

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF HIGHAM (ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST) WITH MERSTON

England & Wales · Charity number 1169926

Details

Other names	ST JOHN, HIGHAM, KENT
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2016-10-27
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	5 Ash Crescent Higham Rochester Kent ME3 7BA
Phone	01474396569
Email	vicar@highamparishchurch.org.uk
Website	www.highamparishchurch.org.uk

Activities

Objects: PROMOTING IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Activities: Promotion of Christianity and the whole mission of the Church through: Teaching Public worship open to all. Pastoral work, e.g. visiting sick, bereaved, activities for senior citizens. Assisting local schools by governing, providing facilities for education and worship. Running young persons' and children's groups with a Christian ethos. Supporting other charities in the UK and overseas.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Kent

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£109,651	£90,499	-	-
2023-12-31	£88,955	£90,879	-	-
2022-12-31	£94,893	£91,394	-	-
2021-12-31	£85,992	£89,391	-	-
2020-12-31	£90,735	£118,516	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ANNE MARGARET TAMMAS-WILLIAMS		2018-04-29
CAROLE ELIZABETH ROUGH		2019-04-21
Claire Howes		2024-04-21
Helen Walker		2016-04-17
MRS VAL LAURENS		2016-04-17
Nancy Lee Hughes		2020-10-18
Neil Jerome		2024-04-21
Professor Leigh Simeon Keates		2026-04-26
Rev CLIVE WESLEY JONES		2022-06-19
SARAH CATHERINE WRIGHT		2017-11-21
Stephen William Tomsett		2025-04-27
TERESA ELIZABETH ESTELLA JOBLIN		2018-04-29
Tracey Ann Jerome		2022-04-24

Accounts

Annual Report 2024



Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Incumbent:

The Revd. Canon Clive W Jones

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr Martyn Burt
Adventus Accounting Solutions,
Ashby Acres, Chapel Lane,
Ashby-cum-Fenby, Grimsby,
DN37 0QT.
BSc (Hons) ACMA, CGMA

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest in Charge, the Reverend Canon Clive W Jones, 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 use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the Parish Priest and Churchwardens in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the regular celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Parish Priest, Churchwardens and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Gravesend, part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020, amended 2023) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2024 are:

Ex Officio:

Parish Priest	The Revd. Canon Clive Jones	Chair
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Miss Lynne Chesterton – Elected May 2023.
Mr Neil Jerome – Elected September 2023.

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance	Stepped down – May 2024.
Mrs Valerie Laurens	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Carole Rough	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Sarah Wright	Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Anne Tammias-Williams	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Nancy Hughes	DBS Second Recruiter.
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	
Mrs Tracey Jerome	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs Catherine Ody	
Mrs Claire Howes	Elected April 2024

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Parish Priest is an ex officio member of all committees including one or both of the Churchwardens. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which usually takes place during February. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund-raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Parish Priest and the PCC, e.g., baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 21st April 2024 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 66.

Sunday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has been stable over the year. Children's attendance remains variable week to week but a core group of children with their families do attend.

Zoom Masses remain available throughout the year and the aim is for these to be an ongoing offer while there is a need. Some Parishioners still use the Zoom Mass offer e.g. when unwell, away on holiday. The Remembrance Sunday Mass was very well attended, especially from among the uniformed organisations this year.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 6 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2024 on a bi-monthly basis with an average of 12 members in attendance. There have been 2 Extraordinary meetings, with Standing Committee meetings/ decisions taking place via email.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Episcopal Care: Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishop's Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. The PCC reviewed its resolutions with regard to the ordination of women as bishops and priests in July 2021 and agreed that its position was unaltered.

Suspension of Living - Fr Clive has written to our Patrons to ask for support in having the patronage of the Living un-suspended in order to be Vicar rather than Priest in Charge. A letter is also being sent from the PCC.

Worship and Prayer: Except for Thursdays, the daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. We have celebrated 2 Baptisms and 4 Marriages in our Church and have led 6 funerals for the Community, 4 of these at the crematorium, and 2 in Church; 8 burials of ashes have taken place.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. Mr. John Mountford, our previous supporting organist left St John's in July, for a new job out of the local area. Various organists have continued supporting with music and Mr Andrew Linn is now our main supporting organist, playing at services and working with the Singing Group.

Mission and Evangelism: has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. The cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat took place. Lent Lunches have again been held on Saturdays in Lent 2024, raising money to support Christian Aid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community e.g. Friends of S. Mary's, Higham History Group, knit and natter.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing. In these ways, the people of God and the Church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

The men's group which was launched in January, continues to be successful and there is a core group attending regularly. Rolfe's Charity agreed it could support the cost of refreshments for this group and may also support the cost of speakers if needed.

A Lent group was organised this year, studying a variety of Christian Themes, which was well supported. A Community Carol service was held on the fourth Sunday of Advent which was well attended. The Crib service on Christmas Eve was also well attended. Both events drew in a number of participants from outside the usual Congregation.

Fr Clive continues to build links with Higham Primary School and Gads Hill School. He ran an Easter 'messy church' event for Higham School's, Year 4, funded by Rolfe's Charity. He also attended Gads Hill's Centenary Service at Rochester Cathedral. He attended both schools' carol services, presiding at Gads Hill's service in Rochester Cathedral, and is involved in assemblies.

Children and Youth work: All activities for children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.

A growing number of families attend Junior Church regularly and are gelling together in their own fellowship. Regular communication to families continues via email. Our teaching team remains at three; additional teachers/leaders would be very much welcomed. We are hoping that parents, who are becoming increasingly confident and helpful during Junior Church, may be encouraged to help lead in the near future. We are very appreciative of the clergy's active encouragement of families and Junior Church and the children's participation in Masses. The Junior Church presented Fr Clive with a decorated shepherd's crook on his Silver Jubilee, and they laid a wreath at the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday. We conducted

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

a Junior Church Posada with figures of Mary & Joseph being hosted by families throughout Advent. We had a Children's Activity Table at the Christmas Fair. Children were involved in the making of Christingles, and in participating with readings at the Crib Service as well as helping to place figures in the crib. Four of our older youth participated in a day out at Carrotty Wood in October half term again this year, along with Fr Clive and Nancy Hughes, and several churches from south London. The day consisted of outdoor adventure, sports, craft, and worship activities. We plan to repeat this in 2025 if possible and hope we can encourage more youth to attend.

Fr Clive & Nancy attended the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage in August with one youth from All Saints Perry Street (together with youth from Belvedere and Abbey Wood), and we hope that youth from Higham will be able to attend in 2025.

We envisage promoting Junior Church further in the coming year and will continue to write articles for the Higham Bridge magazine.

Social Media and Communications Committee: The Higham Bridge - this magazine continues to provide a link between St John's and the village, with some local organisations providing content. The number of copies printed each month was 225. The price of the magazine was reviewed in 2024, but no change was made. The cost to subscribers remained at 70p per issue - £7 for a year. - and was not increased for the period October 2023- September 2024. The digital version remained at 19 subscribers at the reduced charge of £5 for the year and again assisted to maintain the price charged. There is a reliable team of volunteers who produce the magazine and others who distribute it to the subscribers. Without them it would not be possible to produce this village magazine. There is an ongoing problem of finding new distributors to replace those who are no longer able to undertake this task. Articles are sought for more contributions to be added to the content. The magazine provides a valuable financial contribution to the income to maintain the church.

The St John's Church Website – The website format was again changed to update and modernise the look of pages. Weekly church bulletins are provided online for those who are unable to attend mass. It provides a place for reminders of special mass celebrations, foodbank collection dates, and a source for daily readings, etc. Work on the website is ongoing with updates made to ensure accuracy of content.

Facebook & Twitter – Our social networking sites enable us to engage with the congregation, the community and the wider church with news/announcements, seasonal celebrations and campaigns, and inspirational content. We follow Diocesan policy and guidelines for adults and children, and respect those who do not wish to appear on social media. We are always seeking to improve the relevance and vitality of our social media activity. Visits to our Facebook page have increased in 2024, with an 11% increase in new followers over the previous year. Twitter/X remains fairly constant with a very slight increase in followers. There is a general move from Twitter/X to Bluesky, but as Christian groups and organisations have not yet made that move, St John's maintains its account for the present.

Welcome Pack – a cover was designed and produced but needs further development both in use and content.

Social Committee: This group continues to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality e.g. St John's Dedication day.

This year, fund-raising events were organised for Burns Night and Harvest.

On 7th July a Mass was held to celebrate Fr Clive's Silver Jubilee with Bishop Norman. The Social Committee and other volunteers organised food and drink afterwards.

The Policies Committee: This committee did not need to meet this year.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, outreach groups, exercise groups, meetings etc. Some local groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Users of the hall follow the Vestry Hall Guidance document.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Letting agents M&M continue to manage the property under a shorthold tenancy that is reviewed every year in October. The tenants that moved into No. 17, in October 2022 continue to rent the property. Mrs Walker, Churchwarden, keeps a log of all work and/or repairs carried out at the property.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: Usually four services are held each year. This year the following services took place - Mothering Sunday, Mass and a Church Tour, Assumption and the Dedication Festival. The programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity. Also a volunteer who lives locally has been supporting with nettle clearance.

Concerns were raised about some of the gravestones that are leaning. The DAC Secretary was consulted who advised contacting the insurance company, which was actioned. A risk assessment was completed. Two memorial masons were contacted for their opinion. Following assessments, a mason reported back suggesting leaving the gravestones in place as the risk of a sudden failure was highly unlikely, due to the style of the gravestones being a monolith design, i.e. a percentage of the gravestone is hidden underground and providing support. The mason suggested it would be best to monitor these gravestones yearly and complete risk assessments.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work took place to - correct an electrical connection to the water heater in the kitchen, decorate the toilet area, clear the gutters, replace external security lights and update the switchboard. The 5-year electrical check was completed with no actions needed.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continue to improve and practise. Fr Clive and the Tower Captain are working on improving safeguarding arrangements in the tower, especially in regard to visiting ringers. The clock faces need removing for repainting and gilding. A plan of work is being actioned to do this following The Church of England guidelines.

Financial Review:

It is pleasing to report that we have ended the year with our income being more than our expenditure and would like to thank members of the congregation for their giving which goes so far to help with the smooth running, financially, of our church. It is worth noting that giving went up last year which has helped us enormously. This also means that we are able to claim more gift aid. Fundraising is also a way of collecting funds and we are fortunate to have a band of people who are willing to put time and effort into raising funds for the church and so we thank them and those who attend for supporting our fundraising events. We are also very grateful to William Rolfe's Charity and Lockett's Trust who support us, without which we would not have this surplus. Costs of running the church continue to rise with the main costs for the PCC being the Parish offer, gas and electricity.

We only have one major item of expenditure this year, which has been the installation of a new lighting board and new LED security lights in the churchyard plus a new lantern over the main entrance, the cost of which has been funded by Lockett's Trust. Looking ahead there are some bigger projects to be carried out, such as the refurbishment of the Vestry Hall kitchen and of the church tower clock faces, and so our surplus will help towards the cost of these.

Pew end candles were bought this year in memory of Edward Hance, a long-standing member of the congregation and the PCC, and paid for by the monies collected in his memory.

It is the policy of St John's to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the PCC which equates to 2 months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g., Parish Offer, rates and taxes, and restricted funds.

Each of the causes listed below was paid the sum of £453.75 during 2024:

St Luke's for Clergy Wellbeing, Gravesham Street Pastors, Diocese of Rochester Poverty & Hope Appeal, The Mission to Seafarers.

In addition to this:

£330.58 was raised for Mary's Meals following Fr Clive's Silver Jubilee celebration.

£800.32 was sent to Christian Aid as a result of Lent Lunches.

£722.09 was raised during Christian Aid week.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

£322.57 was raised following the Harvest Lunch, raffle and bucket appeal. Half the money was sent to Gravesham food bank and the other to Rochester Poverty and Hope appeal.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins continued with her role as Stewardship Secretary. Following an initial visit to St John's from Liz Mullins, Generous Giving Adviser, the usual Planned Giving date was moved from February to March. This allowed time for updating of the planning giving packs and for Liz to speak with the congregation. Following this it was noted that there had been a considerable increase in giving compared to last year.

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish. We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy, a policy on Domestic Violence and Lone Working Guidance. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified, and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

Safeguarding

Mrs T Jerome continues in her role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). She is a PCC member so any needed information or updates can be shared during meetings. Mrs Jerome receives updates regarding safeguarding via the Diocesan Safeguarding Newsletter. An excel spreadsheet has been compiled to support ensuring all key people/ volunteers have completed the correct safeguarding training. All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap. Mrs Jerome monitors the safeguarding information presented on the Church website to ensure it is up to date.

Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes continues in her role as Second Lead Recruiter. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS. Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. All members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies and Guidance: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies and/or guidance regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Parish Priest of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also, policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC takes into account GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is the Incumbent in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens is the appointed Data Compliance Officer. Policies, consent forms and privacy notices were produced in compliance with the regulations. A GDPR Annual Return form is completed by key volunteers to inform Mrs Laurens of how the various lists of contact details (databases) that leaders keep for groups attached to the Church have been used during the course of each year.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Localism Act – Fr Clive received notice from Gravesham Council that Higham Parish Council had asked for both churches to be listed under the Localism Act. Following a letter from the Diocesan Registrar, the application was withdrawn.

S Wright

Sarah Wright

Hon. Secretary

Clive W Jones

The Reverend Canon Clive W Jones

Priest in Charge

adventus accounting solutions

Supporting Charitable Organisations

12 March 2025

Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees of St John's Church - Parish of Higham with Merston Registered Charity No 1169926

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on the pages following.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2024

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2024	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts									
Voluntary income	2a	64,997		8,160	73,157	55,926	476	2,093	58,495
Activities for generating funds	2b	7,424		2,359	9,782	6,326		433	6,759
Investment income	2c	13,498	1,160		14,658	722	181		903
Church activities	2d	9,596		2,458	12,054	8,269		507	8,776
Other incoming resources	2e					14,022			14,022
		95,514	1,160	12,976	109,650	85,265	657	3,033	88,955
Payments									
Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	64			64	58			58
Fund-raising trading costs	3b	679			679	849			849
Church activities	3c	75,394	1,976	12,386	89,756	82,182		7,790	89,972
		76,137	1,976	12,386	90,499	83,089		7,790	90,879
Total resources expended									
		19,377	(816)	591	19,151	2,176	657	(4,757)	(1,924)
Excess of Receipts over Payments		4056	700	806	5,562		10	814	824
Transfers between funds - transfers in		-4851		-711	(5,562)	(824)			(824)
Transfers between funds - transfers out									
		18,582	(116)	686	19,151	1,352	667	(3,943)	(1,924)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2024/23		54,864	9,433	6,152	70,449	53,512	8,766	10,095	72,373
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2024/23	4	73,446	9,317	6,838	89,600	54,864	9,433	6,152	70,449

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house rented to tenants, estimated market value

£ 350,000.00

Please see note 4 on page 7 for further information regarding restricted funds

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Treasurer

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust of bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a <i>Voluntary income</i>								
Planned giving by standing order	39546			39546	34847		1398	34847
Planned giving envelopes	7054			7054	5149		560	5149
Income tax recoverable	10710			10710	10673			10673
Collections	1570			1570	1991			1991
Charity Collections			2242	2242				1398
Donations and appeals	6117		5432	11550	3266	476		4302
Legacies/Grants			485	485			135	135
	64997		8160	73157	55926	476	2093	58495
b <i>Activities for generating funds</i>								
General fundraising	4718			4718	3745			3745
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	2706		2359	5065	2581		433	3014
	7424		2359	9782	6326		433	6759
c <i>Investment income</i>								
No 17 rent	13401			13401				
Dividends and interest	97	1160		1256	722	181		903
	13498	1160		14658	722	181		903
d <i>Income from Church Activities</i>								
Church Hall rental	5497			5497	3544			3544
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	3385		643	4028	2586			2586
DBF element of fees			1815	1815	1512			1512
Refreshments	714			714	627			627
Social Committee							507	507
	9596		2458	12054	8269		507	8776
e <i>Other incoming resources</i>								
Sundry					391			391
Other income					13631			13631
					14022			14022
	95514	1160	12976	109650	85265	657	3033	88955
Total receipts								

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a Costs of generating voluntary income								
Stewardship costs	64			64	58			58
	64			64	58			58
b Fund raising costs	679			679	849			849
	679			679	849			849
c Church Activities								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1815		2247	4062	1,991		1,956	44000
Diocesan Offer	45000			45000	44,000			673
Expenses	1441		60	1501	673			2864
Vicarage costs	3153		2258	3153	2,864			1975
Other Benefice account costs				2258	1,975		176	176
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	7425			7425	14,189			328
Refreshments	878			878	328			3553
Insurance	3477	1976	2413	3477	3,553		495	2152
Church maintenance	3774			8162	1,657			
Major Structural work								
Upkeep of services	1486		2392	3878	1,109			1109
Organ Tuning and Playing	3614		585	4199	4,721			4721
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance								
Insurance	272			272	238			238
Administration	1381			1381	1,435			1435
Training/Childrens Church	151		514	665	139			139
Other costs	1525		1918	3443	3,310		5,163	8473
	75,394	1,976	12,386	89756	82,182		7,790	86025
	75,394	1,976	12,386	89756	82,182		7,790	86025
Total payments	76,137	1,976	12,386	90459	83,089		7,790	86932

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

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	54,864	95,514	(76,137)		(795)	73,446
	<u>54,864</u>	<u>95,514</u>	<u>(76,137)</u>		<u>(795)</u>	<u>73,446</u>
Designated Funds						
Church Repair Fund	6,821	248	0	0	700	7,769
Restoration Fund	2,612	911	(1,976)	0	0	1,547
	<u>9,433</u>	<u>1,159</u>	<u>(1,976)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>9,316</u>
Restricted Funds						
Shaves	5,766	0	(479)	0	0	5,287
Mission Direct Grant	0	350	(34)	0	0	316
Electrical work	0	2,000	(2,000)	0	0	0
Legacy 2 (Church Purchases)	150	0	0	0	0	150
DBF fees	0	1,815	(1,675)	0	0	140
War Graves	0	135	(150)	0	15	0
Charity Appeals	0	2,242	(2,247)	0	5	(0)
St Mary's Churchyard	200	200	0	0	0	400
Flowers	36	618	(543)	0	0	110
Cleaning	0	398	(263)	0	0	135
Lamps	0	1,741	(1,789)	0	48	0
EH Memorial Fund	0	1,918	(1,918)	0	0	0
Music	0	557	(585)	0	28	0
Sanctuary	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
Kitchen	0	300	0	0	0	300
Clergy expenses	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
PTO Fees	0	583	(583)	0	0	0
	<u>6,153</u>	<u>12,976</u>	<u>(12,386)</u>		<u>95</u>	<u>6,838</u>
Total bank and current accounts	<u>70,449</u>	<u>109,650</u>	<u>(90,499)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>89,600</u>
Total funds	<u>70,449</u>	<u>109,650</u>	<u>(90,499)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>89,600</u>

The **General Fund** is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The **Church Repair Fund** has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The **Restoration Fund** is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held.

Shaves was a charity that has now closed. The funds have been passed to the PCC's bank account for use in cases of need in the village. Use of these funds is solely at the incumbent's discretion.

Legacy: This was given to St John's for the purpose of buying items for use in St John's church. These funds have been used to buy a new incense boat and a wafer box.

Mission Direct Grant was successfully applied for and these funds are for Children and Young People.

Charity appeals are our bucket appeals and again the PCC round up the figures from general funds.

Flowers - these are funded from donations specifically for the cost of flowers to decorate the church, often for special festivals.

Cleaning - St John's is fortunate to have the cost of church cleaning covered by the Lockett Trust.

Lamps - Shrine Lamps are sponsored by members of the Congregation on a weekly basis. Also memorial candles for All Souls Day.

Electrical work - the installation of a new lighting board and new LED security lights in the churchyard plus a new lantern over the main entrance was funded by a donation from the Lockett's Trust for this purpose.

DBF/PTO/ fees and clergy expenses - these are from weddings and funerals and are sent on to the Rochester Board of Finance and the stand-in priests.

War Graves - this grant is used for tending the war graves at St Mary's.

St Mary's Churchyard - this has been set up by a parishioner for the upkeep of St Mary's churchyard.

Kitchen - we have received a donation to go towards the refurbishment of the vestry hall kitchen.

Sanctuary - this was a donation from Rolfe's for the printing of new mass sheets.

Memorial Fund - this purchased the end of pew candle lights.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

5 Staff costs and payments to PCC members

There are no employees and we have made no payments to PCC members apart from reimbursement of expenses.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
	Undesignated	Special Collections	Undesignated	Special Collections
Christian Aid		800	42	1,238
Emergency Youth Pilgrim Appeal Walsingham			100	
Rochester DBF Poverty and Hope Appeal	454	323	485	
Ellenor			200	
Friends of St Mary's				75
College of St Barnabas			485	
Mary's Meals		331	9	343
Gravesend Daytime hub			485	
Friends of the Holy Land			485	
Additional Curates Society	5	145		
Gravesham Food Bank		323		
Mission to Seafarers	454			
St Luke's for Clergy Wellbeing	454			
Gravesham Street Pastors	454			
Confirmation Collection		100		
Charity appeals expenses		221		
	1,820	2,242	2,291	1,656

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

adventus accounting solutions

Supporting Charitable Organisations

12 March 2025

Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees of St John's Church - Parish of Higham with Merston Registered Charity No 1169926

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on the pages following.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2024

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2024	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS 2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts									
Voluntary income	2a	64,997		8,160	73,157	55,926	476	2,093	58,495
Activities for generating funds	2b	7,424		2,359	9,782	6,326		433	6,759
Investment income	2c	13,498	1,160		14,658	722	181		903
Church activities	2d	9,596		2,458	12,054	8,269		507	8,776
Other incoming resources	2e					14,022			14,022
		95,514	1,160	12,976	109,650	85,265	657	3,033	88,955
Payments									
Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	64			64	58			58
Fund-raising trading costs	3b	679			679	849			849
Church activities	3c	75,394	1,976	12,386	89,756	82,182		7,790	89,972
		76,137	1,976	12,386	90,499	83,089		7,790	90,879
Total resources expended									
		19,377	(816)	591	19,151	2,176	657	(4,757)	(1,924)
Excess of Receipts over Payments		4056	700	806	5,562		10	814	824
Transfers between funds - transfers in		-4851		-711	(5,562)	(824)			(824)
Transfers between funds - transfers out									
		18,582	(116)	686	19,151	1,352	667	(3,943)	(1,924)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2024/23		54,864	9,433	6,152	70,449	53,512	8,766	10,095	72,373
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2024/23	4	73,446	9,317	6,838	89,600	54,864	9,433	6,152	70,449

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Description of any Assets

Semi detached 3 bedroomed house rented to tenants, estimated market value

£ 350,000.00

Please see note 4 on page 7 for further information regarding restricted funds

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Treasurer

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust of bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a <i>Voluntary income</i>								
Planned giving by standing order	39546			39546	34847		1398	34847
Planned giving envelopes	7054			7054	5149		560	5149
Income tax recoverable	10710			10710	10673			10673
Collections	1570			1570	1991			1991
Charity Collections			2242	2242				1398
Donations and appeals	6117		5432	11550	3266	476		4302
Legacies/Grants			485	485			135	135
	64997		8160	73157	55926	476	2093	58495
b <i>Activities for generating funds</i>								
General fundraising	4718			4718	3745			3745
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	2706		2359	5065	2581		433	3014
	7424		2359	9782	6326		433	6759
c <i>Investment income</i>								
No 17 rent	13401			13401				
Dividends and interest	97	1160		1256	722	181		903
	13498	1160		14658	722	181		903
d <i>Income from Church Activities</i>								
Church Hall rental	5497			5497	3544			3544
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	3385		643	4028	2586			2586
DBF element of fees			1815	1815	1512			1512
Refreshments	714			714	627			627
Social Committee							507	507
	9596		2458	12054	8269		507	8776
e <i>Other incoming resources</i>								
Sundry					391			391
Other income					13631			13631
					14022			14022
	95514	1160	12976	109650	85265	657	3033	88955
Total receipts								

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	FUNDS 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>								
Stewardship costs	64			64	58			58
	64			64	58			58
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	679			679	849			849
	679			679	849			849
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1815		2247	4062	1,991		1,956	44000
Diocesan Offer	45000			45000	44,000			673
Expenses	1441		60	1501	673			2864
Vicarage costs	3153		2258	3153	2,864			1975
Other Benefice account costs				2258	1,975		176	176
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	7425			7425	14,189			328
Refreshments	878			878	328			3553
Insurance	3477			3477	3,553			2152
Church maintenance	3774	1976	2413	8162	1,657		495	1109
Major Structural work								4721
Upkeep of services	1486		2392	3878	1,109			
Organ Tuning and Playing	3614		585	4199	4,721			
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance								
Insurance	272			272	238			1435
Administration	1381			1381	1,435			139
Training/Childrens Church	151		514	665	139			
Other costs	1525		1918	3443	3,310		5,163	86025
	75,394	1,976	12,386	89756	82,182		7,790	86932
	76,137	1,976	12,386	90499	83,089		7,790	
Total payments								

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

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	54,864	95,514	(76,137)		(795)	73,446
	<u>54,864</u>	<u>95,514</u>	<u>(76,137)</u>		<u>(795)</u>	<u>73,446</u>
Designated Funds						
Church Repair Fund	6,821	248	0	0	700	7,769
Restoration Fund	2,612	911	(1,976)	0	0	1,547
	<u>9,433</u>	<u>1,159</u>	<u>(1,976)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>9,316</u>
Restricted Funds						
Shaves	5,766	0	(479)	0	0	5,287
Mission Direct Grant	0	350	(34)	0	0	316
Electrical work	0	2,000	(2,000)	0	0	0
Legacy 2 (Church Purchases)	150	0	0	0	0	150
DBF fees	0	1,815	(1,675)	0	0	140
War Graves	0	135	(150)	0	15	0
Charity Appeals	0	2,242	(2,247)	0	5	(0)
St Mary's Churchyard	200	200	0	0	0	400
Flowers	36	618	(543)	0	0	110
Cleaning	0	398	(263)	0	0	135
Lamps	0	1,741	(1,789)	0	48	0
EH Memorial Fund	0	1,918	(1,918)	0	0	0
Music	0	557	(585)	0	28	0
Sanctuary	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
Kitchen	0	300	0	0	0	300
Clergy expenses	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
PTO Fees	0	583	(583)	0	0	0
	<u>6,153</u>	<u>12,976</u>	<u>(12,386)</u>		<u>95</u>	<u>6,838</u>
Total bank and current accounts	<u>70,449</u>	<u>109,650</u>	<u>(90,499)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>89,600</u>
Total funds	<u>70,449</u>	<u>109,650</u>	<u>(90,499)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>89,600</u>

The **General Fund** is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The **Church Repair Fund** has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The **Restoration Fund** is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held.

Shaves was a charity that has now closed. The funds have been passed to the PCC's bank account for use in cases of need in the village. Use of these funds is solely at the incumbent's discretion.

Legacy: This was given to St John's for the purpose of buying items for use in St John's church. These funds have been used to buy a new incense boat and a wafer box.

Mission Direct Grant was successfully applied for and these funds are for Children and Young People.

Charity appeals are our bucket appeals and again the PCC round up the figures from general funds.

Flowers - these are funded from donations specifically for the cost of flowers to decorate the church, often for special festivals.

Cleaning - St John's is fortunate to have the cost of church cleaning covered by the Lockett Trust.

Lamps - Shrine Lamps are sponsored by members of the Congregation on a weekly basis. Also memorial candles for All Souls Day.

Electrical work - the installation of a new lighting board and new LED security lights in the churchyard plus a new lantern over the main entrance was funded by a donation from the Lockett's Trust for this purpose.

DBF/PTO/ fees and clergy expenses - these are from weddings and funerals and are sent on to the Rochester Board of Finance and the stand-in priests.

War Graves - this grant is used for tending the war graves at St Mary's.

St Mary's Churchyard - this has been set up by a parishioner for the upkeep of St Mary's churchyard.

Kitchen - we have received a donation to go towards the refurbishment of the vestry hall kitchen.

Sanctuary - this was a donation from Rolfe's for the printing of new mass sheets.

Memorial Fund - this purchased the end of pew candle lights.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

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

5 Staff costs and payments to PCC members

There are no employees and we have made no payments to PCC members apart from reimbursement of expenses.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
	Undesignated	Special Collections	Undesignated	Special Collections
Christian Aid		800	42	1,238
Emergency Youth Pilgrim Appeal Walsingham			100	
Rochester DBF Poverty and Hope Appeal	454	323	485	
Ellenor			200	
Friends of St Mary's				75
College of St Barnabas			485	
Mary's Meals		331	9	343
Gravesend Daytime hub			485	
Friends of the Holy Land			485	
Additional Curates Society	5	145		
Gravesham Food Bank		323		
Mission to Seafarers	454			
St Luke's for Clergy Wellbeing	454			
Gravesham Street Pastors	454			
Confirmation Collection		100		
Charity appeals expenses		221		
	1,820	2,242	2,291	1,656

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Accounts

Annual Report 2023



Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Incumbent:

Revd. Canon Clive W Jones

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr Martyn Burt
Adventus Accounting Solutions,
Ashby Acres, Chapel Lane,
Ashby-cum-Fenby, Grimsby,
DN37 0QT.
BSc (Hons) ACMA, CGMA

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest in Charge, the Reverend Canon Clive W Jones, 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 use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the Parish Priest and Churchwardens in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the regular celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Parish Priest, Churchwardens and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Gravesend, part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2023 are:

Ex Officio:

Parish Priest	The Revd. Canon Clive Jones	Chair
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mr Stephen Phillips - Stepped down May 2023.

Miss Lynne Chesterton – Elected May 2023.

Mr Neil Jerome – Elected September 2023.

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Valerie Laurens	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Carole Rough	Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Sarah Wright	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Anne Tammas-Williams	DBS Second Recruiter.
Mrs Nancy Hughes	
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	
Mrs Tracey Jerome	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs Catherine Ody	

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Parish Priest is an ex officio member of all committees including one or both of the Churchwardens. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which usually takes place during February. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund-raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Parish Priest and the PCC, e.g., baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 7th May 2023 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 70.

Sunday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has been stable over the year. Children's attendance remains variable week to week but a core group of children with their families do attend.

Zoom Masses remain available throughout the year and the aim is for these to be an ongoing offer while there is a need. Some Parishioners still use the Zoom Mass offer e.g. when unwell, away on holiday.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 6 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2023 on a bi-monthly basis with an average of 10 members in attendance. There has been 1 Extraordinary meeting, with Standing Committee meetings/ decisions taking place via email.

Following Fr Clive settling into St John's and a Vision Day held by Bishop Norman, a working party has been formed and met in November to discuss plans to further develop mission, outreach and vision at St John's.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Episcopal Care: Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. We have still not received a written reply to date. However, the appointment of Bishop Norman as an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese implies that this meets our situation in part. The PCC reviewed its resolutions with regard to the ordination of women as bishops and priests in July 2021 and agreed that its position was unaltered.

With the support of Bishop Jonathan, Bishop of Rochester and Bishop Norman, Bishop of Richborough, it was decided due to concerns regarding Fr Clive's health, that he should step down from his role as Priest in Charge of All Saints in August 2023. He is now serving as full time Priest in Charge at St John's.

Worship and Prayer: Except for Thursdays, the daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. We have celebrated 2 Baptisms and 1 Marriage in our Church and have led 7 funerals for the Community, 3 of these at the crematorium, and 4 in Church; 5 burials of ashes have taken place.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. We are fortunate to have Mr. John Mountford, Head of Music at Kings School, alongside other organists, to support us, when available, by playing the organ at services and working with the Singing Group.

Mission and Evangelism: has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. Bishop Norman's cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat took place. Lent Lunches have again been held on Saturdays in Lent 2023, raising money to support Christian Aid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community e.g. Friends of S. Mary's, Higham History Group.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a Foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing. In these ways, the people of God and the church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

A Community Carol service was held on the third Sunday of Advent. The Crib service on Christmas Eve was well attended. Both events drew in a number of participants from outside the usual Congregation. Fr Clive is building links with Higham Primary School and Gads Hill School. Attending their carol services and being involved in assemblies.

Children and Youth work: All activities for the children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.

A growing number of families attend Junior Church regularly, and are getting together in their own fellowship. Regular communication to families continues via email. The teaching team was increased to three, with the addition of Mavis Hearn this year, and we have enjoyed the support of and prayer for each other. Additional teachers/leaders would be very much welcomed. We are hoping that parents, who are becoming increasingly confident and helpful during Junior Church, may be encouraged to help lead in the near future.

We put up a summer board again this year, for which members of the congregation sent in postcards from their travels, highlighting that 'God is Everywhere'. The children made and laid a wreath at the war memorial during our Remembrance Service. We held a Light party at the beginning of December. We had a Children's Activity Table at the Christmas Fair where we promoted our Sunday Junior Church meetings. Children were involved in the making of Christingles, and in participating with readings at the Crib Service as well as helping bring figures up.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

We're very appreciative of Fr Clive's active encouragement of families and Junior Church and the children's participation in Masses. We envisage promoting Junior Church further in the coming year, perhaps with involvement and handouts at coffee mornings and other seasonal events. We will continue to write articles for the Higham Bridge magazine.

Four of our older youth participated in a day out at Carrotty Wood in October half term again this year, along with Fr Clive and Nancy Hughes, and several churches from south London. The day consisted of outdoor adventure, craft, and worship activities. We plan to repeat this in 2024 and hope we can encourage more youth to attend. Charitable funds raised through the Penny Jar collection, totalling £21.88 this year, were given to Mary's Meals.

Social Media and Communications Committee: The Higham Bridge (renamed and redesigned in 2023) – The number of copies printed each month was 265. The quality of printing had increased significantly with the new photocopier and the price of the magazine was reviewed in July 2023. The cost to subscribers was not increased for the period October 2023-September 2024 with 242 copies now being printed for this period. The introduction of a digital version was taken up by 19 subscribers at a slightly reduced fee assisted to reduce the costs.

The Website – Weekly church bulletins are provided online for those who are unable to attend mass. It provides a place for reminders of special masses, foodbank collection dates, and a source for daily readings and prayers. Work on the website is ongoing with updates made to ensure accuracy of content.

Facebook & Twitter – Our social networking sites enable us to engage with the congregation, the community and the wider church with news/announcements, seasonal celebrations and campaigns, and inspirational content. We follow Diocesan policy and guidelines for adults and children, and respect those who do not wish to appear on social media. We are always seeking to improve the relevance and vitality of our social media activity. Visits to our Facebook page have increased significantly this year, with a 23% increase in new followers over the previous year. Twitter/X remains fairly constant with a very slight increase in followers.

Social Committee: This group continues to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality e.g. St John's Dedication day, the Coronation.

This year, fund-raising events were organised for Burns Night and Harvest Thanksgiving.

The Policies Committee: The Marriage policy was amended and the changes agreed by the PCC on 21st March. There is a local guidance document regarding Burials.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, outreach groups, exercise groups, meetings etc. Some local groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Groups that used the hall in 2023 were – Higham Choral Group, Knit & Natter, T'ai Chi, Cardcraft, Yoga, the Parish Council, Higham Village History Group, Higham Duo. Users of the hall follow the Vestry Hall Guidance document. Due to increased costs it was decided at the July PCC meeting to increase the donation for use of the hall from £8 an hour to £10 per hour for local people/parishioners and from £10 per hour for business groups to £12.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Fr Clive received for signature two copies of a Trust Deed compiled by the Diocesan Solicitors, Cripps, in respect of 17 Hermitage Rd, which clarified that the Diocese is the custodian trustee on behalf of the PCC as beneficiaries. Letting agents M&M continue to manage the property under a shorthold tenancy that is reviewed every year in October. A copy of the inventory which was initially taken and held by M&M has now been received. The tenants that moved into No. 17, in October 2022 continue to rent the property. Mrs Walker, Churchwarden, keeps a log of all work and/or repairs carried out at the property.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: Usually four services are held each year. This year, one mass and two vespers services took place. The programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity. Also a volunteer who lives locally has been supporting with nettle clearance.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work has also taken place to:

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Repair wiring to the sockets of the wall heaters in the Vestry Hall and a burnt-out socket in the kitchen. Application has been made for a faculty to update the lighting board in the church and to change all the security lights to LEDs.

The Quinquennial inspection took place in April, some recommendations were made which are being followed up.

The tree survey was carried out by Down to Earth in October, a few recommendations were made and a quote for £270 was given to carry out this work.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continue to improve and practise. They carried out events to support the celebration of the Coronation. 'Ringing for the King', a quarter peal (45 rings) took place on the 6th and 7th May. Also the bell tower was opened for visits by the public on 8th May (risk assessments completed) before joining the Village Parade with the handheld bells. In July the clock in the tower was inspected and some servicing completed to ensure the clock is now functioning.

Financial Review:

Finance remains a major item on the PCC's agenda. It continues to be difficult to raise sufficient funds to ensure the smooth running of St John's. The cost of living has impacted on us all and on St John's. Energy bills have risen sharply and take up a good proportion of our income.

In 2023, our expenditure at £90,879, was £1,924 more than our income of £88,955. However, some of the expenditure was for items for which we had received donations in previous years. It is also worth noting that without support from Rolfe's charity and Locketts, our expenditure over income would be far more and we thank these charities for their support.

Our biggest expense this year (energy bills aside) was replacing a 24" Corpus and a 42" Corpus at a total cost of £3,733.05. Most of this money came from legacies that we had received in previous years – we did not receive any legacies in 2023. We also purchased a new lectern at a cost of £917.80 with money given to us for this purpose. Legacies are placed in our CAF Gold account.

In 2023 we opened a CAF cash account as otherwise we would not have been able to keep our CAF Gold Account. Extensive research was carried out at the end of 2022 when we were informed of this change as to whether a different deposit account should be opened. However, after the results of the research were reported to the PCC it was decided that a CAF cash account should be opened and the Gold account retained.

With regard to expenditure and invoices, we are currently investigating the charges made for our photocopying – we have asked the company to check their counters (It is all done remotely) as they are charging us for many more colour prints than we feel we could possibly have done!

It is the policy of St John's to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the PCC which equates to 2 months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations.

It just remains to say thank you to you all for your generous giving, and to ask you to continue to support St John's financially or in whatever way you are able.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g., Parish Offer, rates and taxes, and restricted funds.

Each of the causes listed below was paid the following sum during 2023:

Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage - £100

College of St Barnabas, Gravesend Daytime Hub, Diocese of Rochester Poverty & Hope appeal and Friends of the Holy Land - £485 each.

In addition to this:

£450 was raised for the Turkey and Syria Earthquake appeal.

£500 was sent to Christian Aid as a result of Lent Lunches, 'fines' and personal giving .

£780 was raised during Christian Aid week.

£660 was raised following the Harvest Lunch, raffle and bucket appeal. Half the money was sent to Mary's Meals and the other to Christian Aid's Libya appeal.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins continued with her role as Stewardship Secretary. The Finance committee produced their annual planned giving appeal, taking into account GDPR, by distributing packs to all members of the Congregation.

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish. We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy, a policy on Domestic Violence and Lone Working Guidance. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified, and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

Safeguarding

Mrs T Jerome continues in her role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). She is also now a PCC member so any needed information or updates can be shared during meetings. Mrs Jerome receives updates regarding Safeguarding via the Diocesan Safeguarding Newsletter.

Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes continues in her role as Second Lead Recruiter. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS.

Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. All members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

The Standing Committee met in May 2021 to discuss and complete an updated version of the 'Delegation of Reporting of Serious Incidences to the Charity Commission' form. This was discussed at the July PCC meeting, and it was agreed to accept the updated version of the form.

A Safeguarding Audit was completed in April 2019.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all.

All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online Safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies and Guidance: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies and/or guidance regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Parish Priest of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also, policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC takes into account GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is the Incumbent in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens was appointed as Data Compliance Officer. Policies, consent forms and privacy notices were produced in compliance with the regulations.

In July Mrs Laurens updated the Social Media Policy and appendices to reflect some recent changes in GDPR regarding the photography/filming of adults in church. PCC members agreed the changes to the updated Social Media Policy and Guidelines document.

Lay Ministry

Mr Phillips' Lay Minister at St John's, stepped down from his role in October.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Sarah Wright

Reverend Canon Clive W Jones

Hon. Secretary

Priest in Charge

Accounts

Annual Report 2022



Incumbent:

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Revd. Canon Clive W Jones

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr G Cousins
Merston
4 Chalk Road
Higham
Nr Rochester
Kent, ME3 7JX

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest in Charge, the Reverend Canon Clive W Jones, 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 use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the Parish Priest and Churchwardens in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the regular celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Parish Priest, Churchwardens and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Gravesend, part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2022 are:

Ex Officio:

Parish Priest	The Revd. Canon Clive Jones	Chair - Commissioned: 29 th June 2022.
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mr Christopher Hanson – Stepped down August 2022.
Mr Stephen Phillips

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Valerie Laurens	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Carole Rough	Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Sarah Wright	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Anne Tammas-Williams	DBS Second Recruiter.
Mrs Nancy Hughes	Stepped down April 2022.
Mrs Julie Aldous	Elected April 2022.
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	Parish Safeguarding Officer – Elected April 2022.
Mrs Tracey Jerome	Elected July 2022
Mrs Catherine Ody	

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Parish Priest is an ex officio member of all committees including one or both of the Churchwardens. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which takes place during February. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund-raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Parish Priest and the PCC, e.g., baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 24th April 2022 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 73.

St John's is fully open following the removal of most Covid restrictions. The Covid 19 special risk assessment was initially kept in place and updated at the beginning of the year, e.g. encouraging mask wearing and using hand sanitizer. In May 2022 it was agreed to remove the 'Coronavirus situation plans and decisions' as a standing item on the PCC agenda and the use of and updating of the risk assessment ceased. Hand sanitizer is still available for those that wish to access it.

Generally most people are now back attending Mass in Church. However, Zoom Masses have continued throughout the year and the aim is for these to be an ongoing offer while there is a need. Some Parishioners still use the Zoom Mass offer e.g. when unwell, away on holiday.

Sunday and weekday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has fallen over the year due to deaths, infirmity and moves out of the parish area.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Achievements and Performance

A total of 8 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2022. Initially meetings took place on a monthly basis following Fr James's retirement, moving again to bi-monthly, once it was known that Fr Clive had been appointed Priest in Charge. An average of 9 members attended meetings. There have been 2 Extraordinary meetings, with Standing Committee meetings/ decisions taking place via email.

Episcopal Care: In 2015 the diocesan bishop made arrangements for St John's and other 'resolution parishes' to be moved from the pastoral care of the Bishop of Fulham to that of the Bishop of Richborough. Following on from the Church of England's decision to ordain women as bishops, the PCC gave considerable time to considering the way forward for St John's under the new arrangements. Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. We have still not received a written reply to date. However, the appointment of Bishop Norman as an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese implies that this meets our situation in part. The PCC reviewed its resolutions with regard to the ordination of women as bishops and priests in July 2021 and agreed that its position was unaltered.

Worship and Prayer: The daily celebration of Mass either at St John's or All Saints, continues to form our main act of worship. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. We have celebrated 5 Baptisms and 5 Marriages in our Church and have led 7 funerals for the Community, 2 of these at the crematorium, and 5 in Church. 15 burials of ashes have taken place.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. We are fortunate to have Mr. John Mountford, Head of Music at Kings School, alongside other organists, to support us, when available, by playing the organ at services and working with the Singing Group.

Mission and Evangelism: has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. Bishop Norman's cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat took place. Lent Lunches have again been held on Saturdays in Lent 2022, raising money to support Christian Aid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community e.g. Friends of S. Mary's, Higham History Group.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a Foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing. In these ways, the people of God and the church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

Following the success of this event in previous years, a Service of Nine Lessons and Carols was held on the last Sunday of Advent. This event drew in a number of participants from outside the usual Congregation.

Children and Youth work: All activities for the children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.

A small core of families attends Junior Church regularly, but attendance has not gone back to pre-Covid numbers. Regular communication to families continues via email. We have requested additional help with Junior Church, with the loss of one teacher this year, and are hoping to confirm one new member to the teaching team in the new year.

A small group of youth and parents met to make Christingles for Crib Service on Christmas Eve (our first in church since before Covid!), which was fairly well attended.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Four of our older youth participated in a day out at Carrotty Wood in October half term, along with Fr Clive and Nancy Hughes, and several churches from south London. The day consisted of outdoor adventure, craft, and worship activities. We plan to repeat this in 2023 and hope we can encourage more youth to attend.

Social Media and Communications Committee: Social media continues to be an important means of reaching parishioners. St John's media includes The Bridge, the website (both edited by Mrs Liz Croker), Facebook and Twitter (both administrated by Mrs Nancy Hughes), Zoom, and weekly emails from Margaret Feist of the bulletin to a circulation list.

The Bridge – The number of copies printed each month is 263. The cost of printing has increased significantly with the new photocopier and the price of the magazine will need to be reviewed in 2023. The website – Weekly bulletins are provided online for those who are unable to attend mass. It provides a place for reminders of special masses, foodbank collection dates, and a source for daily readings and prayers. Work on the new website has been completed.

Facebook & Twitter – Our social networking sites enable us to engage with the congregation, the community and the wider church with news/announcements, seasonal celebrations and campaigns, and inspirational content. Visits to our social networking pages increased by 50% over the previous year, with an increase of 8% in new followers.

Social Committee: This group continues to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality e.g. St John's Dedication day, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. On the 29th June following The Mass of Commissioning, celebrated by Bishop Norman, for Fr Clive, cheese and wine were served for all attending, which included Parishioners from All Saints Church. Light refreshments were also served following the Lay Ministry licensing of Mr Steve Phillips by the Bishop of Tonbridge on the 3rd October.

This year, fund-raising events were organised for Harvest Thanksgiving.

The Policies Committee: The Burial policy was amended and the changes agreed by the PCC on 22nd February.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, outreach groups, exercise groups, meetings etc. Some local groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Groups that used the hall in 2022 were - Higham Choral Group, Knit & Natter, T'ai Chi, Cardcraft, Yoga, the Parish Council, Higham Village History Group, Higham Duo. Users of the hall follow the Vestry Hall Guidance document. Due to increased costs it was decided at the July PCC meeting to increase the donation for use of the hall from £7 an hour to £8 per hour for local people/parishioners and £10 per hour for business groups.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Fr Peter Bolton, Honorary Assistant Priest to St John's, ceased his tenancy on 19th January. Fr Peter was a very welcome and highly involved addition to the St John's family, and he has been missed following his departure from the Parish. The PCC agreed to leave the property empty during the Interregnum period and wait for the new Priest in Charge to start. In a PCC meeting in July, Fr Clive reported he had been contacting retired Priests who might want to rent No. 17 but there would be no guarantees it would be taken on. He suggested starting to investigate renting No. 17 out commercially as costs were continuing to mount while it was vacant, PCC members agreed with this. Following a viewing, letting agents M&M, agreed to manage the property. At the September PCC meeting it was agreed to reverse the decision made on the 8th June 1982 that the property would only be leased out to a retired priest at a low rent in the hope of supporting duties at St John's church, and advertise the property for rent. It was noted it would be a shorthold tenancy that will be reviewed. Tenants moved into the property in October 2022.

The following work was carried out during the year at the property - garden maintenance, a boiler service, some electrical work and painting.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: Usually four services are held each year. This year, due to the Interregnum, two services were planned; one went ahead the other was cancelled. The continued programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work has also taken place to:

Put up a new Church sign/ noticeboard.

Cut and shape the holly trees in the Churchyard and cut back other shrubbery.

Complete a church high level clean.

Replace some lights in the Lady Chapel with LED's and wiring for the outside lights.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continue to improve and practise. They carried out two events to support celebrating the Queen's Jubilee this year. On Thursday 2nd June the bells rang from 19.52 pm – 20.22 pm to represent the Queen's 70 years of service. On the 4th June, tours were organised for people/ parishioners to view St John's bell tower for a tour which would include the chance to ring a bell. Also to view and to find out about the bell system and ring the bell(s) at St Mary's. Funds raised from the event at St John's were split equally between St John's and the St Mary's Inspire fund.

Financial Review: Finance remains a major item on the PCC's agenda. It continues to be difficult to raise sufficient funds to ensure the smooth running of St John's Church. The Covid 19 situation impacted on the financial situation, also the Interregnum and now the 'cost of living' situation e.g. rising energy bills. An energy support grant was applied for from the Diocese, and £1533 was offered. St John's may also qualify for further relief of which details are awaited.

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the PCC, at a level which equates to approximately two months' unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations.

A card reader/ contactless donations device was installed in approx. June / July. It is being trialled for a year.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g., Parish Offer rates and taxes, and restricted funds.

Each of the causes listed below was paid the following sum during 2022:

Bishop of Richborough's Discretionary Fund £136

Barnabas Fund £350

ChildAid to Eastern Europe £350

Diocese of Rochester Poverty and Hope Appeal £350

In addition to this:

£950 was raised and sent via the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) for the Ukraine appeal.

£630 was sent to Christian Aid as a result of Lent Lunches, 'fines' and personal giving .

£832.91 was raised during Christian Aid week.

£670 was raised following the Harvest Lunch, raffle and bucket appeal. Half the money was sent to DEC and the other to the Poverty and Hope appeal.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins continued with her role as Stewardship Secretary. The Finance committee produced their annual planned giving appeal, taking into account GDPR, by distributing packs to all members of the Congregation.

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish.

We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy and a policy on Domestic Violence. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified, and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Safeguarding

Mrs T Jerome continues in her role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). She is also now a PCC member so any needed information or updates can be shared during meetings. Mrs Jerome receives updates regarding Safeguarding via the Diocesan Safeguarding Newsletter.

Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes continues in her role as Second Lead Recruiter. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS.

Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. All members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

The Standing Committee met in May 2021 to discuss and complete an updated version of the 'Delegation of Reporting of Serious Incidences to the Charity Commission' form. This was discussed at the July PCC meeting, and it was agreed to accept the updated version of the form.

A Safeguarding Audit was completed in April 2019.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all.

All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online Safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by Parish Priest of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also, policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC takes into account GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is the Incumbent in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens was appointed as Data Compliance Officer. Policies, consent forms and privacy notices were produced in compliance with the regulations.

In May 2021 an updated consent form was developed for church attendees to sign, so they could formally consent, in line with GDPR regulations, to their data to be used by the Parish Priest/ PCC for future communications.

Interregnum

The Reverend Canon James F Southward retired on the 31st October 2021 following 26 years of service to the Parish of St John's, Higham with Merston. The period of Interregnum followed, and key processes took place e.g. Section 11 meeting, producing the Parish Profile etc. The Revd Jane Winter carried out 'Addressing Unconscious Bias' training to PCC members in February 2022. Interviews took place on the 14th March where the Reverend Canon Clive W Jones was identified as the preferred candidate. A Mass of Commissioning took place on the 29th June to welcome Fr Clive as Priest in Charge of St John's and All Saints Churches.

Lay Ministry

Following 4 years of Lay Ministry training, Mr Steve Phillips was licensed by the Bishop of Tonbridge at St John's Church on the 3rd October. Mr Phillips' role may involve visits to Parishioners in hospital, taking communion to the housebound, etc. He is a welcome addition to the St John's and All Saints Ministry Team.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Sarah Wright

Reverend Canon Clive W Jones

Hon. Secretary

Priest in Charge

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2022

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
Receipts									
Voluntary income	2a	59,542		15,579	75,121	60,990	580	6,401	67,971
Activities for generating funds	2b	5,642		706	6,348	5,411		327	5,738
Investment income	2c	1	176		177	91	5		96
Church activities	2d	6,503		3,153	9,656	4,894		2,955	7,849
Other incoming resources	2e	3,329		263	3,592	4,338			4,338
		75,017	176	19,701	94,894	75,724	585	9,683	85,992
Payments									
Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	56			56	65			65
Fund-raising trading costs	3b	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
Church activities	3c	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
Total resources expended		75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391
Excess of Receipts over Payments									
Transfers between funds - transfers in		(573)	(1,216)	5,289	3,500	(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)
Transfers between funds - transfers out		2500	1700		4,200	3,374	1,829		5,203
		-2500	-1700		(4,200)	(3,374)	(1,829)		(5,203)
		(573)	(1,216)	5,289	3,500	(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2022/21		58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874	64,004	7,946	324	72,273
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2022/21	4	57,737	7,315	7,323	72,374	58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Notes	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	Total £	2022 £	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	2021 Total £
Cash and bank deposits	10906	295	3950		15151	15151	8568	754	2703		12,025
Current accounts	12210	33630	5943		51783	51783	12208	34984	5943		53,135
Deposit accounts		5440			5440	5440		3715			3,715
Church repair fund	23,116	39,365	9,893		72,374	72,374	20,776	39,453	8,646		68,875

Other monetary assets

Investment assets

Assets retained for Church Use
No 17 Hermitage Road

Liabilities

Charity Payments

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house for use of retired clergy, estimated market value

21/3/2023

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Treasurer

A. Tannas-Winans 21/3/2023

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust of bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
a Voluntary income								
Planned giving by standing order	34706			34,706	37231			37,231
Planned giving envelopes	7352			7,352	9030			9,030
Income tax recoverable	11604			11,604	11209			11,209
Collections	1400			1,400	1498			1,498
Charity Collections			1975	1,975	937			937
Donations and appeals	3968		12469	16,437	1085	580	4446	6,111
Legacies/Grants	512		1135	1,647			1955	1,955
	59542		15579	75,121	60990	580	6401	67,971
b Activities for generating funds								
General fundraising	2414		296	2,710	2094			2,094
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	3228		410	3,638	3317		327	3,644
	5642		706	6,348	5411		327	5,738
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	1	176		177	91	5		96
	1	176		177	91	5		96
d Income from Church Activities								
Church Hall rental	1601			1,601	574			574
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	4312		323	4,635	4089			4,089
DBF element of fees			2219	2,219			2955	2,955
Refreshments	590			590	231			231
Social Committee			611	611				
	6503		3153	9656	4894		2955	7,849
e Other incoming resources								
Sundry	700		263	963	1458			1,458
Other income	2629			2,629	2880			2,880
	3329		263	3,592	4338			4,338
Total receipts	75017	176	19701	94894	75724	585	9683	85,992

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>								
Stewardship costs	56			56	65			65
	56			56	65			65
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1386		2473	3,859	1,250		941	2,191
Diocesan Offer	48552			48,552	52,966			52,966
Expenses	322		566	888	1,834			1,834
Vicarage costs	3349			3,349	3,903			3,903
Other Benefice account costs	498		4657	5,155	1,986		3,724	5,710
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	5818			5,818	4,575			4,575
Refreshments	356			356	87			87
Insurance	3663			3,663	3,524			3,524
Church maintenance	1564		4105	5,669	1,253		180	1,433
Major Structural work								
Upkeep of services	1408		1926	3,334	489		1,613	2,102
Organ Tuning and Playing	3687			3,687	1,690			1,690
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance	1499			1,499	732			732
Insurance	173			173				
Administration	1162			1,162	1,722			1,722
Training/Childrens Church	128			128	29			29
Other costs	1301	1392	425	3,118	4,248		1,515	5,763
	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
Total payments	75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391
	75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	58,310	75,017	(75,590)		0	57,737
	58,310	75,017	(75,590)		0	57,737
Designated Fund						
	8,531	176	(1,392)		0	7,315
	8,531	176	(1,392)	0	0	7,315
Restricted Fund						
	2,034	19,701	(14,412)		0	7,323
	2,034	19,701	(14,412)		0	7,323
Total bank and current accounts	68,874	94,894	(91,394)	0	0	72,374
Total funds	68,874	94,894	(91,394)		0	72,374

The General Fund is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The Church Repair Fund has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

The Bell Tower Fund which forms part of the Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of making repairs to the tower, bells and church clock. This fund is financed from donations and charges made at weddings.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

5 Staff costs

	2022 £	2021 £
a Wages and salaries	0	0

b Payments to PCC members

No other payments, apart from reimbursement of expenses, were made to PCC members.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2022		2021	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Bishop of Richborough Discretionary Fund	136		100	
Christian Aid		630		391
National Churches Trust			50	
DEC Ukraine Appeal		950		
Barnabas Fund	350		300	
Rochester DBF Harare Appeal		100		
Gravesham Food Bank		43		
DEC Pakistan Floods Appeal		335		
Rochester DBF Poverty and Hope Appeal	350	335		
Ellenor	200		200	
Ssafa			300	
College of St Barnabas			300	
Child Aid to Eastern Europe	350			
Welcome Churches				550
Charity appeals expenses		80	300	
	1,386	2,473	1,550	941

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Higham with Merston Church PCC

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1169926

Set out on pages

One to Eight

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). You are satisfied that your charity is not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

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

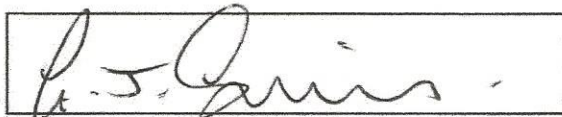
**Independent
examiner's statement**

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.

Signed:



Date:

11/3/23

Name:

Geoffrey John Cousins

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

N/A

Address:

4 Chalk Road, Higham.

Rochester, ME3 7JX

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2022

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
Receipts									
Voluntary income	2a	59,542		15,579	75,121	60,990	580	6,401	67,971
Activities for generating funds	2b	5,642		706	6,348	5,411		327	5,738
Investment income	2c	1	176		177	91	5		96
Church activities	2d	6,503		3,153	9,656	4,894		2,955	7,849
Other incoming resources	2e	3,329		263	3,592	4,338			4,338
		75,017	176	19,701	94,894	75,724	585	9,683	85,992
Payments									
Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	56			56	65			65
Fund-raising trading costs	3b	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
Church activities	3c	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
Total resources expended		75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391
Excess of Receipts over Payments									
Transfers between funds - transfers in		(573)	(1,216)	5,289	3,500	(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)
Transfers between funds - transfers out		2500	1700		4,200	3,374	1,829		5,203
		-2500	-1700		(4,200)	(3,374)	(1,829)		(5,203)
		(573)	(1,216)	5,289	3,500	(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2022/21		58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874	64,004	7,946	324	72,273
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2022/21	4	57,737	7,315	7,323	72,374	58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Notes	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	Total £	2022 £	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	2021 Total £
Cash and bank deposits	10906	295	3950		15151	15151	8568	754	2703		12,025
Current accounts	12210	33630	5943		51783	51783	12208	34984	5943		53,135
Deposit accounts		5440			5440	5440		3715			3,715
Church repair fund	23,116	39,365	9,893		72,374	72,374	20,776	39,453	8,646		68,875
4											

Other monetary assets

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Investment assets

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Assets retained for Church Use
No 17 Hermitage Road

350,000					350,000	350,000					350,000
-	350,000				350,000	350,000	-	350,000			350,000

Liabilities

Charity Payments

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house for use of retired clergy, estimated market value

21/3/2023

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Treasurer

A. Tamas-Winans 21/3/2023

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust of bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
a Voluntary income								
Planned giving by standing order	34706			34,706	37231			37,231
Planned giving envelopes	7352			7,352	9030			9,030
Income tax recoverable	11604			11,604	11209			11,209
Collections	1400			1,400	1498			1,498
Charity Collections			1975	1,975	937			937
Donations and appeals	3968		12469	16,437	1085	580	4446	6,111
Legacies/Grants	512		1135	1,647			1955	1,955
	59542		15579	75,121	60990	580	6401	67,971
b Activities for generating funds								
General fundraising	2414		296	2,710	2094			2,094
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	3228		410	3,638	3317		327	3,644
	5642		706	6,348	5411		327	5,738
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	1	176		177	91	5		96
	1	176		177	91	5		96
d Income from Church Activities								
Church Hall rental	1601			1,601	574			574
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	4312		323	4,635	4089			4,089
DBF element of fees			2219	2,219			2955	2,955
Refreshments	590			590	231			231
Social Committee			611	611				
	6503		3153	9656	4894		2955	7,849
e Other incoming resources								
Sundry	700		263	963	1458			1,458
Other income	2629			2,629	2880			2,880
	3329		263	3,592	4338			4,338
Total receipts	75017	176	19701	94894	75724	585	9683	85,992

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>								
Stewardship costs	56			56	65			65
	56			56	65			65
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
	668		260	928	1,065			1,065
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1386		2473	3,859	1,250		941	2,191
Diocesan Offer	48552			48,552	52,966			52,966
Expenses	322		566	888	1,834			1,834
Vicarage costs	3349			3,349	3,903			3,903
Other Benefice account costs	498		4657	5,155	1,986		3,724	5,710
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	5818			5,818	4,575			4,575
Refreshments	356			356	87			87
Insurance	3663			3,663	3,524			3,524
Church maintenance	1564		4105	5,669	1,253		180	1,433
Major Structural work								
Upkeep of services	1408		1926	3,334	489		1,613	2,102
Organ Tuning and Playing	3687			3,687	1,690			1,690
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance	1499			1,499	732			732
Insurance	173			173				
Administration	1162			1,162	1,722			1,722
Training/Childrens Church	128			128	29			29
Other costs	1301	1392	425	3,118	4,248		1,515	5,763
	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
	74,866	1,392	14,152	90,410	80,288		7,973	88,261
Total payments	75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391
	75,590	1,392	14,412	91,394	81,418		7,973	89,391

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	58,310	75,017	(75,590)		0	57,737
	58,310	75,017	(75,590)		0	57,737
Designated Fund						
	8,531	176	(1,392)		0	7,315
	8,531	176	(1,392)	0	0	7,315
Restricted Fund						
	2,034	19,701	(14,412)		0	7,323
	2,034	19,701	(14,412)		0	7,323
Total bank and current accounts	68,874	94,894	(91,394)	0	0	72,374
Total funds	68,874	94,894	(91,394)		0	72,374

The General Fund is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The Church Repair Fund has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

The Bell Tower Fund which forms part of the Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of making repairs to the tower, bells and church clock. This fund is financed from donations and charges made at weddings.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

5 Staff costs

	2022 £	2021 £
a Wages and salaries	0	0

b Payments to PCC members

No other payments, apart from reimbursement of expenses, were made to PCC members.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2022		2021	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Bishop of Richborough Discretionary Fund	136		100	
Christian Aid		630		391
National Churches Trust			50	
DEC Ukraine Appeal		950		
Barnabas Fund	350		300	
Rochester DBF Harare Appeal		100		
Gravesham Food Bank		43		
DEC Pakistan Floods Appeal		335		
Rochester DBF Poverty and Hope Appeal	350	335		
Ellenor	200		200	
Ssafa			300	
College of St Barnabas			300	
Child Aid to Eastern Europe	350			
Welcome Churches				550
Charity appeals expenses		80	300	
	1,386	2,473	1,550	941

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Higham with Merston Church PCC

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1169926

Set out on pages

One to Eight

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). You are satisfied that your charity is not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

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

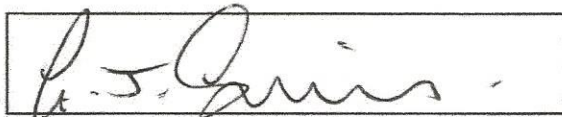
**Independent
examiner's statement**

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.

Signed:



Date:

11/3/23

Name:

Geoffrey John Cousins

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

N/A

Address:

4 Chalk Road, Higham.

Rochester, ME3 7JX

Accounts

Annual Report 2021



Incumbent:

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

The Reverend Canon James F Southward
Retired 31st October 2021
Currently in Interregnum

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr G Cousins
Merston
4 Chalk Road
Higham
Nr Rochester
Kent, ME3 7JX

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, the Reverend Canon James F. Southward, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Since Fr James' retirement, the Churchwardens have been responsible for general every day running of the Church and the Honorary Assistant Priests, Fr Peter Bolton and Fr Andrew Davis, have offered to support spiritual matters.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the Incumbent and Churchwardens in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the daily celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Incumbent, Churchwardens and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It was in the Deanery of Strood, but on 8th December 2021 it transferred to the Deanery of Gravesham, part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester. St John's Church is under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The boundaries of the ecclesiastical parish of Higham with Merston have also changed, so that they are the same as those of the civil parish of Higham.

These changes were formally agreed in writing by the Bishop of Tonbridge.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2021 are:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent	The Revd. Canon James Southward	Chair - Retired 31 st October 2021
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair - Chair since 31 st
October 2021	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mr Christopher Hanson
Mr Stephen Phillips

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance
Mrs Valerie Laurens
Mrs Carole Rough
Mrs Sarah Wright
Mrs Anne Tammias-Williams
Mrs Catherine Ody

Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
DBS First Recruiter
Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Hon. Treasurer
Parish Safeguarding Officer. Stepped down from PSO and PCC April 2021.
DBS Second Recruiter.

Mrs Nancy Hughes
Mrs Julie Aldous

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Incumbent is an ex officio member of all committees including one or both of the Churchwardens. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which takes place during February and discusses matters relating to charitable and missionary giving. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund-raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Vicar and the PCC, e.g., baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 25th April 2021 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 78.

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus situation and the rising level of cases in Kent, St John's Church had to close again on the 6th January 2021. Funeral services and the small area of the Church cordoned off for private prayer continued to be offered. Daily Mass continued online, from St John's Church and sometimes from clergy homes via Zoom. The Zoom Masses have continued throughout the year and the aim is for these to be an ongoing offer while there is a need. The Vicar sent out weekly updates and copies of the bulletin by email until restrictions were relaxed and the Church website and social media sites were used to share key information, including making hyperlinks available so bible readings could be accessed. As the Coronavirus situation began to improve again and following Government and Diocesan advice, St John's was able to re-open on 14th March 2021. Initially the numbers of people who could attend services was restricted to 30 to ensure social distancing was maintained. Over the course of the year these numbers were gradually increased as advised by Government and Diocesan recommendations. Currently St John's is now fully open with no restrictions on numbers attending services. The Covid 19 special risk assessment continues to be adhered to. There is an ongoing mixed pattern of attendance, some parishioners attending Mass in Church, some continuing to access Mass via Zoom, some combining both. Sunday and weekday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has fallen over the year due to deaths, infirmity and the Coronavirus situation.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 8 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2021. Initially on a bi-monthly basis, moving to monthly following Fr James' retirement. An average of 10 members attended meetings. There have been 2 Extraordinary meetings, 2 face - to - face Standing Committee meetings, (with some Standing Committee meetings/ decisions taking place via email or text during the year), plus a Section 11 meeting.

Episcopal Care: In 2015 the diocesan bishop made arrangements for St John's and other 'resolution parishes' to be moved from the pastoral care of the Bishop of Fulham to that of the Bishop of Richborough. Following on from the Church of England's decision to ordain women as bishops, the PCC gave considerable time to considering the way forward for St John's under the new arrangements. Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. We have still not received a written reply to date. However, the appointment of Bishop Norman as an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese implies that this meets our situation in part.

When it was known that Fr James was due to retire in October 2021, it was suggested that a review of St John's Resolutions should be an agenda item at the next full PCC meeting (27th July). Following discussions, it was proposed that following this review of resolutions A, B and 'C' (Request for episcopal care in accordance with the House of Bishops Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests) that the PCC continue to stand by their original resolutions and that this must not affect our Christian duty of care and respect to all the Church community. All PCC members present voted in favour of this with 2 abstentions.

Worship and Prayer: The daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. We have planned to offer a range of services that our community might find beneficial and spiritually fulfilling, such as 'Holy Hours' before the Blessed Sacrament on a Saturday of each month, and at varying times each week during Lent and Advent and a healing ministry during Mass on some Saturdays through the year. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 situation has made it impossible to offer these services during most of 2021. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. Here again, the Covid 19 pandemic has severely limited our

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

opportunity to offer these life celebrations. We have celebrated 3 Baptisms and 2 Marriages in our Church and have led 15 funerals for the Community, 10 of these at the crematorium, and 5 in Church. 11 burials of ashes have taken place.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. We are fortunate to have Mr. John Mountford, Head of Music at Kings School, alongside other organists, to support us, when available, by playing the organ at services and working with the Singing Group. Playing the organ and singing in church was able to start again, following previous Covid restrictions, early in September.

Mission and Evangelism: has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. Bishop Norman's cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat, started being held again from 31st July. Lent Lunches did not take place this year due to Covid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community among Friends of S. Mary's, School Governors, Higham History Group, and Hiara.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a Foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing, particularly during the Covid pandemic.

In these ways, the people of God and the church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

Our Study Group, **M4**, which should meet on most first **M**ondays of the month, for **M**ass, **M**unch and **M**use has been affected by the Covid situation but a programme studying St Marks Gospel for Lent did take place via Zoom and was organised and led by Fr Peter in February 2021.

Christmas Masses did take place in church (following the Covid 19 special risk assessment guidelines) and via Zoom i.e. Midnight Mass and Christmas Day. A Service of Lessons and Carols also went ahead on the Sunday before Christmas.

Children and Youth work: All activities for the children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website. Due to Covid restrictions, Junior Church had ceased to take place in the Church building from March 2020 until September 2021. During the hiatus, regular contact was kept with Junior Church families through digital lessons, email, social media, and articles and Junior Pages in The Bridge. Regular communication to Junior Church families continues.

Sadly, the ongoing Covid situation still means many families have not returned to in-person Junior Church (although a very large group met on 19th September to bid farewell to Fr James) and we have had to be flexible in planning and carrying out activities, with the cancellation in particular of Christmas and Epiphany celebrations, including Crib Service on Christmas Eve. A small group of youth and parents met to make Christingles for collection by parishioners from the porch on Christmas Eve. We continue to do what we can to minister to our families and young people during these difficult times.

The Teens N Twenties group has ceased.

Voice Rejoice, a singing group for children, is no longer running.

Social Media and Communications Committee: In a year where meeting in person continued to be difficult because of the pandemic, social media was an important means of reaching parishioners. St John's media includes The Bridge, the website (both edited by Mrs Liz Croker), Facebook and Twitter (both administrated by Mrs Nancy Hughes).

The Bridge - Subscriptions were down for the year from about 320 to 280. The number of articles has increased which is invaluable. The PCC had agreed to defer the collection for all

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

subscribers until September 2021 since the magazine had only been provided digitally prior to that.

Mrs Heather Harvey has joined the team to coordinate distributors.

The website – Weekly bulletins are provided online for those who are unable to attend mass. It provides a place for reminders of special masses, foodbank collection dates, and a source for daily readings and prayers. A new website has been built in response to BT removing the editing software without notice. Whilst not all pages are complete, Mrs Croker has done a great job at short notice. The site is greatly improved for viewing on mobile devices.

Facebook & Twitter – Our social networking sites enable us to engage with the congregation, the community and the wider church with news/announcements, fundraising/charity campaigns, seasonal celebrations, weekly bulletin/readings, inspirational content and worship. Our social networking saw a 12% increase over the year. In 2021 Mrs Lizzie Hanson agreed to be second administrator to assist as necessary.

Special thanks to Fr Peter Bolton for all he has contributed to social media since his arrival at St John's.

Social Committee: On 27th June Fr. Andrew's 50th anniversary of ordination as a priest was celebrated and on 19th September, a celebration of Harvest took place which was jointly celebrated as Fr James' retirement party. Due to the ongoing Covid 19 situation most events generally organised by this committee could not take place.

The Policies Committee: This committee met on two separate occasions to discuss the Charity Governance Code. Following looking through the code, it was felt by the committee that St John's is generally complying with the code. Some work is needed, but it will be a work in progress.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, for outreach groups, and others such as the Friends of St. Mary's for special meetings. Some local groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Unfortunately, the hall was out of use from January until the beginning of June, due to Covid 19. Coffee and Conversation started running again at the end of July. Users of the hall continue to follow the Vestry Hall Guidance document and the Covid 19 special risk assessment continues to be monitored and updated accordingly. New chairs, carpeting (hall and lobby) and lino (kitchen) were purchased and installed this year.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Fr Peter Bolton, Honorary Assistant Priest to St John's, continued with the tenancy this year, taken up in November 2018. Fr Peter has been a very welcome and highly involved addition to the St John's family, and he will be much missed following his departure from the Parish.

The following work was carried out during the year at the property - garden maintenance, outside security lights and a new dishwasher were installed. The porch that was built 32 years ago needed repair; the guttering and downpipes were replaced and the circular window, fascia & soffit boards were fixed following rainwater leaking into them.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: Usually four services are held each year. This year, again due to the Covid 19 situation, only 2 services took place. The continued programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work has also taken place to:

Remove the public rubbish bin from the Churchyard.

Remove one of the electric meters (St John's was historically fitted with and charged for 2 electric meters, one of which it has been agreed by the current energy supplier is not needed). Following discussions at PCC meetings it was agreed to leave for now the further damage caused to the corner of the churchyard wall, to the west of the main gate and review again following the next Quinquennial report.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continues to improve and practise, but their activities have also been limited by the Covid situation. The ringers returned to ringing when all felt it safe to do so within government guidelines. The group have been ringing in face masks and also been using a Co2 (Carbon Dioxide) monitor to determine the levels in the ringing chamber with 6 ringers present and ringing. Readings were high, so the window, door and the hatch to the clock and bells were opened to improve circulation and ventilation. This did bring the readings down with the added use of a fan but not really low enough to be safe. The band discussed the readings and the increased spread of the new Omicron virus, and it was felt that, until the Coronavirus numbers were dramatically reduced, ringing as a band in our tower would not take place. However, a couple from the same household would continue to chime for Sunday Mass and special services. All surfaces are cleaned with anti-bacterial cloths and hand sanitiser is also used before and after ringing. We have also had one new recruit this year, but he has been unable to practice on an ongoing basis due to the Covid restrictions.

Financial Review: Finance remains a major item on the PCC's agenda. It continues to be difficult to raise sufficient funds to ensure the smooth running of St John's Church. The Covid 19 situation has also now impacted on the financial situation with income generally down. It is the policy of the PCC to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the PCC, at a level which equates to approximately two months' unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during 2021. The PCC held discussions regarding the possibility of buying and using a card reader/contactless donations device. Mr Hanson, PCC member, completed some research regarding this, informing the PCC of the potential benefits. At the PCC meeting in November, it was proposed and agreed by all to trial a device for a year.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g., Parish Offer rates and taxes, and restricted funds. Due to the reduction of income caused by the Covid 19 situation it was not felt possible to achieve this level of giving for 2021. It was agreed at the PCC meeting in December 2021 to donate £1000. £100 to the Bishop of Richborough's Discretionary fund, £300 each to – The Barnabas Fund, The College of St Barnabas and SAAFA.

Christian Aid week raised £1,189.91, including money donated via 'Lent 'fines' and personal giving. The Harvest Bucket appeal and raffle raised £550 which was sent to support Afghan refugees via Welcome Churches. The Poppy Appeal raised £117.23. A collection following the Service of Lessons and Carols raised £112.70 which was sent to Christian Aid for their Afghanistan Appeal.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins continued with her role as Stewardship Secretary. The Finance committee produced their annual planned giving appeal, taking into account GDPR, by distributing packs to all members of the Congregation, mostly this year by email, with some paper copies prepared to hand out in church. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. However, due to a drop in PCC funds owing to the Covid 19 pandemic, it was not possible for this committee to consider a plan of charitable giving for 2021.

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish.

We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy and a policy on Domestic Violence. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified, and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

St John's has been observant of the evolving Covid 19 situation and continues to follow guidance from the Government and Diocese to ensure correct procedures are followed and adhered to. Covid 19 situation, plans and decisions, is a standing item on the PCC agenda to be discussed at each meeting. The Standing Committee also met in person and liaised via email/ text on several occasions to discuss issues connected to this that arose between PCC meetings. A Covid 19 special risk assessment has been compiled and agreed and has been regularly checked and updated as needed since. This risk assessment is displayed on the Church and Vestry Hall notice boards.

Safeguarding

Mrs. C. Ody stood down from her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer in April 2021. Mrs. T Jerome took on the role from April 2021. Before every PCC meeting, Mrs Jerome is invited to contribute any needed information or updates via the PCC Secretary, so if anything is raised it can be fed back during PCC meetings. Mrs Jerome receives updates regarding Safeguarding via the Diocesan Safeguarding Newsletter.

Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes continues in her role as Second Lead Recruiter. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS. Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. All members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

The Standing Committee met in May 2021 to discuss and complete an updated version of the 'Delegation of Reporting of Serious Incidences to the Charity Commission' form. This was discussed at the July PCC meeting, and it was agreed to accept the updated version of the form.

A Safeguarding Audit was completed in April 2019.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all.

All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online Safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Incumbent of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also, policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC takes into account GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is the Incumbent in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens was appointed as Data Compliance Officer. Policies, consent forms and privacy notices were produced in compliance with the regulations. In May 2021 an updated consent form was developed for church attendees to sign, so they could formally consent, in line with GDPR regulations, to their data to be used by the Incumbent/ PCC for future communications.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with

In 2020, Fr James was appointed as Priest in Charge at All Saints Church, Perry Street, Gravesend, in addition to his role as Vicar of Higham with Merston. Fr James is continuing as Priest-in-Charge at All Saints, Perry Street for another 6 months following his retirement from St John's.

Interregnum

The Reverend Canon James F Southward retired on the 31st October 2021 following 26 years of service to the Parish of St John's, Higham with Merston.

Andrew Wooding Jones, the Archdeacon of Rochester, met with PCC members on 20th July to explain the processes that would take place during the Interregnum period, including the Section 11 meeting, compiling the Parish Profile and electing Parish Representatives. He shared information about St John's Church's patron, St John's College Cambridge and reported that this patronage would probably be suspended to simplify the process of appointing a priest for both St John's and All Saints, Perry St. and the patrons asked to step back. This was confirmed when the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee informed the PCC Secretary via email that it had recently been recommended that the bishop consider suspending the patronage, by St John's College, Cambridge, of the parish of Higham with Merston upon the retirement of Fr James. The email also stated that during the period of suspension a priest-in-charge would be nominated for the vacancy at St Johns (a priest-in-charge to both St John's, Higham, and All Saints, Perry Street). The Diocese asked for PCC views regarding this proposal. Mrs Walker, Churchwarden contacted Bishop Norman to ask for his advice as to whether the PCC should challenge the suspension of patronage, given that, when the PCC had originally agreed to share their priest with All Saints, Perry Street, there had been no mention that this would involve a change to a priest-in-charge, rather than a vicar, on Father James' retirement. Bishop Norman suggested that we agree to the suspension, as it could be revised in future and would probably be imposed anyway. The Standing Committee agreed a response, which was sent to the Diocese, stating the PCC's agreement to the suspension in this instance, but asking for assurance that the situation could be reviewed in the future. A response was then received from the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee reporting - 'The Bishop has decided to suspend the Patron's Right of Presentation to the benefice for a period of up to five years from 1 November 2021.'

A small group from the PCC met and worked together to complete the Parish Profile. The Section 11 meeting took place on the 7th November. 2 Parish Representatives were elected, Mrs Helen Walker, Churchwarden and Mr Chris Hanson, PCC and Deanery Synod rep. and the final version of the Parish Profile agreed. Mrs Wright, PCC Secretary is liaising with Revd Jane Winter regarding PCC members attending 'Addressing/ Unconscious Bias' training. We currently await next steps from the Diocese.

Sarah Wright

Hon. Secretary

Helen Walker

Chair and Churchwarden

Teresa Joblin

Churchwarden

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2021

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	TOTAL				TOTAL			
		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	FUNDS 2021	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	FUNDS 2020
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts									
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	60,990	580	6,401	67,971	58,480		17,461	75,941
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	5,411		327	5,738	5,569		186	5,755
<i>Investment income</i>	2c	91	5		96	96	35		130
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	4,894		2,955	7,849	2,726		3,492	6,218
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	4,338			4,338	2,690			2,690
		75,724	585	9,683	85,992	69,560	35	21,139	90,735
Payments									
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	65			65	64			64
<i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>	3b	1,065			1,065	379			379
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	80,288		7,973	88,261	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073
Total resources expended		81,418		7,973	89,391	83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)	(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)
Transfers between funds - transfers in		3,374	1,829		5,203	8,200	12,900	12,000	33,100
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(3,374)	(1,829)		(5,203)	(8,200)	(12,900)	(12,000)	(33,100)
		(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)	(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2021/20		64,004	7,946	324	72,273	77,916	22,587	(448)	100,055
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2021/20	4	58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874	64,004	7,946	324	72,273

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Notes	General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Funds	Endowment Fund	2021 Total	General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Funds	2020 Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cash and bank deposits		8568		754	2703	12,025	13,422	3,258	670	17,350
Current accounts		12208		34984	5943	53,135	12,121	40,794		52,915
Deposit accounts				3715		3,715		2,010		2,010
Church repair fund	4	20,776	39,453	8,646		68,875	25,543	46,062	670	72,275
Other monetary assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets retained for Church Use			350,000			350,000		300,000		300,000
No 17 Hermitage Road										
Liabilities		-	350,000	-	-	350,000	-	300,000	-	300,000
Charity Payments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house for use of retired clergy, estimated market value

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

A. Thomas - Wilkins
Treasurer

Churchwarden

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a Voluntary income								
Planned giving by standing order	37231			37,231	33,786			33,786
Planned giving envelopes	9030			9,030	9,006			9,006
Income tax recoverable	11209			11,209	13,127			13,127
Collections	1498			1,498	1,519			1,519
Charity Collections	937			937			520	520
Donations and appeals	1085	580	4446	6,111	1,042		16806	17,848
Legacies/Grants			1955	1,955			135	135
	60,990	580	6,401	67,971	58,480		17,461	75,941
b Activities for generating funds								
General fundraising	2094			2,094	1,403			1,403
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	3317		327	3,644	4,166		186	4,352
	5,411		327	5,738	5,569		186	5,755
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	91	5		96	96	35		130
	91	5		96	96	35		130
d Income from Church Activities								
Church Hall rental	574			574	739			739
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	4089			4,089	1,820			1,820
DBF element of fees			2955	2,955			3,492	3,492
Refreshments	231			231	167			167
Social Committee								
	4,894		2,955	7,849	2,726		3,492	6,218
e Other incoming resources								
Sundry	1458			1,458	50			50
Other income	2880			2,880	2,640			2,640
	4,338			4,338	2,690			2,690
Total receipts	75,724	585	9,683	85,992	69,560	35	21,139	90,735

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>								
Stewardship costs	65			65	64			64
	65			65	64			64
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	1,065			1,065	379			379
	1,065			1,065	379			379
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1,250		941	2,191	1,050		690	1,740
Diocesan Offer	52,966			52,966	52,966			52,966
Expenses	1,834			1,834	2,514			2,514
Vicarage costs	3,903			3,903	4,049			4,049
Other Benefice account costs	1,986		3,724	5,710			2,555	2,555
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	4,575			4,575	4,937			4,937
Refreshments	87			87	86			86
Insurance	3,524			3,524	3,586			3,586
Church maintenance	1,253		180	1,433	9,578		261	9,839
Major Structural work					14,144		15,000	29,144
Upkeep of services	489		1,613	2,102	1,067		1,324	2,391
Organ Tuning and Playing	1,690			1,690	835			835
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance	732			732	576			576
Insurance					211			211
Administration	1,722			1,722	1,189			1,189
Training/Childrens Church	29			29	67			67
Other costs	4,248		1,515	5,763	320	532	537	1,389
	80,288		7,973	88,261	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073
Total payments	81,418		7,973	89,391	83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	64,004	75,724	(81,418)		0	58,310
	64,004	75,724	(81,418)		0	58,310
Designated Fund	7,946	585	0		0	8,531
	7,946	585	0	0	0	8,531
Restricted Fund	324	9,683	(7,973)		0	2,034
	324	9,683	(7,973)		0	2,034
Total bank and current accounts	72,273	85,992	(89,391)	0	0	68,874
Total funds	72,273	85,992	(89,391)		0	68,874

The General Fund is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The Church Repair Fund has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

The Bell Tower Fund which forms part of the Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of making repairs to the tower, bells and church clock. This fund is financed from donations and charges made at weddings.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

5 Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
a Wages and salaries	0	0

b Payments to PCC members

No other payments, apart from reimbursement of expenses, were made to PCC members.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2021		2020	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Bishop of Richborough Discretionary Fund	100			
Christian Aid		391	800	520
National Churches Trust	50		50	
Save the children				170
Barnabas Fund	300			
Ssafa	300			
Ellenor	200		200	
Welcome Churches		550		
College of St Barnabus	300			
	<u>1,250</u>	<u>941</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>690</u>

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees/
members of

Higham with Merston Church PCC

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1169926

Set out on pages

One to Eight

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). You are satisfied that your charity is not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

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

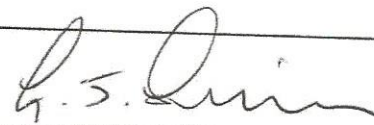
Independent
examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.

Signed:



Date:

09/03/2022

Name:

Geoffrey John Cousins

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

N/A

Address:

4 Chalk Road, Higham.

Rochester, ME3 7JX

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2021

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	TOTAL				TOTAL			
		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	FUNDS 2021	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	FUNDS 2020
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts									
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	60,990	580	6,401	67,971	58,480		17,461	75,941
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	5,411		327	5,738	5,569		186	5,755
<i>Investment income</i>	2c	91	5		96	96	35		130
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	4,894		2,955	7,849	2,726		3,492	6,218
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	4,338			4,338	2,690			2,690
		75,724	585	9,683	85,992	69,560	35	21,139	90,735
Payments									
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	65			65	64			64
<i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>	3b	1,065			1,065	379			379
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	80,288		7,973	88,261	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073
Total resources expended		81,418		7,973	89,391	83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)	(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)
Transfers between funds - transfers in		3,374	1,829		5,203	8,200	12,900	12,000	33,100
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(3,374)	(1,829)		(5,203)	(8,200)	(12,900)	(12,000)	(33,100)
		(5,694)	585	1,710	(3,399)	(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2021/20		64,004	7,946	324	72,273	77,916	22,587	(448)	100,055
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2021/20	4	58,310	8,531	2,034	68,874	64,004	7,946	324	72,273

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Notes	General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Funds	Endowment Fund	2021 Total	General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Funds	2020 Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cash and bank deposits		8568	754	2703		12,025	13,422	3,258	670	17,350
Current accounts		12208	34984	5943		53,135	12,121	40,794		52,915
Deposit accounts			3715			3,715		2,010		2,010
Church repair fund	4	20,776	39,453	8,646		68,875	25,543	46,062	670	72,275
Other monetary assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets retained for Church Use			350,000			350,000		300,000		300,000
No 17 Hermitage Road						-		-		-
Liabilities		-	350,000	-	-	350,000	-	300,000	-	300,000
Charity Payments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house for use of retired clergy, estimated market value

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

A. Thomas - Wilkins
Treasurer

Churchwarden

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a Voluntary income								
Planned giving by standing order	37231			37,231	33,786			33,786
Planned giving envelopes	9030			9,030	9,006			9,006
Income tax recoverable	11209			11,209	13,127			13,127
Collections	1498			1,498	1,519			1,519
Charity Collections	937			937			520	520
Donations and appeals	1085	580	4446	6,111	1,042		16806	17,848
Legacies/Grants			1955	1,955			135	135
	60,990	580	6,401	67,971	58,480		17,461	75,941
b Activities for generating funds								
General fundraising	2094			2,094	1,403			1,403
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	3317		327	3,644	4,166		186	4,352
	5,411		327	5,738	5,569		186	5,755
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	91	5		96	96	35		130
	91	5		96	96	35		130
d Income from Church Activities								
Church Hall rental	574			574	739			739
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	4089			4,089	1,820			1,820
DBF element of fees			2955	2,955			3,492	3,492
Refreshments	231			231	167			167
Social Committee								
	4,894		2,955	7,849	2,726		3,492	6,218
e Other incoming resources								
Sundry	1458			1,458	50			50
Other income	2880			2,880	2,640			2,640
	4,338			4,338	2,690			2,690
Total receipts	75,724	585	9,683	85,992	69,560	35	21,139	90,735

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>								
Stewardship costs	65			65	64			64
	65			65	64			64
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	1,065			1,065	379			379
	1,065			1,065	379			379
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):								
Ministry Costs	1,250		941	2,191	1,050		690	1,740
Diocesan Offer	52,966			52,966	52,966			52,966
Expenses	1,834			1,834	2,514			2,514
Vicarage costs	3,903			3,903	4,049			4,049
Other Benefice account costs	1,986		3,724	5,710			2,555	2,555
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	4,575			4,575	4,937			4,937
Refreshments	87			87	86			86
Insurance	3,524			3,524	3,586			3,586
Church maintenance	1,253		180	1,433	9,578		261	9,839
Major Structural work					14,144		15,000	29,144
Upkeep of services	489		1,613	2,102	1,067		1,324	2,391
Organ Tuning and Playing	1,690			1,690	835			835
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance	732			732	576			576
Insurance					211			211
Administration	1,722			1,722	1,189			1,189
Training/Childrens Church	29			29	67			67
Other costs	4,248		1,515	5,763	320	532	537	1,389
	80,288		7,973	88,261	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073
Total payments	81,418		7,973	89,391	83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund	64,004	75,724	(81,418)		0	58,310
	64,004	75,724	(81,418)		0	58,310
Designated Fund	7,946	585	0		0	8,531
	7,946	585	0	0	0	8,531
Restricted Fund	324	9,683	(7,973)		0	2,034
	324	9,683	(7,973)		0	2,034
Total bank and current accounts	72,273	85,992	(89,391)	0	0	68,874
Total funds	72,273	85,992	(89,391)		0	68,874

The General Fund is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The Church Repair Fund has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

The Bell Tower Fund which forms part of the Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of making repairs to the tower, bells and church clock. This fund is financed from donations and charges made at weddings.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

5 Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
a Wages and salaries	0	0

b Payments to PCC members

No other payments, apart from reimbursement of expenses, were made to PCC members.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2021		2020	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Bishop of Richborough Discretionary Fund	100			
Christian Aid		391	800	520
National Churches Trust	50		50	
Save the children				170
Barnabas Fund	300			
Ssafa	300			
Ellenor	200		200	
Welcome Churches		550		
College of St Barnabus	300			
	<u>1,250</u>	<u>941</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>690</u>

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees/
members of

Higham with Merston Church PCC

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1169926

Set out on pages

One to Eight

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). You are satisfied that your charity is not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

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

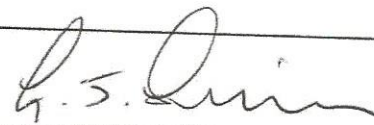
Independent
examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.

Signed:



Date:

09/03/2022

Name:

Geoffrey John Cousins

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

N/A

Address:

4 Chalk Road, Higham.

Rochester, ME3 7JX

Accounts

Annual Report 2020



Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Incumbent:

The Reverend Canon James F Southward

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr G Cousins
Merston
4 Chalk Road
Higham
Nr Rochester
Kent, ME3 7JX

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Canon James F. Southward, 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 use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the incumbent in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the daily celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Strood: part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2020 are:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent	The Revd. Canon James Southward	Chair
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mrs Kim Wood	Vulnerable Adults Representative until September 2020 and stepped down from the Deanery Synod role in October 2020.
Mr Christopher Hanson	
Mr Stephen Phillips	Elected October 2020, previously an elected PCC Member.

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance	Served until October 2020.
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Valerie Laurens	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Carole Rough	Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Sarah Wright	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Anne Tammas-Williams	Parish Safeguarding Officer. Stepped down from DBS Second Recruiter role in November 2020.
Mrs Catherine Ody	Served until October 2020.
Mrs Tessa Packer	DBS Second Recruiter. Elected October 2020.
Mrs Nancy Hughes	Elected October 2020.
Mrs Julie Aldous	

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Incumbent is an ex officio member of all committees and one or both Churchwardens sit on most committees. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Planned Giving Committee: is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which takes place during February and discusses matters relating to charitable and missionary giving. The PCC, meeting on 17th March 2020, agreed to merge the committee with the Finance committee.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Vicar and the PCC, e.g. baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 16th October 2020 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 78.

The Coronavirus situation began to escalate in February 2020 and the country went into 'lockdown' in March 2020 when St John's Church had to close. Daily Mass continued to be offered, transferring the celebration online, from clergy homes, initially via Skype then moving onto Zoom as numbers 'attending' these increased. Two Sunday morning masses were offered and a Sunday evening Mass was also available for a period of time via Facebook. The Vicar's weekly emails and the Church website and social media sites were used to share key information, including making hyperlinks available so bible readings could be accessed. As the Coronavirus situation began to improve and following Government and Diocesan advice, St John's was able to re-open a small area of the Church cordoned off for private prayer starting on Monday 15th June. This was followed on the 12th July when St John's was able to re-open for parishioners to attend some weekday Masses and the two Sunday Masses. St John's Church then became open again every day for daily Mass with the continued offer of accessing Mass via Zoom. There was a mixed pattern of attendance, some parishioners attending Mass in Church, some continuing to access Mass via Zoom, some combining both. Sunday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has fallen slightly over the year due to deaths, infirmity and due to the Coronavirus situation. Sometimes weekday Masses are only supported by those who live OUTSIDE the parish. Junior Church continued as usual at the beginning of the year. The lack in the number of children attending continued to be a real problem, and

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

weekly attendance was utterly erratic. Junior Church also ceased when 'lockdown' started and is yet to re-start.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 6 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2020 on a bi-monthly basis with an average of 10 members in attendance. There has been 1 Extraordinary meeting and 5 Standing Committee meetings during the year.

The Focus on Renewal and Growth Group, established 2013 by the Incumbent as a 'think-tank' to support him in considering new or different ideas for worship, outreach and care both in our Church and the wider community, has not met this year.

Episcopal Care: In 2015 the diocesan bishop made arrangements for St John's and other 'resolution parishes' to be moved from the pastoral care of the Bishop of Fulham to that of the Bishop of Richborough. Following on from the Church of England's decision to ordain women as bishops, the PCC gave considerable time to considering the way forward for St John's under the new arrangements. Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. We have still not received a written reply to date. However, the appointment of Bishop Norman as an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese implies that this meets our situation in part.

Worship and Prayer: The daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. Following suggestions from the Focus on Renewal and Growth group in 2014, we have planned to offer a range of services that our community might find beneficial and spiritually fulfilling, such as 'Holy Hours' before the Blessed Sacrament on a Saturday of each month, and at varying times each week during Lent and Advent and a healing ministry during Mass on some Saturdays through the year. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 situation has made it impossible to offer these services during most of 2020. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting Prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. Here again, the Covid 19 pandemic has severely limited our opportunity to offer these life celebrations. We have celebrated 1 Baptism but no Marriages in our Church and have led 21 funerals for the Community, 15 of these at the crematorium, 6 in Church, once Church use was allowed again.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. We are fortunate to have Mr. John Mountford, Head of Music at Kings School, alongside other organists, to support us, when available, by playing the organ at services and working with the Singing Group. Support from Mr John Mountford continued in January and February 2020 but due to the Covid 19 situation and following recommendations from the Government and Diocese, music and singing in church has temporarily ceased.

Mission and Evangelism has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. Bishop Norman's cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat, were held at the beginning of the year. They are currently on hold during the Covid 19 situation. Lent Lunches held on Saturdays started to take place in February but had to be cancelled due to the Covid 19 situation. The money raised from the initial two lunches that did take place was sent in support of Christian Aid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community among Friends of S.Mary's, School Governors, Higham History Group, and Hiara.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a Foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing, particularly during the Covid pandemic.

In these ways, the people of God and the church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Our Study Group, **M4**, which should meet on most first Mondays of the month, for **Mass**, **Munch** and **Muse** was adversely affected and suspended as with other meetings in 2020.

A new group was started early in 2020 by PCC Member, Chris Hanson, and our Hon. Assistant Priest, Father Peter Bolton. Called the Confraternity of Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, it was formed to address the low number of men in St John's congregation and with the objects of adopting a rule of life, evangelizing and doing good works. Unfortunately, this group was in the early stages of formation when the pandemic struck and has been forced to suspend its activities for the time being.

Christmas Masses did take place in church (with restricted numbers and following the Covid 19 special risk assessment guidelines) and via Zoom e.g. Midnight Mass and Christmas Day. Unfortunately due to the Covid 19 situation some Christmas church events had to be cancelled due to the increased risks that these could pose, namely the children's Crib Service and the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Parish Representative to the Cathedral: The PCC is grateful to Mr Roger Hill who continued as our Parish Representative until very recently. This scheme is now defunct.

Children and Youth work: All activities for the children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.

Due to the Covid 19 situation, Junior Church ceased to take place in the Church building from March 2020. Despite the Covid19 situation and the inability to meet in person, regular contact has been kept with Junior Church families through email, social media, and articles and Junior Pages in The Bridge. Activities have been shared online and a virtual Crib Service for Zoom was prepared by JC teachers and attended by JC families on Christmas Eve. Encouragement is given to continue worship; a couple of JC families regularly attend weekly mass either in church or on Zoom. There has been positive feedback that these efforts are appreciated, and we will continue these through 2021 until we can meet again.

The Teens N Twenties group did not meet in 2020 - particularly for Palm Cross and Christingle Making because of Covid19. Lent & Advent challenges/activities were posted on the TNT Facebook page to continue outreach.

Voice Rejoice, a singing group, for children which was established at the end of 2017, is led by Mrs Catherine Ody assisted by Mrs Anne Tammis-Williams. One of the objects of this group is to provide a possible entry into church life for children who have previously had no connection. The choir has 4 children regularly attending and they had sung at various church services during 2019. The choir met up for practice at the beginning of the year through January & February 2020. Due to the Covid 19 situation this group is currently not meeting.

In previous years both Higham Primary and Gads Hill School have made use of St. John's as an instrument in the teaching of Christianity during Religious Education. Again due to the Covid 19 situation the use of the church has temporarily ceased.

Social Committee: This group's role is to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality. Apart from the Burns Night Supper, linked with dedication Festival, these events did not take place due to Covid 19.

Stewardship Committee: This committee continued to produce their planned giving appeal, taking into account GDPR, by distributing packs to all members of the Congregation. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. However, due to a drop in PCC funds owing to the Covid 19 pandemic, it was not possible for this committee to consider a plan of charitable giving for 2020. The functions of this committee will be taken on by the Finance Committee in future.

The Policies Committee: This committee has been unable to meet this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, for outreach groups, and others such as the Friends of St. Mary's for special meetings. The Icon group and some exercise groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Unfortunately the use of the Vestry Hall has significantly reduced this year due to Covid 19. Following Government and Diocesan advice, access to and use of the Vestry Hall initially ceased on the 17th March 2020. During a Standing Committee meeting on the 16th August discussions took place regarding how to re-open the hall for use by outside organisations. The Covid 19 special risk assessment was updated and a Hall Guidance document was written to support users of the hall to manage and follow the appropriate guidelines. For a short period of time the hall was being used by the Yoga and Knit and Natter groups but this again has now ceased due to changes in the Covid 19 situation.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Fr Peter Bolton, Honorary Assistant Priest to St John's, continues with the tenancy taken up in November 2018. Fr Peter has been a very welcome and highly involved addition to the St John's family.

A burglary took place at No.17 in November which necessitated the replacement of some locks (on-going insurance claim) and the installation of new security lights (funded by Rolfe's Charity).

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) inspection took place, a legal requirement, which highlighted that some minor improvements were desirable. The PCC will be dealing with these during 2021.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: No services were held at St. Mary's Church during the year due to the Covid 19 situation. The continued programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work has taken place to:

Rebuild a section of the Churchyard wall (between the main gates and small gate on the main road). Further damage was caused to the corner of the wall, to the west of the main gate, this will need to be repaired as soon as possible next year.

Replace/repair the ceiling and insulate the flooring of the Vestry Hall. Also upgrading the current light system to LED's and installing emergency exit lights.

Repair some tiles on the Lady Chapel roof, together with a loose tile on the Vestry Hall roof.

Fix the lights in the Sacristy and the digital control box.

Further electrical work is about to take place in 2021 in connection with the lights outside the Church, as rainwater is seeping into the connection boxes for these.

Also work is planned in 2021 to remove one of the electric meters in the Church. For reasons unknown, St John's was historically fitted with and charged for 2 electric meters, one of which it has been agreed by the current energy supplier is not needed.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continues to improve and practise, aided by training from the Kent County Association of Change Ringers. New bell muffles were ordered in February 2020 and are stored in the bell tower ready for use. Following Covid19 guidelines, change ringing was not possible but individuals have been able to chime when required for Sunday Parish Mass and toll for funerals.

Financial Review: Finance remains a major item on the PCC's agenda. It continues to be difficult to raise sufficient funds to ensure the smooth running of St John's Church. The Covid 19 situation has also now impacted on the financial situation with income generally down.

Following consultation with the Diocesan Office, the PCC decided to switch the method of accounting from Accruals to Receipts & Payments from 2018 onwards. Mr G Cousins was appointed to act as Examiner for the PCC's accounts.

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the PCC, at a level which equates to approximately two months' unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during 2020.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g. Indicative Offer (formerly Parish Offer), rates and taxes, and restricted funds. Due to the reduction of income caused by the Covid 19 situation it was not felt possible to achieve this level of giving for 2020. It was agreed at the PCC meeting in March 2020 to donate all of our Away-Giving to Christian Aid this year.

£520 was sent to Christian Aid in February, which was raised as a result of the 2 Lent Lunches that were able to take place and via 'fines' and personal giving. Following a PCC meeting in November 2020 it was agreed to give another £800 to Christian Aid.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins carries on with her role as Stewardship Secretary.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish. We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy and a policy on Domestic Violence. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

St John's was observant of the developing Covid 19 situation and sought guidance from the Government and Diocese to ensure correct procedures were followed and adhered to. Covid 19 situation, plans and decisions, is currently a standing item on the PCC agenda to be discussed at each meeting. The Standing Committee also met on a number of occasions to discuss issues connected to this that arose between PCC meetings. An initial Covid 19 special risk assessment was compiled and agreed following a Standing Committee meeting held on 29th June and has been regularly checked and updated as needed since. This risk assessment is uploaded onto the Church Website and a copy is also kept on the Church notice board.

Child Protection: Mrs. C. Ody continues in her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer. Mrs. T Jerome took on the role of Second Safeguarding Officer in September 2020.

Disclosure and Barring Service: Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes was elected to the role as Second Lead Recruiter at the November 2020 PCC meeting.

Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS. Now that the PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission, all members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

A procedure regarding 'Reporting of Serious Incidents' has been agreed and authority has been delegated to the Diocesan Secretary to submit safeguarding *Serious Incident Reports* to the Charity Commission on behalf of the PCC's trustees.

A Safeguarding Audit was completed in April 2019.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all. Steps were taken to inform the current St John's congregation and wider community regarding the 'Community Guidance in relation to a Past Cases Review' by Rochester Diocese in December 2019. The Past Cases Review was then completed and returned to the Diocese with nothing to report.

All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online Safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Incumbent of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC took into account the new GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is Rev. Canon James F Southward in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens was appointed as Data Compliance Officer.

The Policies Committee worked to produce the following documentation to support the implementation of GDPR:

GDPR action plan.

GDPR policy – adopted by the PCC on the 17th July 2018.

Privacy notices for general use and for role holders.

CCTV policy – adopted by the PCC on the 10th September 2018.

An Annual Return of Processing Activities.

A letter sent out to all members of the congregation to inform them about GDPR.

In September 2020, Andrew Wooding Jones, the Archdeacon of Rochester, contacted Fr James and asked him to consider becoming the Priest in Charge at All Saints Church, Perry Street, Gravesend. Consultation with PCC members took place and there was agreement with Fr James taking on this role. This has now been officially confirmed. It was agreed that this could be a positive collaboration between St John's and All Saints.



Sarah Wright
Hon. Secretary



Rev. Canon James F Southward
Vicar of Higham and Rector of Merston

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2020

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

**RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2019 £
Receipts										
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	58,480	0	17,461	75,941	67,728	728	4,573		73,030
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	5,569	0	186	5,755	6,572	0	437		7,009
<i>Investment income</i>	2c	96	35	0	130	87	117	0		204
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	2,726	0	3,492	6,218	11,927	0	0		11,927
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	2,690	0	0	2,690	2,640		0		2,640
		69,560	35	21,139	90,735	88,955	846	5,010	0	94,810
Payments										
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	64	0	0	64	82	0	0		82
<i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>	3b	379	0	0	379	661	0	0		661
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073	78,868	4,242	2,582		85,692
Total resources expended		83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516	79,611	4,242	2,582		86,435
Excess of Receipts over Payments										
		(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)	9,344	(3,396)	2,428		8,376
Transfers between funds - transfers in		8,200	12,900	12,000	33,100	0	10,291	150		10,441
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(8,200)	(12,900)	(12,000)	(33,100)	(10,291)	0	(150)		(10,441)
					0					0
		(13,912)	(14,641)	772	(27,782)	(947)	6,894	2,428		8,376
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2020/19		77,916	22,587	(448)	100,056	78,863	15,693	(2,876)	0	91,680
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2020/19 4		64,004	7,946	324	72,274	77,916	22,587	(448)	0	100,056

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Notes	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	2020 Total £	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	2019 Total £
<u>Cash and bank deposits</u>										
Current accounts	13,422	3,258	670		17,350	21,994				21,994
Deposit accounts	12,121	40,794			52,915	12,025	55,032			67,057
Church repair fund		2,010			2,010		11,005			11,005
4	25,543	46,062	670		72,275	34,019	66,036	-		100,056
<u>Other monetary assets</u>										
			-		-					-
			-		-					-
	-	-	-		-					-
<u>Investment assets</u>										
					-					-
	-	-	-		-				-	-
<u>Assets retained for Church Use</u>										
No 17 Hermitage Road		300,000			300,000		300,000			300,000
					-		-			-
	-	300,000	-		300,000		300,000			300,000
<u>Liabilities</u>										
						-				-
Charity Payments					-	170				170
	0				-	0				-
	-	-	-	-	-		0	0		170

Description of any Assets
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house for use of retired clergy, estimated market value 300,000

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Treasurer

Incumbent

Date

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to a wider body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

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

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

gulations
ived and

onsible in
another

include

y the PCC
only on
be
t at the

from
iding upon

ind
CC and

n the
where a

ties where

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

2

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2019 £
a Voluntary income				0				0
Planned giving by standing order	33,786			33,786	32,834			32,834
Planned giving envelopes	9,006			9,006	10,505			10,505
Income tax recoverable	13,127			13,127	16,708			16,708
Collections	1,519			1,519	4,414		539	4,954
Charity Collections			520	520			1,615	1,615
Donations and appeals	1,042		16806	17,848	2,717		2284	5,001
Legacies/Grants			135	135	550	728	135	1,413
	58,480	0	17,461	75,941	67,728	728	4,573	73,030
b Activities for generating funds								
General fundraising	1,403			1,403	3,109		39	3,148
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	4,166		186	4,352	3,463		398	3,861
				0				0
				0				0
				0				0
	5,569	0	186	5,755	6,572	0	437	7,009
c Investment income								
Dividends and interest	96	35		130	87	117		204
	96	35	0	130	87	117	0	204
d Income from Church Activities								
Church Hall Income	739			739	5,125			5,125
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	1,820			1,820	3,563			3,563
DBF element of fees			3,492	3,492	2,042			2,042
Refreshments	167			167	648			648
Social Committee	0			0	550			550
	2,726	0	3,492	6,218	11,927	0	0	11,927
e Other incoming resources								
Sundry	50			50				0
Other income	2,640			2,640	2,640			2,640
	2,690	0	0	2,690	2,640	0	0	2,640
Total receipts	69,560	35	21,139	90,735	88,955	846	5,010	94,810

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2019 £
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>				0				0
Stewardship costs	64			64	82			82
	64	0	0	64	82		0	82
b <i>Fund raising costs</i>	379			379	661			661
				0				0
				0				0
	379	0	0	379	661		0	661
c <i>Church Activities</i>								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):	1,050		690	1,740	1,782		2,022	3,804
Ministry Costs				0				0
Diocesan Offer	52,966			52,966	52,482			52,482
Expenses	2,514			2,514	1,386			1,386
Vicarage costs	4,049			4,049	3,551			3,551
Other Benefice account costs			2,555	2,555	162			162
Other Ministry costs				0				0
Church running expenses				0				0
Utilities	4,937			4,937	5,470			5,470
Refreshments	86			86	342			342
Insurance	3,586			3,586	3,653			3,653
Church maintenance	9,578		261	9,839	1,712		150	1,862
Major Structural work		14,144	15,000	29,144				0
Upkeep of services	1,067		1,324	2,391	2,171		410	2,581
Organ Tuning and Playing	835			835	2,719			2,719
No. 17 Hermitage Road				0				0
Maintenance	576			576	558			558
Insurance	211			211	201			201
Administration	1,189			1,189	1,992			1,992
Training/Childrens Church	67			67	255			255
Other costs	320	532	537	1,389	431	4,242		4,673
	83,030	14,676	20,368	118,073	78,868	4,242	2,582	85,692
Total payments	83,472	14,676	20,368	118,516	79,611	4,242	2,582	86,435

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund					
General fund	32,231	69,560	(83,472)	9,000	27,319
	32,231	69,560	(83,472)	9,000	27,319
Designated Fund	65,922	35	(14,676)	(9,000)	42,281
	65,922	35	(14,676)	(9,000)	42,281
Restricted Fund	1,902	21,139	(20,368)	0	2,674
	1,902	21,139	(20,368)	0	2,674
Total bank and current accounts	100,055	90,735	(118,516)	0	72,273
Endowment Fund					0
		0	0	0	0
Total funds	100,055	90,735	(118,516)	0	72,273

The General Fund is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a Santander and Barclays Current Account.

The Church Repair Fund has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.

The Bell Tower Fund which forms part of the Restoration Fund is held for the purpose of making repairs to the tower, bells and church clock. This fund is financed from donations and charges made at weddings.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

5 Staff costs

	2020 £	2019 £
a Wages and salaries	0	0

b Payments to PCC members

No other payments, apart from reimbursement of expenses, were made to PCC members.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2020		2019	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Bishop of Richborough Discretionary Fund			150	
Christian Aid	800	520		1,200
Gravesham food bank				22
National Churches Trust	50		50	
Save the children		170		150
Barnabas Fund			382	
Rochester DBF - Conf. Collection				-
Zimbabwe appeal			1,000	
Ellenor	200		200	
Yes Liberia				650
	1,050	690	1,782	2,022

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

Compatibility Report for Final 1.xls
Run on 27/01/2021 16:54

The following features in this workbook are not supported by earlier versions of Excel. These features may be lost or degraded when opening this workbook in an earlier version of Excel or if you save this workbook in an earlier file format.

Minor loss of fidelity

	# of occurrences	Version
--	-----------------------------	----------------

Some cells or styles in this workbook contain formatting that is not supported by the selected file format. These formats will be converted to the closest format available.
--

6

Excel 97-2003

Annual Report 2020



Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Incumbent:

The Reverend Canon James F Southward

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr G Cousins
Merston
4 Chalk Road
Higham
Nr Rochester
Kent, ME3 7JX

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Canon James F. Southward, 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 use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the incumbent in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the daily celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Strood: part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2020 are:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent	The Revd. Canon James Southward	Chair
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mrs Kim Wood	Vulnerable Adults Representative until September 2020 and stepped down from the Deanery Synod role in October 2020.
Mr Christopher Hanson	
Mr Stephen Phillips	Elected October 2020, previously an elected PCC Member.

Elected Members

Mr Edward Hance	Served until October 2020.
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Valerie Laurens	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Carole Rough	Hon. Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer
Mrs Sarah Wright	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Anne Tammas-Williams	Parish Safeguarding Officer. Stepped down from DBS Second Recruiter role in November 2020.
Mrs Catherine Ody	Served until October 2020.
Mrs Tessa Packer	DBS Second Recruiter. Elected October 2020.
Mrs Nancy Hughes	Elected October 2020.
Mrs Julie Aldous	

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

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

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Incumbent is an ex officio member of all committees and one or both Churchwardens sit on most committees. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Planned Giving Committee: is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which takes place during February and discusses matters relating to charitable and missionary giving. The PCC, meeting on 17th March 2020, agreed to merge the committee with the Finance committee.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Vicar and the PCC, e.g. baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 16th October 2020 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 78.

The Coronavirus situation began to escalate in February 2020 and the country went into 'lockdown' in March 2020 when St John's Church had to close. Daily Mass continued to be offered, transferring the celebration online, from clergy homes, initially via Skype then moving onto Zoom as numbers 'attending' these increased. Two Sunday morning masses were offered and a Sunday evening Mass was also available for a period of time via Facebook. The Vicar's weekly emails and the Church website and social media sites were used to share key information, including making hyperlinks available so bible readings could be accessed. As the Coronavirus situation began to improve and following Government and Diocesan advice, St John's was able to re-open a small area of the Church cordoned off for private prayer starting on Monday 15th June. This was followed on the 12th July when St John's was able to re-open for parishioners to attend some weekday Masses and the two Sunday Masses. St John's Church then became open again every day for daily Mass with the continued offer of accessing Mass via Zoom. There was a mixed pattern of attendance, some parishioners attending Mass in Church, some continuing to access Mass via Zoom, some combining both. Sunday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has fallen slightly over the year due to deaths, infirmity and due to the Coronavirus situation. Sometimes weekday Masses are only supported by those who live OUTSIDE the parish. Junior Church continued as usual at the beginning of the year. The lack in the number of children attending continued to be a real problem, and

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

weekly attendance was utterly erratic. Junior Church also ceased when 'lockdown' started and is yet to re-start.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 6 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2020 on a bi-monthly basis with an average of 10 members in attendance. There has been 1 Extraordinary meeting and 5 Standing Committee meetings during the year.

The Focus on Renewal and Growth Group, established 2013 by the Incumbent as a 'think-tank' to support him in considering new or different ideas for worship, outreach and care both in our Church and the wider community, has not met this year.

Episcopal Care: In 2015 the diocesan bishop made arrangements for St John's and other 'resolution parishes' to be moved from the pastoral care of the Bishop of Fulham to that of the Bishop of Richborough. Following on from the Church of England's decision to ordain women as bishops, the PCC gave considerable time to considering the way forward for St John's under the new arrangements. Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. We have still not received a written reply to date. However, the appointment of Bishop Norman as an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese implies that this meets our situation in part.

Worship and Prayer: The daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. Following suggestions from the Focus on Renewal and Growth group in 2014, we have planned to offer a range of services that our community might find beneficial and spiritually fulfilling, such as 'Holy Hours' before the Blessed Sacrament on a Saturday of each month, and at varying times each week during Lent and Advent and a healing ministry during Mass on some Saturdays through the year. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 situation has made it impossible to offer these services during most of 2020. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting Prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of life's journey. Here again, the Covid 19 pandemic has severely limited our opportunity to offer these life celebrations. We have celebrated 1 Baptism but no Marriages in our Church and have led 21 funerals for the Community, 15 of these at the crematorium, 6 in Church, once Church use was allowed again.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. We are fortunate to have Mr. John Mountford, Head of Music at Kings School, alongside other organists, to support us, when available, by playing the organ at services and working with the Singing Group. Support from Mr John Mountford continued in January and February 2020 but due to the Covid 19 situation and following recommendations from the Government and Diocese, music and singing in church has temporarily ceased.

Mission and Evangelism has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. Bishop Norman's cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat, were held at the beginning of the year. They are currently on hold during the Covid 19 situation. Lent Lunches held on Saturdays started to take place in February but had to be cancelled due to the Covid 19 situation. The money raised from the initial two lunches that did take place was sent in support of Christian Aid.

There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community among Friends of S.Mary's, School Governors, Higham History Group, and Hiara.

Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a Foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing, particularly during the Covid pandemic.

In these ways, the people of God and the church of Christ are working for the benefit of the entire community.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Our Study Group, **M4**, which should meet on most first Mondays of the month, for **Mass**, **Munch** and **Muse** was adversely affected and suspended as with other meetings in 2020.

A new group was started early in 2020 by PCC Member, Chris Hanson, and our Hon. Assistant Priest, Father Peter Bolton. Called the Confraternity of Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, it was formed to address the low number of men in St John's congregation and with the objects of adopting a rule of life, evangelizing and doing good works. Unfortunately, this group was in the early stages of formation when the pandemic struck and has been forced to suspend its activities for the time being.

Christmas Masses did take place in church (with restricted numbers and following the Covid 19 special risk assessment guidelines) and via Zoom e.g. Midnight Mass and Christmas Day. Unfortunately due to the Covid 19 situation some Christmas church events had to be cancelled due to the increased risks that these could pose, namely the children's Crib Service and the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Parish Representative to the Cathedral: The PCC is grateful to Mr Roger Hill who continued as our Parish Representative until very recently. This scheme is now defunct.

Children and Youth work: All activities for the children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.

Due to the Covid 19 situation, Junior Church ceased to take place in the Church building from March 2020. Despite the Covid19 situation and the inability to meet in person, regular contact has been kept with Junior Church families through email, social media, and articles and Junior Pages in The Bridge. Activities have been shared online and a virtual Crib Service for Zoom was prepared by JC teachers and attended by JC families on Christmas Eve. Encouragement is given to continue worship; a couple of JC families regularly attend weekly mass either in church or on Zoom. There has been positive feedback that these efforts are appreciated, and we will continue these through 2021 until we can meet again.

The Teens N Twenties group did not meet in 2020 - particularly for Palm Cross and Christingle Making because of Covid19. Lent & Advent challenges/activities were posted on the TNT Facebook page to continue outreach.

Voice Rejoice, a singing group, for children which was established at the end of 2017, is led by Mrs Catherine Ody assisted by Mrs Anne Tammis-Williams. One of the objects of this group is to provide a possible entry into church life for children who have previously had no connection. The choir has 4 children regularly attending and they had sung at various church services during 2019. The choir met up for practice at the beginning of the year through January & February 2020. Due to the Covid 19 situation this group is currently not meeting.

In previous years both Higham Primary and Gads Hill School have made use of St. John's as an instrument in the teaching of Christianity during Religious Education. Again due to the Covid 19 situation the use of the church has temporarily ceased.

Social Committee: This group's role is to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality. Apart from the Burns Night Supper, linked with dedication Festival, these events did not take place due to Covid 19.

Stewardship Committee: This committee continued to produce their planned giving appeal, taking into account GDPR, by distributing packs to all members of the Congregation. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. However, due to a drop in PCC funds owing to the Covid 19 pandemic, it was not possible for this committee to consider a plan of charitable giving for 2020. The functions of this committee will be taken on by the Finance Committee in future.

The Policies Committee: This committee has been unable to meet this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, for outreach groups, and others such as the Friends of St. Mary's for special meetings. The Icon group and some exercise groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Unfortunately the use of the Vestry Hall has significantly reduced this year due to Covid 19. Following Government and Diocesan advice, access to and use of the Vestry Hall initially ceased on the 17th March 2020. During a Standing Committee meeting on the 16th August discussions took place regarding how to re-open the hall for use by outside organisations. The Covid 19 special risk assessment was updated and a Hall Guidance document was written to support users of the hall to manage and follow the appropriate guidelines. For a short period of time the hall was being used by the Yoga and Knit and Natter groups but this again has now ceased due to changes in the Covid 19 situation.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Fr Peter Bolton, Honorary Assistant Priest to St John's, continues with the tenancy taken up in November 2018. Fr Peter has been a very welcome and highly involved addition to the St John's family.

A burglary took place at No.17 in November which necessitated the replacement of some locks (on-going insurance claim) and the installation of new security lights (funded by Rolfe's Charity).

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) inspection took place, a legal requirement, which highlighted that some minor improvements were desirable. The PCC will be dealing with these during 2021.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: No services were held at St. Mary's Church during the year due to the Covid 19 situation. The continued programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work has taken place to:

Rebuild a section of the Churchyard wall (between the main gates and small gate on the main road). Further damage was caused to the corner of the wall, to the west of the main gate, this will need to be repaired as soon as possible next year.

Replace/repair the ceiling and insulate the flooring of the Vestry Hall. Also upgrading the current light system to LED's and installing emergency exit lights.

Repair some tiles on the Lady Chapel roof, together with a loose tile on the Vestry Hall roof.

Fix the lights in the Sacristy and the digital control box.

Further electrical work is about to take place in 2021 in connection with the lights outside the Church, as rainwater is seeping into the connection boxes for these.

Also work is planned in 2021 to remove one of the electric meters in the Church. For reasons unknown, St John's was historically fitted with and charged for 2 electric meters, one of which it has been agreed by the current energy supplier is not needed.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continues to improve and practise, aided by training from the Kent County Association of Change Ringers. New bell muffles were ordered in February 2020 and are stored in the bell tower ready for use. Following Covid19 guidelines, change ringing was not possible but individuals have been able to chime when required for Sunday Parish Mass and toll for funerals.

Financial Review: Finance remains a major item on the PCC's agenda. It continues to be difficult to raise sufficient funds to ensure the smooth running of St John's Church. The Covid 19 situation has also now impacted on the financial situation with income generally down.

Following consultation with the Diocesan Office, the PCC decided to switch the method of accounting from Accruals to Receipts & Payments from 2018 onwards. Mr G Cousins was appointed to act as Examiner for the PCC's accounts.

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the PCC, at a level which equates to approximately two months' unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during 2020.

Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g. Indicative Offer (formerly Parish Offer), rates and taxes, and restricted funds. Due to the reduction of income caused by the Covid 19 situation it was not felt possible to achieve this level of giving for 2020. It was agreed at the PCC meeting in March 2020 to donate all of our Away-Giving to Christian Aid this year.

£520 was sent to Christian Aid in February, which was raised as a result of the 2 Lent Lunches that were able to take place and via 'fines' and personal giving. Following a PCC meeting in November 2020 it was agreed to give another £800 to Christian Aid.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins carries on with her role as Stewardship Secretary.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Risk Management

It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish. We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy and a policy on Domestic Violence. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

St John's was observant of the developing Covid 19 situation and sought guidance from the Government and Diocese to ensure correct procedures were followed and adhered to. Covid 19 situation, plans and decisions, is currently a standing item on the PCC agenda to be discussed at each meeting. The Standing Committee also met on a number of occasions to discuss issues connected to this that arose between PCC meetings. An initial Covid 19 special risk assessment was compiled and agreed following a Standing Committee meeting held on 29th June and has been regularly checked and updated as needed since. This risk assessment is uploaded onto the Church Website and a copy is also kept on the Church notice board.

Child Protection: Mrs. C. Ody continues in her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer. Mrs. T Jerome took on the role of Second Safeguarding Officer in September 2020.

Disclosure and Barring Service: Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes was elected to the role as Second Lead Recruiter at the November 2020 PCC meeting.

Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS. Now that the PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission, all members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.

A procedure regarding 'Reporting of Serious Incidents' has been agreed and authority has been delegated to the Diocesan Secretary to submit safeguarding *Serious Incident Reports* to the Charity Commission on behalf of the PCC's trustees.

A Safeguarding Audit was completed in April 2019.

The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy.

A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all. Steps were taken to inform the current St John's congregation and wider community regarding the 'Community Guidance in relation to a Past Cases Review' by Rochester Diocese in December 2019. The Past Cases Review was then completed and returned to the Diocese with nothing to report.

All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online Safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

Policies: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Incumbent of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC took into account the new GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is Rev. Canon James F Southward in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens was appointed as Data Compliance Officer.

The Policies Committee worked to produce the following documentation to support the implementation of GDPR:

GDPR action plan.

GDPR policy – adopted by the PCC on the 17th July 2018.

Privacy notices for general use and for role holders.

CCTV policy – adopted by the PCC on the 10th September 2018.

An Annual Return of Processing Activities.

A letter sent out to all members of the congregation to inform them about GDPR.

In September 2020, Andrew Wooding Jones, the Archdeacon of Rochester, contacted Fr James and asked him to consider becoming the Priest in Charge at All Saints Church, Perry Street, Gravesend. Consultation with PCC members took place and there was agreement with Fr James taking on this role. This has now been officially confirmed. It was agreed that this could be a positive collaboration between St John's and All Saints.



Sarah Wright
Hon. Secretary



Rev. Canon James F Southward
Vicar of Higham and Rector of Merston