

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2024



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

**The Annual Parochial Church meeting will take place
on Sunday 11th May 2025 at 12 noon in church.**

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2024**
- 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**

Index to Contents

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 12 th May 2023 .	Page...4
Deanery Synod Report	Page...6
Electoral Roll Officers Report	Page...6
Fabric Report	Page...6
Health & Safety Report	Page...7
Rectors Report	Page...7
Safeguarding Report	Page...11
Secretary to PCC Report	Page...11
Communications Report	Page...12
Treasurers' Report; Achievements & Performance; Annual Accounts	Page...14
All Together Worship	Page...35
Bellringers Report	Page...35
Café Chill	Page...36
Catering Report	Page...36
Cleaning Team Report	Page...37
Churches Together Report	Page...37
Film Night	Page...37
Flower Report	Page...38
Friendly Club	Page...38
Friends of St Mary's Report	Page...39
Fundraising Report	Page...39
Lectio Divina Report	Page...40
Music at St Marys Report	Page...40
Open Gardens	Page...41
Pastoral Care Report	Page...41
St Mary's Link with Uganda	Page...41
St Mary's Music Society	Page...41
Sunday Club Report	Page...42
The Way	Page...43
Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group Report	Page...43
Worship Group Report	Page...44

St. Mary the Virgin, Wivenhoe
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church
Meeting held on Sunday 12th May 2024
in Church

The Meeting opened at 12.00 noon with a prayer read by the Revd. Erwin Lammens which referred to the Vision for our church and the glory of God and our community. Revd. Erwin Lammens in the chair welcomed the 57 people present.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Graeme & Carolyn Martin; Bill Eborn, Peter Hill
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2023** shown on pages 4 and 5 of the annual report were proposed by Hannah Cole and seconded by Margaret Allison. It was unanimously agreed by those present that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2023 were a true record.
3. **Election of members to the Parochial Church Council**
Erwin thanked **Graham Wadley** and **Margaret Allison** for their time and commitment as a member of the PCC. They were given a round of applause and a thank you card. The following candidates for were put forward for election to the PCC –
 - **Sandra Osborne** was proposed by Heather Edwards and seconded by Sue Jones
 - **Sam Belcher** was proposed by Bonnie Hill and seconded by Peter Terry There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role.
4. **Election of Churchwardens**
Erwin thanked Douglas McCormick and Mary Jakens for their work during the year. Douglas and Mary were both prepared to stand for election again. Greg Butler and Sue Jones were also thanked for the duties he had undertaken as assistant churchwardens. The following candidates were put forward for election as Churchwardens -
 - **Douglas McCormick** was proposed by Peter Terry and seconded by Bonnie Hill
 - **Mary Jakens** was proposed by Susan Darien and seconded by Greg Butler There being no other nominations they were confirmed in that role. Those present were content with the election.
5. **The Annual Report**
A PowerPoint presentation was shown outlining various aspects of church life. Erwin spoke about the progress that had been made since the periods of Covid lockdown and the fact that attendances are slowly growing. Two positive things from a grid showed attendance at services – the first was the number of young people under 16 attending and secondly evensong attendance had increased since 2022 both were encouraging for the future. Holy Ground didn't appeal to a wider section of the congregation and so had been set aside. The 8 a.m. and 7 past 7 attendance is a worry and creative thinking is needed. A decent number of Baptisms have taken place but only one wedding during 2023. Church weddings in general are dropping in number. Erwin thanked The Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale, Helena Hughes; Douglas McCormick and the Revd. Janet Driver for their support and commitment during the year in delivering services. Erwin spoke about the Revd. John Driver who had died in 2023 – he was really missed and kept in our memories and hearts.
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. He was thankful for all the numerous volunteers and their commitment, skills and loving heart given to the church.
6. **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 2023 Annual Report. 121 names were on the 2023 electoral roll. Some members of the congregation had sadly passed away or moved away. Erwin thanked Vivien for her work in preparing and keeping the role.

7. Annual Report on the fabric and goods and ornaments of the church

Erwin referred those present to page 6 of the 2023 Annual Report. More plans were being put together to address the requirements of the Quinquennial Report.

8. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod

Erwin referred those present to page 5 of the 2023 Annual Report. An overview had been given of the meetings which had taken place during the year.

9. Acceptance of accounts

Treasurer Douglas McCormick presented the accounts to those present.

£32,000 had been spent more than the income received during 2023. This is a trend and may continue. Thanks to income from Friends of St Marys; St Mary's Music Society; the Friendly Club and church bookings the shortfall had been reduced. Douglas pointed out that we have paid our Parish Share in full for 2023 which was £73,000 and in 2024 it would rise to £76,000. He also pointed out that the cost for power and insurance had increased.

Roof repairs costing £25,000 had been undertaken but there is another area on the roof which was identified in the Quinquennial report that needs attention. Some areas of lead and some coping stones need to be refixed or replaced, when the stones fall they cause more damage. Our architects Inkpen Downie is due to send our tenders for the work in the near future. The cost of the repair work is going to be more than £50,000.

Douglas urged those who could sign a form for gift aid as a significant amount can be claimed which makes such a difference to church finances - £21,339 had been claimed in 2023. The accounts also show various legacies which are in restricted and unrestricted funds.

Susan Darien asked a question about how the parish share amount was worked out. Douglas explained that it was a deanery calculation. In 2024 we volunteered to pay more as we are blessed with funds and other churches are not in such a positive position.

Lucy Crocker stated that we have lots of different ways to give to the church now and we need to direct people to the card reader and QR code which can be used rather than cash. The QR code will be put on the service sheet to enable easy giving at services.

The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Sandra Osborne, seconded by Greg Butler, and unanimously agreed.

10. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Although Peyton Tyler Mears had been appointed to act as Independent Examiners at the 2023 Annual Meeting they had been unable to prepare and examine the accounts. The PCC had authorised the appointment of Larking Gower LLP to undertake the work at their February meeting.

Douglas McCormick proposed that Larking Gower LLP be appointed as Independent Examiners for 2024\2025, this was seconded by Barry Smith and unanimously agreed by those present.

11. Other matters

Erwin thanked his family An, Jonas, Mieke and his friend Nigel Spencer for their understanding and support during the past year.

12. Erwin closed the meeting at 12.45 and everyone joined together in saying The Grace.

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 Diocese and nationally, and to discuss and share ideas about how we can work together more effectively across Colchester. Please find below a short report on the Deanery Synod Meetings held during 2024.

13th March 2024 – At St. James The Great with St. Paul Church, Colchester

- Our speaker for this Synod was Sam Fowler, Director of Christian Youth Outreach (CYO). Lyne Gettings, Lay Chair, interviewed Sam about the work of CYO. During the interview Sam told us about the vision for CYO and how they want to work with churches in supporting them to carry out work in schools – local churches in local communities. Revd Hanna Copper, Assistant Area Dean, then spoke about a new chaplaincy service being implemented by St. Mark's Church with the help of CYO, at Brinkley Grove School, Colchester.
- This was followed with a Q&A session.

12th June 2024 – At St. maru's Church, West Bergholt

- Our speaker for this Synod was Revd Canon Ian Hilton who introduced a new course, 'How to Pioneer.' Following the talk Revd Sarah Hayward, Revd Wendy Pagden and Revd Sue Howlett gave testimonies about pioneer ministry in their contexts.
- Synod was then presented with a proposal from the Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committee (DSPC), to develop ministry to children, young people, and families and also for a Deanery Day to be held during 2025 to further develop a co-ordinated vision for mission in this area.

16th October 2024 – St. Peter's Church, Colchester

- Synod was joined by the bishop of Colchester, The Right Reverend Roger Morris. The format for this meeting was a Question-and-Answer Panel with each parish providing feedback on Parish Away Days which had taken place with funding from the Mission Opportunity Fund (MOF) for this year.

Electoral Roll

In 2024 there were 124 names on St Mary's Electoral Roll.

This year, 2025, the roll needed to be revised. It is 6 years since the last revision.

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 names on the Electoral Roll can be found at the back of church.

Mary Jakens

Fabric Report

Maintenance work has continued in various areas to ensure that the building is kept in good order. The fabric team have not met regularly in 2024 as there has been little to do other than the routine maintenance of systems scheduled throughout the year.

Generally: PAT testing of electrical equipment, pump maintenance, fire alarm and fire extinguisher equipment maintenance, light fittings replaced in the Annexe, etc all carried out as scheduled throughout the year.

Roof: tenders were sought for the re-roofing and replacement of coping stones to the East end of the main roof. The tenders returned were beyond the Church's ability to fund the works, given a sizeable contingency would also be required. Fundraising will be required to fund these works.

General maintenance of the roof and the roof alarm system was carried out during the year.

Storage: A clear out exercise was carried out in the year, but this will need repeated as the space created has been filled again. It is proposed to clear out the Choir Vestry, the Rector's Vestry corridor and the shed early in the Spring 2025.

Church Yard: great thanks are due to Peter Terry and his team of volunteers who have done a brilliant job of upgrading the Church Yard with new planting and maintenance. Similar thanks are due to the team from the Town Council who provide general maintenance, grass cutting, etc throughout the year, which is greatly appreciated.

A number of bicycle racks were installed in the Church Yard during the year.

Mary Jakens and Douglas McCormick

Church Wardens

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.

Rectors Report

Let the figures speak

When we look at the statistics of the last decade, the Covid year 2020 appears as a reset of the figures. Just before Covid we welcomed on average 86 people on a Sunday morning; in the years after the pandemic that figure had dropped to 70. In the last three years the attendance seems stable: there is no decrease in the numbers but also no growth. In 2025 we have a mission to fulfil: turning St Mary's into a growing church again.

But there are exceptions, which are significant and tell us which services have grown in popularity, and which seem less attractive. Also in 2024 people voted with their feet.

We have seen a significant increase in attendance at Evensong. The new format includes much loved elements of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Evensong and Common Worship Communion. Taizé services attract a good number as well.

On the other hand, the 8.00am BCP Communion sees a worrying drop in numbers. Midweek reflection has seen ups and downs, sadly more downs than ups last year.

The statistics illustrate that young families with children are more than ever a vital part of our church family.

Figures do not tell us everything. Whether the Sunday Service is attended by 5 or 75 people, there is always a team of volunteers offering a warm welcome and making sure that everything is in place for you to sit down and relax, to encounter God in your prayers and to make you realise how much you are loved by Him and your sisters and brothers in your church.

Sunday and Wednesday services

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
8am	10	11	11	12	14	12	10	11	11		10	9	7	5
10.30am: under 16	7	7	7	6	6	5	6	5	8		6	11	10	9
10.30 am: adults	77	79	79	76	76	72	72	62	67		51	52	54	57
Evensong	17	16	16	17	17	14	16	12	11		N/A	5	14	20
7 past 7	10	11	11	11	12	11	12	8	8		6	7	7	6
Taizé	18	12	25	34	28	18	27	26	21		16	15	14	18

Pastoral and initiation services

The figure that stands out in the statistics below is the number of funerals that took place in the church: 22. This is the highest number for the last 15 years. On the other hand, the number of weddings at the church remains low, which confirms the national trend.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Baptisms	18	30	20	27	14	21	18	18	9	4	6	2	13	7
Confirmations	4	8	0	6	8	0	6	0	8	0	0	5	1	2
Weddings	12	19	13	6	10	15	8	6	5	3	5	7	1	2
Renewal of vows	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Funerals in church	21	20	18	20	20	10	14	6	10	10	8	15	12	22
Cremation services	8	13	9	8	4	15	10	9	16	17	9	6	8	6

Vision Away Day

On the 27th April 38 members of our church community, 30 adults and 8 children, spent the day at St Andrew's church Alresford exploring our vision for the future of St Mary's.

A vision committee has been established to work through the list of ideas that were discussed on the day. Its initial aim is to manage the suggestions by accessing, prioritising, and validating each item so that a measured recommendation can be made to the PCC outlining the key actions to be taken forward. Some items are 'easy wins' which can be implemented quickly, and others will need a much longer timescale to action effectively. The committee will also be accountable for validating the correct outcome.

The Deanery Synod also asked us to write a report about the Vision Day and to take part in a panel with other churches and Bishop Roger, Bishop of Colchester. Lucy Crocker represented St Mary's at the panel and here is an extract of her report.

'At the Vision Day we worked our way through a series of creative exercises, with topics to cover everything from Worship and pastoral care to music and community links. This allowed us to uncover what our church community means to us now, how we would like our church to develop moving forward and how we see those things serving God's mission through our offering to both our church community and the wider community of Wivenhoe in the future.

Our last vision day was 7 years ago and with the support of so many in our community we have been able to fulfil the aspirations set out to build the Annexe and re-order the Nave which is an amazing achievement! As we continue to grow and discover new ways of using our new flexible layout at St Mary's it was refreshing to return to St Andrews, a source of inspiration in our project planning, to remind ourselves how far we have moved forward in the last 7 years.' In 2024 the focus was on how we continue to develop on the wonderful facilities and community we have through worship, faith education, opportunities for children and young adults and much more.

As a church community we have a huge amount of respect for those who work within our church to organise and implement a busy schedule of activity on a weekly basis, a great deal of our work moving forward revolves around building that team and future proofing those key roles so that we can, for example, maintain things like our outreach for children, musical activities, pastoral care and varieties of worship.'

Also, in 2025 the vision committee will continue to find ways to implement the conclusions of the Vision Day. The first results are already seen in the work with children, youth and families (such as Open the Book in the Wivenhoe schools, plans for a Youth Drama Group and Nativity Play in the streets of Wivenhoe), in the running of nurture and study courses (such as the Romans Bible Course, 'Spot the difference' Lent Course and the Radical Welcome Course) and further developing the inclusive ethos of the church.

Ministers' Team and Standing Committee

St Mary's is blessed with a passionate and compassionate Ministers' Team and hard-working Standing Committee.

Members of the ministers' team are Revd Canon Erwin Lammens, Rector, Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale, Associate Priest, Revd Emma Smith, Associate Curate, Dr Glyn Stanway, Reader, Helena Hughes and Douglas McCormick, Authorised Local Preachers. After the passing of Deirdre Gill last July, this Parish no longer has a Pastoral Assistant.

The Standing Committee consists of the churchwardens, treasurer, PCC secretary and the Rector. This team discusses matters of Fabric, Finances and Mission. They also meet to set the PCC Agenda.

Without these teams it would be impossible to fulfil my ministry as Rector in Wivenhoe. I am hugely grateful to all.

Worship

The Worship group meets three times a year and discusses the church services. Some good ideas have been put into practice. There is always space for renewal or making use of resources that we haven't included before. Also changes of circumstances may urge us to adjust the pattern of Sunday worship. Elsewhere in the Annual Report you will find the Worship Group Report.

We celebrate the Sunday services and major festivals with music by the church choir, St Mary's singers, director, organists, soloists, other musicians, and the participation of our congregation. I thank all those involved in singing and playing music at our church.

Music also plays an important role outside Worship. St Mary's Wivenhoe Music Society organises successful concerts and several other music groups book the church for their concerts. The church is popular for these events because of its excellent acoustics.

Fabric and Fundraising

These topics will be covered elsewhere. I just wanted to highlight the drop in our financial reserves and the need to raise funds for the roof repair (a 6-figure expense). The Fundraising at special events, Friends of St Mary's, donations, collections, legacies, standing orders continue to cover partly the running cost of our church (over £400 per day) but this year an extra effort will need to be made to raise for the roof repair. Challenging times. Thank you to all involved and to generous givers.

St Mary's welcomes everyone

The PCC has voted unanimously to apply for the church to receive the status of an inclusive church as part of the Inclusive Church Network. A Radical Welcome Course - to which everyone in church will be invited - will be organised during 2025. This course will help to welcome people with diverse backgrounds.

Two groups of people who receive our special attention are the elderly and the young.

Pastoral visiting and social events are organised for those who like. Every week it is good to see people joining the Friendly Club, Sunday services, Café Chill, and other events at which the elderly are very welcome. Thank you to all organisers and volunteers.

For a Parish of this size and with several pastoral needs among its residents the absence of a Pastoral Assistant is felt strongly. St Mary's pastoral visitors group, a small group of volunteers, works hard to cover the need by visiting or keeping in touch with the residents who have asked for a visit. Please do consider how God is calling you. He needs fieldworkers and labourers, and you may well be one of them.

Our children's and youth ministry are another main focus in our Mission. Sunday Club, The Way, All Together, Easter activities for children, nativity play, Christmas party and much more are events where the young feel very welcome. With thanks to the Sunday Club and the Way leaders.

The wider perspective

We are not an island or isolated church. We have a mission in establishing peace and protecting the environment locally with a global perspective. If everyone contributes to this mission the world will be better. Small but important steps have been made such as the upkeep of the churchyard with more planting and sowing flowers, including creating a patch with wildflowers.

We take part in an active way in the broader context of Churches Together in Wivenhoe, Mission and Ministry Partnership with the churches in Greenstead and St John's Colchester and the Colchester Deanery (with three St Mary's representatives at Synod). We also have an active link with St Andrew's in Namalemba in Uganda and the group of Christian Women there.

Love one another

I was humbled by your response that I received when Bishop Guli, Bishop of Chelmsford, honoured me as a member of the College of Canons at Chelmsford Cathedral. St Mary's church family is wonderful, caring, and welcoming. I pray that you may continue to love one another.

Due to circumstances beyond our power, such as illness, work and family commitments, the workload in this busy church lies on the shoulders of only a small group of people. They are already stretched. If anyone reading this has the time and energy to give some support, please let the churchwardens or me know. Whatever your skills are I am sure your assistance will be much appreciated.

In my second year as Area Dean the demands on me have increased. But despite the rise of my work hours, with the help of others, we have regained strength in the aftermath of the pandemic. The last three years have seen a status quo. But now it's time to start growing again, spiritually, and numerically. Huge thanks to An, Jonas and Mieke and all of you for your prayers and support.

Safeguarding Report

- I have had one planned focussed face-to-face meeting with Erwin, numerous phone calls, emails, and unplanned informal meetings, as always Erwin has given me support, encouragement, and advice.
- There have been two Safeguarding issues raised and dealt with this year. They demonstrated clear communication channels, prompt action with thorough and reflective outcomes. Everyone was communicated with appropriately, both electronically and verbally.
- The question of streaming the Nativity play was raised. I sought advice from the Diocese and then fed the information back.
- Erwin and I have discussed on many occasions the log that the Diocese keep on individuals training. Names appear to move/disappear dependent on whether it is mine or Erwin's name that is clicked on. Erwin plans to discuss this with the Diocese Safeguarding Team this year.

Erwin and I met on Wednesday 25th September at the Rectory; these are the minutes from that meeting.

- We discussed the recent recruitment for two new volunteers, one for The Way and the other for The Sunday Club. We talked about the whole process, and it was obvious that Erwin had gained much from the experience and how he would adapt it for future recruiting.
- Once more, we discussed the need for all PCC members to undertake Safeguarding training; this is a requirement from the Diocese.
- Both Erwin and I received an email from the Diocese Safeguarding Team alerting us to an individual (a name was given) Erwin made some very subtle enquiries and was assured he had no connection to St Mary's.
- We went on to discuss the Christingle Service, Children's Society and Harvest donations.

A very productive meeting.

A big thank-you also to Bonnie for her knowledgeable and prompt answers to my enquiries.

It is of paramount importance to remember that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Gill Black, P.S.O

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.

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 2024

Incumbent	The Revd. Erwin Lammens Chairperson
Licensed Clergy	Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale
Reader	Emeritus Professor Dr. Glyn Stanway
Churchwardens	Douglas McCormick Mary Jakens
Treasurer	Douglas McCormick
Secretary	Bonnie Hill
Deanery Synod Representatives	Rick Cawley Dr. Nick Gustard Heather Edwards
Elected Members	Greg Butler Jane Taylor Eric Jakens Claudia Alsdorf Hannah Cole Gary Ranford Sue Jones Sandra Osborne Sam Belcher

Since the last Annual Meeting, the PCC have met on 9 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, Health & Safety, 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 meetings regularly 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

OUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

Streaming services

On the tech side, when the system works it works well. However, we can never be certain that it will be the same from one use to the next and attendance at one hour before services has become a way of life for the operatives.

The BT connection has been reliable.

In the last few months, we have experienced recurring failures of the most used of the 3 cameras. Putting this right requires physical manipulation at the camera itself and a suitable stepladder needs to be made available to obviate the necessity to climb the rood screen...!

On the ministry side, we have streamed church services, Civic and Remembrance services, funerals, and thanksgiving services. Our YouTube stats are less than impressive. Rick helped Edward Cole to learn how to use the equipment to record, and the Nativity Play could this way be made available to parents on a DVD.

Edward has become a valued member of the team, producing and screening presentations at the Altogether Services.

Clergy still need to get used to the presence of our virtual audience and remember to address viewers at the welcome and from time to time throughout the service.

What we really need is a dedicated streaming team that can look at and prepare outside content for incorporation into our service streams as is done to great effect by other churches, examples of which abound on YouTube.

Website and Facebook

Around 100 people follow the website which means they are alerted by email when new posts are made.

Facebook postings get good attention when posted by Facebookers who themselves have a large following, and I am grateful to FB co-editors Teresa and Lucy for taking much of the publicity on this platform for their account.

Licensing

CCLI and OneLicence between them cover the music sung in church broadcast on YouTube during our streamed services or printed in service booklets.

We also have a church video licence with CCLI which costs around £141 per year. Unfortunately, there are restrictions involved with this:

1. we cannot publicise film screenings outside the congregation.
2. we cannot charge people when they attend film showings.
3. we can only show films from producers on the Approved list.

Together these restrictions have frustrated efforts to bring people in with the intention of evangelising, or as Lent events by Churches Together in Wivenhoe.

I am informed that currently we show 13 films in the year.

I have investigated alternative licences; these are available but are all more expensive. For example, Moving Image pays £100 per film.

It must however be recognised that, unless the above-mentioned restrictions are observed, we are not covered by our licence and at risk of being fined - with all the reputational damage that would entail.

I suggest this is a matter for the PCC to attend to, possibly by appointing one of its members to be the go-to person who can assist those who wish to show films.

GDPR

As little appeared to have changed by way of administration no audit was carried out in 2024.

There will have to be one in 2025, and questionnaires will be sent out in the course of the year.

I highlight one of the ways we can all remain compliant: by making more use of the BCC email facility.

If it is not necessary for the recipients to get in touch with each other about the content of the email, BCC should be used as standard.

This will cover most mass information mailings.

Marika Footring

TIDINGS

Erwin and I continue to meet up in person or by telephone, depending on our circumstances.

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

One advertiser has pulled out (Rosie Hunter), and at the time of writing this report we are still to replace this. Advertising costs remain the same for 2024 (£120 for ten issues), the revenue for which covers all printing costs. The four-page content has continued, and the number of flyers remains buoyant. 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.

As last year, 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 12, 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 2024 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 2024

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 2024.

Overall, our total funds have increased in the period by £639 (2023: decrease £31,875), as the difference between our income and expenditure. In the medium term, this remains a concern as we are continuing to use our reserves to prop up the running costs of the Church. This comes into particular focus as we look to implement some of the Quinquennial Inspection Report, in respect of repairs to the roof and to high level stonework. This work requires fund raising and is likely to cost in the region of £150,000. Funds raised and allocated to date amount to approximately £83,000. There is more to do.

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 2024 gift aid was worth just under £16,000, which was more than expected.

The objective to create space for the community with the Annexe 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, Friendly Club and 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, continue together to collect, count and bank all the monies received and to Bonnie Hill who dual authorises our bank payments.

The full accounts, which appear on pages 19 to 34 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 18.

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.

Financial review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £136,970 of which £94,374 was unrestricted planned voluntary donations, including a Gift Aid figure of £15,912. Restricted grants and donations of £4,268 were also received.

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 increased from £201,818 to £202,457, of which £154,746 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 £154,746 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.

Achievements and performance

The achievements and performance of the church of St Mary's is set out on pages 35 to 44 of the Annual Report

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 9 times during the year with an average level of attendance of 79%. 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, 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, C07 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 2024 are as detailed on page 12 of this Annual Report.

Address for correspondence:

16 Colchester Road Wivenhoe Colchester C079EU

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
their behalf

and signed on



8/4/2025

by the Reverend Erwin Lammens (PCC Chairman)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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 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 2024, which are set out on pages 12 to 34.

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: 22 April 2025

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 2024**

	Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Incoming resources					
Voluntary income	2	1,557	94,374	95,931	74,637
Activities for generating funds	3	1,100	19,580	20,680	18,712
Income from investments	4	-	3,400	3,400	2,380
Church activities	5	1,611	19,616	21,227	15,450
Total incoming resources		4,268	136,970	141,238	111,179
Resources expended					
Costs of generating voluntary income	7	-	7,706	7,706	7,795
Church activities		565	132,328	132,893	135,259
Total expenditure		565	140,034	140,599	143,054
Net income/(expenditure)		3,703	(3,064)	639	(31,875)
Transfers between funds	12	(42,538)	42,538	-	-
Net movement in funds		(38,835)	39,474	639	(31,875)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		86,546	115,272	201,818	233,693
Net movement in funds		(38,835)	39,474	639	(31,875)
Total funds carried forward		47,711	154,746	202,457	201,818

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


The notes on pages 21 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Note		2024 £	2023 £
Current assets				
Debtors	10	13,000	10,000	
FOSM Current Account		10,490	9,745	
Transformation Appeal Account		5,939	5,851	
Short Term Deposits		53,665	53,665	
PCC Current Account		102,424	110,804	
Transformation Appeal Deposit Account		19,873	15,329	
		205,391	205,394	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(2,934)	(3,576)	
Net current assets			202,457	201,818
Total net assets			202,457	201,818
Charity funds				
Restricted funds	12	47,711		86,546
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds	12	45,900	42,779	
General funds	12	108,846	72,493	
Total unrestricted funds	12	154,746	115,272	
Total funds			202,457	201,818

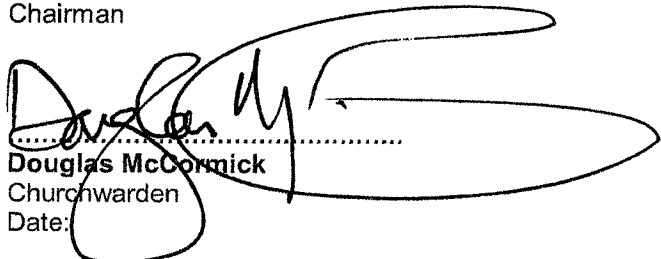
The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Parochial Church Council and signed on their behalf by:



Rev Erwin Lammens
 Chairman



Mary Jakens
 Churchwarden



Douglas McCormick
 Churchwarden
 Date: _____

The notes on pages 21 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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 2024**

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.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Planned giving:			
Gift aid donations	-	57,828	57,828
Income tax recoverable	-	15,912	15,912
Other	-	991	991
	-	74,731	74,731
Collections at all services (open plate)	-	8,443	8,443
Legacies	-	2,246	2,246
Grants	-	941	941
Sundry donations and appeals	1,557	8,013	9,570
Subtotal	1,557	19,643	21,200
	1,557	94,374	95,931

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

2. Voluntary income (continued)

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

3. Activities for generating funds

Income from fundraising events

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Parish magazine (advertising)	-	1,385	1,385
June and December markets	-	3,706	3,706
Fundraising	1,100	14,489	15,589
Total 2024	1,100	19,580	20,680

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

3. Activities for generating funds (continued)

Income from fundraising events (continued)

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

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Dividends on CBF Investment Fund	704	704
Bank and CBF Deposit Fund Interest	2,696	2,696
	<u>3,400</u>	<u>3,400</u>

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

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

5. Income from Church activities

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Fees from weddings and funerals	-	12,734	12,734
Parish Magazine (sales)	-	20	20
Church lettings: local community use	1,611	6,862	8,473
Total 2024	<u>1,611</u>	<u>19,616</u>	<u>21,227</u>

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

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Charitable Activities 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Church Activities	124,922	124,922
Missionary and charitable giving - Overseas	5,037	5,037
Governance Costs	2,934	2,934
	<u>132,893</u>	<u>132,893</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

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

Charitable Activities

	Church Activities 2024 £	Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2024 £	Governance Costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Relief and Development Agencies	-	900	-	900
Home Missions	-	3,362	-	3,362
Secular Charities	-	775	-	775
Ministry Costs: Diocesan Parish Share	76,909	-	-	76,909
Other Ministry Costs	2,055	-	-	2,055
Church Maintenance	4,539	-	-	4,539
Church Running Expenses	15,659	-	-	15,659
Upkeep of Services	2,702	-	-	2,702
Organ and Organists	2,670	-	-	2,670
Vergers	690	-	-	690
Major Repairs: Structural Renewal	7,888	-	-	7,888
Parish Magazine Costs	2,785	-	-	2,785
Assigned Fees to the Diocese	4,966	-	-	4,966
Administration	3,560	-	-	3,560
Bank Charges	499	-	-	499
Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	2,934	2,934
	<u>124,922</u>	<u>5,037</u>	<u>2,934</u>	<u>132,893</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

(continued)

	<i>Church Activities 2023 £</i>	<i>Missionary and Charitable Giving Overseas 2023 £</i>	<i>Governance Costs 2023 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
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
Including Independent Examiner's remuneration	-	-	3,576	3,576
	<u>128,510</u>	<u>3,173</u>	<u>3,576</u>	<u>135,259</u>

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Generation of Voluntary Income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Fundraising costs	<u>7,706</u>	<u>7,706</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

7. Expenditure on raising funds (continued)

Generation of Voluntary Income (continued)

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

8. Independent examiner's remuneration

	<i>2024 £</i>	<i>2023 £</i>
Fees payable to the Charity's independent examiner for the independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts	2,445	2,380
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 (2023 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 December 2024, expenses totalling £1,617 were reimbursed or paid direct to 1 Trustee (2023 - £2,613 to 1 Trustee). These were in relation to the Trustees expenses incurred as their role as the incumbent.

10. Debtors

	<i>2024 £</i>	<i>2023 £</i>
Debtors less than one year		
Tax recoverable	13,000	10,000

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Accruals and deferred income	<u>2,934</u>	<u>3,576</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

12. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Designated legacy funds	40,000	2,246	-	-	42,246
Sunday club	2,779	875	-	-	3,654
	<u>42,779</u>	<u>3,121</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>45,900</u>
General funds					
General	<u>72,493</u>	<u>133,849</u>	<u>(140,034)</u>	<u>42,538</u>	<u>108,846</u>
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>115,272</u>	<u>136,970</u>	<u>(140,034)</u>	<u>42,538</u>	<u>154,746</u>
Restricted funds					
Bell	12,105	140	-	-	12,245
Choir	800	-	-	-	800
Fabric - General	4,964	-	-	4,556	9,520
Fabric - Ashton Legacy	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Flower	719	-	-	-	719
FOSM	9,745	1,310	(565)	-	10,490
Maintenance	2,535	-	-	-	2,535
Transformation Project	40,663	-	-	(40,663)	-
Organ	370	-	-	-	370
Wiv St Mary's Music Society	4,645	2,818	-	(6,431)	1,032
	<u>86,546</u>	<u>4,268</u>	<u>(565)</u>	<u>(42,538)</u>	<u>47,711</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>201,818</u></u>	<u><u>141,238</u></u>	<u><u>(140,599)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>202,457</u></u>

A transfer has been made from Restricted Funds to General Funds in the year of £42,538. This corrects the Transformation Project treatment which should have been reflected within unrestricted funds.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

12. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2023 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2023 £</i>
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
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
	<hr/> 8,029	<hr/> 2,250	<hr/> -	<hr/> 32,500	<hr/> 42,779
General funds					
General	<hr/> 94,019	<hr/> 103,860	<hr/> (125,386)	<hr/> -	<hr/> 72,493
Total Unrestricted funds	<hr/> 102,048	<hr/> 106,110	<hr/> (125,386)	<hr/> 32,500	<hr/> 115,272
Restricted funds					
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

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

12. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year (continued)

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

13. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2024 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2024 £</i>
Designated funds	42,779	3,121	-	-	45,900
General funds	72,493	133,849	(140,034)	42,538	108,846
Restricted funds	86,546	4,268	(565)	(42,538)	47,711
	<u>201,818</u>	<u>141,238</u>	<u>(140,599)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>202,457</u>

Summary of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2023 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2023 £</i>
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
	<u>233,693</u>	<u>111,179</u>	<u>(143,054)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>201,818</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIVENHOE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Current assets	47,711	157,680	205,391
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,934)	(2,934)
Total	47,711	154,746	202,457

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	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

15. Related party transactions

During the year, Graham Wadley was remunerated in his role as Organist for a total of £2,235 (2023: £780). Mary Jakens was also remunerated for her role as Verger for a total of £690 (2023: £340). Both Graham and Mary held the position of 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

All Together had a full programme in 2024 with a monthly Sunday service for all ages. We chose readings and hymns that suit age groups from toddlers, over teenagers, to adults (young and mature). Our young are involved in leading and reading. The texts are available on screen. The All Together team (Teresa, Hannah, Sue and Erwin) prepares a diversity of monthly themes with Edward Cole preparing and running the PowerPoint.

January

Epiphany with blessing of the Magi's gifts

February

The Power of God's Word

We compared God's Word to reassuring love language in human relationships.

March

Welcome to God's house: what makes the church your home?

Also in March

Mothering Sunday with the participation of the Sunday Club and Broomgrove Junior.

May

Baptism celebration with baptism families from the past year

June

Who calls you?

Members of the congregation had to recognise different sounds.

Would you recognise the sound of God's voice when he calls you?

July

First Communion

August

An informal All Together Communion

September

New beginnings: hope and peace

October

Harvest Festival with the participation of Broomgrove Junior and Millfields Primary.

November

All Saints' Sunday: Rejoice and leap for joy

December

Advent Sunday: Be on guard! Be alert!

In 2025 we are changing the services a little and they will be part led by the children too.

Teresa Warren and Erwin Lammens

Bellringers Report

We have rung for Sunday services and held our Wednesday practice evenings consistently each week, apart from one Sunday in October when the bells were silent as several of us were away on holiday or not available that day. Yes, it was noticed! We are pleased to report that bell ringing at St Mary's is still as strong and popular as ever and we have a good team of dedicated bell ringers. We do of course ring for weddings, albeit not that many these days in comparison to a few years ago. We toll at funerals when it is requested.

During the year another returning bell ringer has joined us and she is now a valued and regular member of our team.

We are now training up several students from the University of Essex who discovered, and were introduced, to bellringing at Freshers Week and decided to pursue their interest further. They are now becoming regular members of the team and are ringing on Sunday mornings and regularly attend our practice evenings. We have also been teaching a mother and her two daughters to ring. So, the future of bell ringing is being secured. We have received support from ringers in the area to assist in teaching the students.

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

Café Chill

In September 2022 Teresa and Mike started up Café Chill. 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 become the café from 12.30 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 16.30.

In April the café was busy as we ran alongside a pre-loved clothing sale in the church

There was no Café Chill in May due to Open Gardens, however in 2025 it will become part of the Open Gardens weekend.

We opened on Saturday for a change in June, to be part of the Regatta. This was popular and was important to have the church open on such a great event in our community. We had a lot of visitors. The café also was visited by many in September as part of Heritage Weekend and November for the Art Trail.

Apart from these event dates, the café was visited by approximately 160 people, and we donated to church funds approximately £340 not including payments made on the machine.

Teresa Warren

Catering Report

I think we can give ourselves a pat on the back this year....not in a fundraising respect but an experimental one for the future.

We had a good turnout with the Summer Fair and again at our Scruffs BBQ for not just dogs but their owners, both very good fundraisers.

Our Harvest Festival lunch proved very popular again as was our Christmas Candlelit Soiree, which we will be promoting as a fundraiser next year. Refreshments in the annexe at the Christmas Fair was another experiment which proved very profitable and will now do annually. Our main aim now is to try and form a group/committee for the future, as for one reason or another, this has become a bit of a one-man army, which is never a good thing. All in all, I think we can say a good year.

Susan Potter, Catering Team Leader

Cleaning Team Report

The loyal and diligent group of church cleaners have continued their good work throughout the year. Having lost two people from the rota during that time has slightly increased the frequency that our other participants have needed to attend.

Sandra Osborne

The loyal and diligent group of church cleaners have continued their good work throughout the year. Having lost two people from the rota during that time has slightly increased the frequency that our other participants have needed to attend.

Sandra Osborne

Churches Together Wivenhoe

Churches Together in Wivenhoe consists in St Mary's Church of England, St Monica's RC and the Methodist, Congregational and Community churches. In 2024 the steering group met 4 times in order to prepare services and events that we organise jointly such as the Lent Lunch, Lent Film, Good Friday Walk of Witness, Good Friday Service, Pentecost get-together, the Christmas card, one for each house in Wivenhoe delivered by the Wivenhoe Scouts and Guides, Carols on the Quay at which the ministers of all Wivenhoe churches lead prayers and read Bible passages. Representatives of the Churches also attend the Civic Service and the Remembrance Service. At these services the CTW secretary reads the Bible passage on behalf of all Wivenhoe churches.

Due to illness the Chair was temporarily replaced by Erwin. The ministers met twice in fellowship over a cuppa.

2025 promises to be a special year for Churches Together in Wivenhoe with more Lent activities and the 1600th anniversary of the Nicene Creed.

Please do join CTW services and events to show year deep respect for your fellow Christian brothers and sisters from other denominations.

Film Night

In January I started up a Film Club. The idea of watching films in our lovely annexe with friends from church. The selection of films is a mixture. They will inspire you, uplift you, make you think or make you laugh.

There is a suggested donation of £2.50 which includes a drink and snack. This is a monthly event and the films shown this year were – The Miracle Club; War Room; The Shack; Keeping Mum; Miracles from Heaven; The Blind Side; The Book of Daniel and The Family Man. Attendance has varied from 3 to 15 people.

We intend to continue this throughout 2025.

Flower Report

The Flower team meet in the church most Friday mornings between 9:30 and 11:30. Despite two broken arms (different people), a shoulder replacement, a broken nose and unexpectedly saying goodbye, just before Christmas to Carol Mitchell, our founder and inspirational leader, we have continued to provide displays throughout the year. We make a special effort at Easter, Harvest, Christmas and Candlemass. Our most appreciative audience is the Friendly Club, and we try to ensure the flowers look fresh for them each Thursday.

We estimate the flowers cost about 900 pounds a year but not all of this is claimed from the church as the team often source the flowers and foliage from friends' and their gardens. We are very grateful to the WTC rural maintenance staff who support the church at Easter and Christmas with hedge and tree clippings.

We are a happy 'bunch' and look forward to others joining the team. During 2025 we would hope to 'grow and nurture' a new team leader.

Jenny, Hiliary, Jill, Maragaret, Susan, Trish & (Carol)

Friendly Club & Café

The Club celebrated its 3rd birthday in August 2024. As usual we had a party with fun, a visit of an ice-cream van so that everyone could be given free ice-cream, and talented entertainer Angie Gibbey. Music and dancing always goes down well.

We have had lots of people come and provide entertainment – there have been illustrated talks, clog dancing (clogs only worn outside) and singing. We don't have this kind of entertainment every week though. In between we have quizzes and chair-based exercises. We aim to make sure that each week is different.

We are fortunate in having a wonderful band of volunteers turn up each week – 35 in total. They don't all come each week of course but it is good to have so many. It means some can sit at the tables and encourage conversation. Others run the Reception Desk whilst a great team provide a steady supply of tea and coffee to everybody.

Alison has a good gang of people around her knitting table. Jan Sinclair organises the entertainment each week until she fell ill towards the end of the year. Sylvia Garrity was also playing the keyboard for us each week and also Stella Amos the piano most weeks. We find having music in Church is very important.

If everybody came we would have 88 people come plus volunteers.

From the £2 we take from everybody except the volunteers and anyone who is a professional carer who we don't charge, we gave St Mary's Church £2,262 during the year. In the year to Dec 2023, we gave the Church £1,671, which is a sign of how popular the Friendly Club has become.

Peter Hill, Chairman, Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group, joint sponsors with St Mary's Church PCC of the Friendly Club & Café.

Friends of St Mary's Report

Friends of St Mary's or FOSM as it is known has had a very good year. Wyvern Stores have continued to sell our merchandise which has become increasingly popular and the basket on the table in Church has been welcomed. Our largest event was the June Market which is always a lovely day, and the Christmas Market provided the opportunity to sell attractive Christmas gifts. Hopefully in 2025 we can return to Regatta Day, Scruffs and some community events, if invited. Our grateful thanks to the members who have helped this year, it's always a pleasure to work together.

Vivien and Bill Eborn

Fundraising Report

The Fundraising team had another busy year made possible by utilizing the best of all the skills available. Each member brings certain skills, and we are all grateful for all the time and attention that make this team work in raising funds for St Mary's.

The first event we arranged in 2024 was a bingo event, although a great deal of advertising went out, the turnout was rather low. So, we agreed to turn our effort in a different direction for next year.

The June Market had more emphasis on raising funds for St Mary's. we achieved this with both the white Elephant stall having extra tables and even more quality items to sell, and the new addition of a Garden Stall with extra tables and ground sheets. Added to this we had both regular and new stall holders joining the market with all available stall space inside sold out, and a greater number of stalls outside the church. The Children's stalls were also popular, and we are currently looking at how we can expand all these stalls for this coming year.

Scruffs. Following on from last year's experiment with adding four stalls. This year we added even more and again we had the BBQ with us which really helped to raise the funds for the church as well as bringing more folk into our church, some for the first time. The turnout was terrific again and the photo's along with 'can we book again for next year' from some of the stall holders was a real joy. This has now become an established event in our fundraising calendar.

Next Came the Christmas Market. The weather plays a big part in this event, as the outside stall holders always attest. This year we had agreed earlier to put the inside stall price up to £20 for the inside stall spaces, which for the first time included the Annex; Santa was in the Vestry. All the inside stall spaces soon sold out. Despite the previous year's storms, we had many stalls outside, with most stallholders returning to support St Mary's.

Looking ahead this year. Instead of a Bingo event, we are planning to run a Book Fayre, and the research so far is looking very well indeed in such an academic village with a university close by and three schools and local book clubs.

The aim now looks at for running four main fundraising events each year, so as not to overburden any of our helpers. We have a good stable fundraising team, a list of helpers for each event, strong catering, strong advertising, a superb raffle support, and a little support from those with strong muscles to help lift and move items. This year we hope we can develop all our skills and strengths in raising funds for St Mary's. I am also pleased to report that many of our members

also help out at other church events throughout the year, even if they are not specifically fundraising events.

Heather Edwards, Fundraising Team Leader

Lectio Divina Report

Lectio Divina meets at 7, West Quay on the last Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm. It's a small group of 8 people including Erwin. A Bible passage is chosen each month, in turn, and as we read it we discuss how it affects our lives and what we learn from it. Prayer for each other is poignant.

Erwin brought Communion to the group at Easter and Christmas which was greatly appreciated by everyone: such joy.

If you would like to come along, please speak to Erwin.
Blessings. Ann Evershed.

Music at St Mary's Report

The music in 2024 jogged along under some duress with some of our musicians suffering severe medical issues which made things quite challenging. Hopefully the service music has continued to be acceptable with support from our small choir and embracing many different musical styles. Taize services were held with thanks to instrumentalists Hilary Cook (clarinet) Karen Cakebread and Nina Greenwood (flute) with Jonathan Timms-Bruno adding a cello.

A Civic Service was held in October. Isla and Lucy Crocker sang a very moving arrangement of Allelujah.

St Mary's Singers presented a high standard programme of music for Good Friday although there was no Music for Remembrance held in 2024. This was after much consideration of the poor attendance last year and also my availability due to medical issues. 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. We were encouraged to have some new members join for the Carol Service which had a mix of congregational and choir carols. The Berlioz Shepherd's Farewell seemed particularly popular.

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.

Our organ tuner Peter de Vile decided to retire at short notice in December 2024. The organ is tuned and regulated twice a year and after a lot of investigation into the limited options available to us, Johnson Organ Builders from near Bury St Edmunds will undertake the tuning in future.

Thanks to everyone who supported our musical efforts particularly John Dowden and Geoff Osborne who have played for services in my absences.
Graham Wadley, Director of Music

Open Gardens

Open Gardens 2024 was held over the weekend 18th / 19th May. It attracted 600 people to the event who enjoyed visiting the 30 gardens which participated this year. This year's event coincided with the Art Trail again this year, which made for a very busy weekend in Wivenhoe.

It was a profitable event, and this year made £4,200. This was again shared 50/50 between The Wivenhoe Society and St Mary's Church. Cheques were presented at a Garden Party at Toad Hall in August. The Society shared their £2,100 with 16 local organisations for different projects in Wivenhoe whilst the £2,100 was given to the Church specifically for the Fabric Fund.

This year several people retired from the Committee after many years' service. These were Dot Mathieson, and Jane & Glyn Stanway. Fortunately, Jenny Heaps remains a key member of the team joined this year by Sandra Osborn to both represent the Church.

Open Gardens 2025 is over the equivalent weekend in 2025 in May, being the 17th / 18th May. Peter Hill, Chairman, Open Gardens Team

Pastoral Report

Under the Guidance of Erwin Lammens and leadership of Gill Strudwick. Supported by Volunteers Ann Barrowman, Jackie Hopkins, Stef Goodman, Chris Amos and more recently Mary Baker and Rosie Vickerstaff. At our last meeting of the group on February 5th, 2025, we said goodbye and thank you to Stef for her work over the last two years. We welcomed new volunteers Mary and Rosie for the first time to the group.

At each of our meetings a confidential discussion has been held about the people being visited or phoned at the present time. Erwin usually suggests people whom we might be able to help. There are many who live in Wivenhoe without their family nearby and who the group feel are vulnerable. Erwin has a confidential list of people involved and their contact numbers and family members when known.

Since December 2024 all group members can be identified by wearing a purple lanyard and badge showing their name and that they belonged to the Pastoral Visiting Team for St. Mary's, Church, Wivenhoe.

Since taking over this job from Deirdre in August 2022 I have been creating confidential contact details for all those involved and have provided a list of agencies which can help in our work. Gill Strudwick

St Mary's Link with Uganda

We continue to support Namalembe in Uganda. Rachale Butterfield came to visit Wivenhoe earlier this past year and brought us items for sale which raised well over £100 for her. She also provided a power point show of how the funds have been spent and introduced us to some of the families who receive the goods. Again, this year, we have sold our Christian charity Christmas Cards and again well over another £100 has been raised. All these monies have been sent to her to spend as she sees where and when the need arises and to get the best possible prices. She thanked us all for St Mary's continued support. And she remains in our prayers.

Heather Edwards

St Mary's Music Society

We organised 5 concerts last year and did all of the admin and promotion for the Mediaeval Carol concert which turned out to be a fantastic success. Opus Anglicanum wowed a full house with

their beautiful voices in the beginning of December. Not having seen them previously, they were a big surprise.

Our first concert in April last year also featured 4 people who have beautiful voices, they call themselves Quattro Amici and everyone who came to that concert appeared to thoroughly enjoy the selection of lovely songs that they performed, accompanied by Joe Richardson on his keyboard.

This was followed by renowned international trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins in May and his selection of vintage trumpets which he played so skilfully, together with Ian le Grice on the Church organ. It was a highly entertaining evening and played to an almost full house.

The Sea Shanty Extravaganza in September featured not just the Wivenhoe Hoolies and the Felixstowaways but also the female shanty crew, the Silver Darlings, from Southend. They were a great hit, and they all made for a really fun evening as well as a profitable one.

The Churchfitters came from France where they now live and played most of their 42 instruments for us in October. This included the musical saw as well as the fiddle and various stringed instruments, whilst Rosie sang with her beautiful, clear voice as well as played her penny whistle, and several other instruments, and all to a packed house.

The Wivenhoe Orchestra played a wide variety of different pieces of music in what we have called a Feast of Music, and a feast it was. This was concert number 7, a reminder that we have been organising concerts in St Mary's now for seven years.

We think we achieved our key objective, and that is to bring a wide variety of quality music to St Mary's Church and the community of Wivenhoe, as well as make a financial contribution towards the maintenance of the Church building, and this year of £1,700.

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 and Louise Harrison.

Louise Harrison joined the team at the start of the year and Heather stepped down at the end of the year to focus on 'The Way' and the Fundraising Team.

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. They are all keen to begin having more involvement in the running of the All Together services.

We ordered all our volunteers a Sunday Club T-shirt. These are to wear at events such as the Easter Workshop, June Market and Free Family Fun Festival. They are great to advertise our children's work.

Our Easter Workshop took place on Easter Saturday and was a busy well attended event. We had a café, and the church was full of art and craft activities. A mini film was shown of the Easter story, and children were able to help create the Easter Garden. Everyone left with a bag of goodies they made along with a Belgian chocolate egg and Easter comic.

Lucy Crocker helped organise our stall at the June Market. We had an activity for the children to do, alongside the usual toys and games for sale. We had a team of volunteers helping on the rota, including some of our children with their parents.

On 21st September we had a stall in Colchester Castle Park at the Free Family Fun Festival. This was our 4th time and was a great success. Erwin, Teresa, Ceri, Sue and Cora were there to represent the team. We had a free raffle table with books and toys, along with a giant 'play your cards right' game and some colouring.

The Nativity play in December was a traditional style. We set up the church in a circle style seating and it was put together by Hannah. Hilary Cook and Sue. We have a group of others that support with costumes, prompting, Makaton signing and general encouragement for the children. A real team effort.

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 'the Snowman' and 'Home Alone' films played on the screen. 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

We are really hopeful that we can now continue to build on our Sunday Club and that more children will join us in 2025. We have space for new volunteers.

Teresa Warren

The Way Report

This group is a relaxed, hang out group for the younger teenagers from 11 to about 14/15. They can meet up with their friends. Make new friends with others who attend different schools and mix with others from all walks of life. Meet professionals they would not normally meet and learn about life and the world away from formal education. Learning how to find a WAY to be themselves. This past year they have shown a great delight in food, as most teenagers do. They have been showing us new games which allows them to show leadership skills with no pressure. During this past year they have enjoyed:- games, arts and craft, mug cakes, Rev Emma's visit, Lego night, pre-set craft, showed off their group work with their interpretation of Annie Bielecka's art work (now shown in church), making and understanding the cooking process for burgers, movie night, free games night, repeat of burger and sausages night, fire art work for self-expressionism, excellent debates, mince pie making and running their own party.

As Teresa has stepped back, we have Helena who comes in to help when she can. This coming term is again planned loosely on more worldly events which have kicked off with the Chinese New Year. Numbers have dropped to a more manageable group size, and it enables us to sit with them and be more relaxed and able to listen to them. It is a privilege to see them growing. We also get a lot of good feedback from the parents WhatsApp group. We could always use an extra helper to just join in with whatever is happening.

Fran, Heather and Helena

Wivenhoe Baby & Toddler Group Report

The group has seen another successful year, despite the numbers attending, fluctuating through the year. The average attendance is 16 little ones plus adults.

Out expenditure each week has increased as the rent we pay to the Scout & Guide association for the use of the hall, has increased as has the cost of the snack we supply due to the rising

cost of food in general. We have not increased the fee for attending each week as we want to keep the group accessible to all. However we were successful in obtaining donations from both, Councillor Andrea Luxford Vaughan and Wivenhoe Town Council which has helped us to keep running.

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.

Our annual summer party, held in the Rectory Garden was a great success as was our Christmas party in our hall with both well attended.

The group is not just for Mums, we have several Grandparents bring along their grandchildren, a few dads and a couple of Childminders.

We have a good leadership team, supported by 5 ladies who help on a rota basis.

We hope our numbers remain steady to enable us to keep running as we still feel the group is an asset to the town and want it to continue running for many more years.

Vanessa Reed

Worship Group Report

The Worship group has continued to meet three times throughout the year: a couple of months before Christmas and Easter and around the summer break. Each meeting begins with a reflection on services that have recently taken place. This helps us to note particular successes and identify areas that could be improved in the future. Following this we look at services that will be taking place in future months and plan for these in some detail.

Our Sunday service pattern is also a theme for discussion. The Worship Group is always keen to encourage feedback from the congregation.

Music is an essential part of the liturgy and worship at St Mary's and the Worship Group members are grateful to director of music, organists, members of the church choir and St Mary's Singers, soloists and musicians at the Sunday services and at special festivals for lifting these occasions.

Erwin Lammens