntary donation of £1 per session.

The Way is run by volunteers which include- Teresa Warren, Fran Bailey, Heather Edwards, and Sue Jones. It has been very well attended since we began with on average between 15 and 20 turning up each time. There is always a theme for each session and the group begins with free time to chat and play board games, table tennis, and have some refreshments from the 'Tuck shop'. Two snacks and one special drink, with plenty of extra water or squash as required. We have the main optional activity or learning experience at about 7.30pm after some ice breaker games. Themes carried out during 2023 included- Chinese New Year, Shadow puppets, team building games, card making, Shrove Tuesday, circus skills, Easter activities, Movie night, BBQ, and a Christmas party. Just before we finish, we all gather in a circle and have a discussion using some 'Affirmations cards or a subject that the group may decide on. This is a time to share thoughts and feelings.

Teresa is planning to take more of a back seat now and won't attend every session. We are currently looking for some new volunteers to join the team. We are really pleased with the attendance and look forward to an exciting 2024.

Teresa Warren

## **Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group Report**

The Toddler group have had another successful year. Numbers at the beginning of the year were good but then started to dwindle off and by the end of the year attendance was quite low. However so far this new year (2024) our numbers are rising which is much more encouraging.

During last year the Council offices were undergoing renovations and access to our hall was difficult so we did wonder if this may have been a factor in our low attendance. We also were unable to have as many sessions with the Soft Play company attending as they could not gain access to the hall. Hopefully now the work at the offices is finished, attendance will grow.



We still follow the same format each session, with role play, construction, craft, book corner and a designated baby area. We still offer a snack for the children and hot drinks for the adults. Each session ends with singing time.

The group is not just for Mums, we have several Grandparents bring along their grandchildren and a few Dads and this year a couple of Childminders have brought along their charges.

We did have a very successful summer party, again held in the rectory garden and our Christmas party in our hall was also well attended. We did have the soft play company attend as the car park is now open again.

Our leadership team still need more helpers to volunteer each week both with the running of the group and in the kitchen to prepare the children's snack and to wash up afterwards. Two of the original Church ladies still help on a rota for which we are most grateful.

Wivenhoe Baby and Toddler group is a valuable asset to the town, and we hope it can continue for many years.

Vanessa Reed

## **Worship Group Report**

The Worship Group met on two occasions during the year, mainly to plan services for the main festivals.

Through 2023 the main morning services followed the normal pattern and the evening service re-introduced on the first Sunday of each month. Holy Ground has been discontinued due to very low attendances.

Further details of attendances at various services are covered in the Rector's report.

Graham Wadley