



The
DAMASCUS
Parish

Drayton | Appleford | Milton
Sutton Courtenay | Steventon



2023 Report and accounts for the DAMASCUS Parochial Church Council

St Peter's, **Drayton**
St Peter & St Paul's, **Appleford**
St Blaise, **Milton**
All Saints', **Sutton Courtenay**
St Michael & All Angels', **Steventon**

Nurturing faith, bringing hope, and sharing love

Introduction to the DAMASCUS Parish

The DAMASCUS Parish is a single parish, formed from the five, growing, semi-rural villages of Drayton, Appleford, Milton, Sutton Courtenay, and Steventon. The five parishes had been working together for over twenty years as a Group Ministry prior to the formation of the single parish in July 2017. We are continuing to build on growing together.

The Parish is situated between Abingdon and Didcot with boundaries abutting both towns. There are considerable numbers of professional people in the area, with Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University, Harwell, Culham, Didcot Power Station and Milton Park Enterprise Zone all in the locality. The easy access to Didcot Parkway Station means that many parishioners commute to London, Oxford, Reading, Swindon and beyond.

Aim and Purposes

The DAMASCUS Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Helen Kendrick, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the churches of St Peter's Drayton, St Peter and St Paul's Appleford, St Blaise Milton, All Saints' Sutton Courtenay and St Michael and All Angels' Steventon and St Michael's Hall Steventon.

Our Vision and Mission

**Our vision is to be a living Christian presence at the heart of our communities
nurturing faith, bringing hope, and sharing love.**

Through:

1. Reaching out to our existing communities and the influx of new residents.
2. Building a new community of faith within the Milton Heights development.
3. Re-invigorating our existing traditional churches to support mission and outreach.
4. Enabling outreach within our Schools to flourish and grow.
5. Developing a spirit of generosity and giving, where all the churches support mission where it is most needed.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music, and sacrament.

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

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the five churches in the parish.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and prayer

Throughout 2023 the number of regular worshippers across the Parish returned to pre-pandemic numbers but with a different age and attendance profile (younger age range but attending less frequently). The smaller churches of Appleford and Milton recovered faster than the larger congregations.

In 2023 the Ministry team and PCC revised the service pattern to enable the reduced clergy team to cover services in all five churches in a more sustainable way, whilst still offer a range of services across the parish during the week and over the course of the year. Main Sunday services now either take place at 9.30 or 11.00 with at least one service in each church every Sunday, except for the fifth Sunday when there is a DAMASCUS Parish service in one of the five churches. Mid-week services are held in two churches on different days of the week. All five churches are open during the day every day for our local community and visitors to enjoy and use for private prayer.

Limited live streaming of Sunday services has been available but proved to be a challenge due to technical difficulties and lack of expertise. The Ministry team continued to provide service sheets for people to worship at home where requested.

During 2023 there were 196 people on the Parish Electoral Roll.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey of life. Throughout 2023 the requests for live-streaming of funerals continued to increase and live-streaming of weddings, particularly in All Saints', Sutton Courtenay was made available when requested. In the DAMASCUS parish we have celebrated 37 baptisms, 11 weddings and 33 funeral services in church during 2023.

Remembrance Sunday Services were held inside our church buildings in 2023 and they were well supported – with attendance similar to pre-COVID years.

Four of the five churches participated in the government's Warm Spaces scheme and offered a variety of opportunities for individuals and families to benefit from free hospitality and activities with the benefit of a grant from local government.

In 2023 we had six confirmation candidates who were prepared for confirmation by the Reverend Canon Dr Phillip Tovey and Mike Blanch.

We focused on sharing faith through various prayer and study groups which were hosted in the River Room and/or online and open to all.

We would like to thank our Rector, Reverend Helen Kendrick, our Associate Ministers Reverend Phil Sutton, Reverend Rosie Bruce, and Reverend Dr Phillip Tovey (retired PTO) and all the Licensed Lay Ministers for their hard work leading, nurturing, inspiring and teaching us during this year.

The following paragraphs present points about worship and ministry specific to each of the five churches in the parish.

Drayton

The Worship Team

The team meets regularly to plan the Thursday morning rota and the leadership of the monthly Praise Services. Members of the team usually lead one service per month on the Thursday rota. The Praise Services, have provided some very interesting and enjoyable topics during the last 12 months, with music provided by Kay Davies.

The worship team have gained in confidence, ably supported by Reverend Rosie Bruce and the congregation. A team member organizes a rota of organists and other musicians who play for us, another member chooses the hymns.

Prayer meeting

We continued to have weekly virtual prayer meetings in our homes for the first three Mondays of the month. On the fourth Monday of the month we physically met up in the church room or a home. A Prayer Supplement is prepared weekly which is much appreciated by those who continue to pray virtually in their homes. Being able to do this has encouraged us to have prayer as part of the church's life together.

Healing Team – Healing Ministry continues to be well supported in St Peter's. The team meet up on the Saturday evening for a Preparation Service in The Lady Chapel. At this service prayer requests and cards left on the prayer board in St Peter's are offered for healing prayers. During the service the following morning after communion the congregation are invited to receive healing prayer by the laying on of hands.

The Comms Team

The Comms Team aim to connect St Peter's to the village community with God's love through different forms of media. We have been posting regularly on the St Peter's Facebook page and on the Drayton Village Community page. Additional posts are made for special services and events, including All Souls' service, Remembrance Day, and Harvest. Both our Easter Day 2023 and Christmas Day 2023 posts received quite a lot of likes on the Drayton Village Community page, many of which were from people not connected with St Peter's and who don't regularly interact with our posts. Knit and Natter posts also drew positive responses, as did the thank you post following the Churchyard cleanup. We update the noticeboard outside St Peter's very regularly and many Church events and services are advertised here also. More people are showing an interest in looking at the board and it is

brighter and more interesting. We continue to put together the church page in the Drayton Chronicle, each month.

Pebbles

The group caters for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their parents and carers. It takes place on Wednesday mornings during term time in the Church Room and at the back of the Church. 2023 saw a change in the leadership of Pebbles with Sue Icke stepping down from leading in July. The leadership was taken over by Cheryl Jarvis and Katy Hoyle who are assisted by two others.

Attendance was very good during 2023 with some leaving to start school and new babies coming for the first time. The children enjoy free play, crafts, singing and story time. The nativity in December was very well attended and thank you to Reverend Phil Sutton for coming and reading to the children. A party followed and was enjoyed by all.

Feedback from the mums and carers was very encouraging, a lot of them stating the Pebbles was the most welcoming group they had been to. 2023 was a very promising one for Baptisms from within the group with 4 children being baptised. A gift of a children's Bible story book was given to each from the group.

First Tuesday Connections – In January exercises from the chair with music and singing was offered. In May, there was a talk about wildlife in the area and a visit to the speaker's garden. In August we celebrated a member's 90th birthday with singing and cake. In November there was another sing along session. In other months it was "just a chat" with tea/coffee and biscuits or seasonally appropriate food.

The Care Team – Continue to visit people who need a listening ear and to share a cup of tea and a chat. Phone calls are often made to check that people not seen for a while are keeping well. Cards sent on the anniversary of a bereavement are much appreciated. Baptism and wedding anniversaries are also sent cards.

Appleford

During 2023 the congregation numbers remained stable, with the highest attendance at Breakfast Church. Breakfast Church is held on the first Sunday of every month with refreshments being served before the service starts and then a short, informal all age liturgy to follow. This continues to be well-supported by families and the WhatsApp group continues to be a useful method of promotion and communication as well as the parish Facebook page.

For Mothering Sunday flowers and prayer cards and for Easter, greeting cards and seeds, were distributed to every home in the village. These were very well received and helped to remind people that the church community was still active and praying for the wider community.

The Street Nativity was extremely well attended and once again a donkey was supplied by The Donkey Sanctuary. The Appleford Community Project paid for the donkey and provided refreshments in the farmyard at the end which was much appreciated by all who attended.

Several people helped to knit angels which were then distributed around the village by the church families, for people to find and hang on their own Christmas trees. The carol service was well attended with children and adults all playing a part.

Milton

The typical attendance at the main Sunday service is 11 adults, but for family services typical attendance is 17 adults and seven children. One Sunday each month we have had a lay led service, Faith Conversations, this is a café style service and has been led by a variety of members of the congregation and a wide range of topics have been discussed. It has also been an opportunity to hear from a representative of our Lent charity. This service has been well supported. Our Family services have been particularly well supported and the young people have been very willing contributors.

We have regular joint services with Milton Methodists, the Palm Sunday procession began at St Blaise and walked to Milton Methodist church for the service. We were pleased to welcome some members of Milton Methodists to the service on Remembrance Sunday and on Christmas Eve.

Our Lent charity was Emmaus (Oxford) and a companion from the charity talked with us about their experience of homelessness and how Emmaus has helped and support them and the work they do in the social enterprise.

For Easter several members of the congregation contributed to the production of 150 knitted chicks containing Easter eggs for all the children at Milton School. For Remembrance Sunday, the knitted poppy cascade was fixed around the porch entrance and in church there was a display of information about those whose names appear on our war memorial, this was much appreciated by the Milton community.

We had a successful Christingle service, and the children (and adults!) enjoyed making their Christingles during this service. The nativity play performed by the young people was particularly well supported and very much enjoyed by the congregation. After the success of the carol service in previous years we again held a Christmas Eve carol service by candle-light with a mix of traditional and contemporary readings and music. The congregational singing was enhanced by the support of the Milton AHA Choir. The church was beautifully decorated and very full; everyone appreciated this beautiful service.

The difficulties of transporting children from Milton School to St Blaise Church have meant that Milton School have been unable to have services at St Blaise church this year, but we maintain links with the school and look forward to welcoming them to church in the future. The knitted chicks with Easter eggs as a gift from the church was very much appreciated by the children.

Sutton Courtenay

As the year progressed the congregation at All Saints' have welcomed several new families and couples but a few of the longer standing members of the congregation have died or moved away. The major festivals have been well attended.

During Holy Week the Maundy Thursday service followed by a Lamb Supper was open to the whole Parish and was appreciated by all who came. The Good Friday Family Service was well attended followed by a less well attended Holy hour. This will be reviewed for 2024. The Easter Day Family Eucharist was very popular.

On April 23rd All Saints hosted the Parish Confirmation Service, at which six candidates were confirmed by Bishop Gavin. This was followed by lunch in the River Room. On Sunday 21st May we celebrated the 20th Anniversary of Reverend Helen Kendrick's Licensing with a joint service, followed by a bring and share lunch. This was well supported and a joyful occasion. Christmas Services again were well supported. The Torchlight procession happened without the torches and bonfire due to poor weather conditions, but it was still well attended and, with the parish carol singing, raised over £1,000 for Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

The primary school held its Easter, End of Year and Christmas Service in the church, whilst its Harvest Festival was held in the school.

An online prayer group has started this year – running on Tuesday mornings from 7.45-8.15am. Sutton Courtenay has hosted several parish study groups during the year in the River Room which enabled us to welcome some participants on zoom. There was a Lent Group; Damascus Big Read in June/July; and a Bible study exploring faith and the environment during October/November.

Our engagement with the local community has continued with regular posts on the church Facebook page, thanks to Bryony Landsbert for acting as admin for this, which are then re-posted onto various community pages. The engagement with our social media has steadily increased through the year and we continue to contribute to the Sutton Courtenay News – promoting our services and events.

Steventon

The size of the congregation at each Sunday service has increased slightly in 2023 however the pattern of attendance has changed significantly with more occasional service attenders and less very regular attenders. Our family services can have three families attending with up to seven children. The two monthly communion services being the best attended. Midweek communion services have an average of eight attenders which include parishioners who do not attend Sunday services. The monthly service of Evening Prayer has developed into Evensong and attended by upwards of 12 regular worshippers.

End of term school services, village Christingle and Crib services resulted in the church packed with over 210 adults and children. Occasional services including Harvest, Remembrance tide and special summer celebrations all attracted a congregation of greater than 60.

Social and fund raising

Social and fund-raising activities have increased in 2023 returning to pre-COVID levels of activity. Many of the social activities provide outreach and mission opportunities within the village communities. Thanks to grant support we were able to offer a warm space and free activities and refreshments in some of our churches in January, February, and March for a few hours each week. This has helped many who are struggling with heating and eating.

Drayton

It was decided at the beginning of the year to put our energy into fundraising events that we felt worked well. We had a successful plant sale in May, several members of the congregation nurture plants for sale at this event. We also had a successful Christmas Cracker weekend event at the end of November, at which over £900 was raised.

Appleford

The Coffee Mornings continue to run monthly – attracting between 20-40 people from across the village on a regular basis - mainly retired and those at home during the day. It provides an invaluable point of social contact and is much appreciated. The Appleford 100 Club continues to run and bring in some much needed income. The draw is held at the monthly coffee morning.

A Winter Warmer supper and quiz was held in the Village Hall, raising some funds. Again, this was well-supported and the catering team, as usual, provided a delicious meal enjoyed by people of all ages. The Christmas Carol Singing Evening held in a private house was very well supported and raised several hundred pounds for the National Kidney Foundation, Sobell Home Hospice, and the David Nott Foundation.

Milton

Our twice monthly tea, chat and craft afternoons and offer an opportunity for companionship particularly for older villagers and these have run regularly through the year. The crafters in the group enjoyed making 150 chicks with easter eggs for St Blaise School and then to making items for the craft fair.

On Shrove Tuesday we held a pancake event with many pancakes and a variety of competitions and races. The young people had a great time and were probably surprised at how competitive parent races can be! Lots of pancakes were tossed and consumed.

In May we held the Milton Duck race. It was a lovely sunny day and lots of villagers turned up to support their duck and to share tea and cake in the church after the racing. We raised over £1000 for church funds, and it was lovely community event.

Working in partnership with the church, MICE (Miltonians in Community Events) have led in the promotion of a 100 Club and other events from which the 'church' benefitted, both financially and socially. In July MICE joined the church in running a food stall at TRUCK over a warm weekend. They sold out and raised over £1000 for church funds.

The craft and jigsaw fair in November was well supported raised over £500 for the church funds and got our Advent and Christmas season off to an enjoyable and profitable start.

Our Lent Charity was Emmaus (Oxford) and at Christmas we supported the Didcot Emergency Foodbank. There was good support for Oxford Historic Churches Ride and Stride – with two families visiting churches and all well sponsored. We also had welcomers at St Blaise for most of the day, who did a grand job tidying the churchyard and cleaning the church during quiet periods!

Sutton Courtenay

The regular events such as Community Cafe, Community Brunch, WeCare2, Movie Matinee, Together in Stitches, Knit and Natter have continued to flourish and have reached out to different sectors of the community.

The special events included The Big Lunch on the Village Green to celebrate King Charles III coronation on 7th May. The English Music Festival returned to All Saints' for a concert on 29th May. The Orwell Society were welcomed for the whole weekend 24th/25th June. On the Sunday craft stalls were available and cream teas.

In the Summer Opera Anywhere performed Pirates of Penzance in the church as a fundraiser. On Sundays in August, we again sold Cream Teas which proved popular and raised funds for the church.

Hampers were distributed again at Christmas, reaching a lot more families than past years.

The River Room has continued to be well used both for church activities and external bookings. It is being used by the wider church community, such as a Clergy Quiet Day, run by the diocese, PCC away days by PCC's from Abingdon. It is becoming popular as a venue for Baptism parties and Wakes.

Steventon

Social and fund-raising events have increased in 2023, returning to pre-COVID levels of activity. Many of the social activities provide outreach and mission opportunities within the village, especially for young families living in the 3 newer housing developments. Throughout 2023 the church continued to actively support the 'Warm Space' programme it initiated in the autumn of 2022 in the church hall. Weekly café and food delivery services are now catered in the larger and better equipped village hall where 80-120 villagers attend each week, and 30 ready-made meals are provided throughout the week.

The Lent lunches, were well supported, raising £1000 for Christian Aid. The village coronation weekend celebrations centred on the church a flower festival, special Sunday service and afternoon cream tea; over 300 were recorded as entering the church for these activities.

Two pasty parties, a plant sale, church fete and book sale all provided successful fund-raising opportunities. The annual TRUCK festival provided the opportunity of generating substantive funds for both parish and church fabric maintenance.

The Friends of St Michael's supported our outreach to the village with the Causeway Christmas lights leading to the church, a full-size outdoor crib, refreshments for parents and children attending end of term services and the procession of lights from the church to the lighting of the village tree on Christingle Sunday.

Music

There are regular weekly choirs in Steventon and Sutton Courtenay. Singers from across the Parish regularly combine forces for weddings and funerals and for shared DAMASCUS Services.

Drayton

The former members of the choir have been supporting our singing in worship as part of the congregation this year. They have joined with those who sing in other DAMASCUS church choirs for joint services on occasions. Thank you to the rota of organists that come and play for the Sunday services at St Peter's and to Kay Davies for her help and support at the Praise services over the year.

Appleford

With no regular organist, Iris Ramkisson continues to choose and upload the hymns to the church iPod and the sound system is used to good effect. Organist support is provided for special services (Christmas Carols and Midnight Mass)

Milton

We do not have a regular organist, so we have effectively used music from CDs. Through the year we have continued to experiment with using some of the less well-known hymns in our hymn book with the support of choirs from around the world via YouTube.

Sutton Courtenay

The 'Singing Saints' have continued to support our worship and they were joined by a good number of 'guest' voices for the Carol Service in December to make a 20-strong choir. They are very grateful indeed to John Napper, who plays the organ, and to Barbara Vellacott for her piano playing.

Steventon

The church choir now consists of five Sopranos, two altos, one tenor and one bass. All the members are very loyal and have all been with the choir for very many years. The choir rehearses once a month and sings at three services a month leading the congregation in the singing of hymns. For special occasions we can call on members of Steventon Choral Society to help with singing. The Choral Society joins the church choir annually for the Christmas

carol service and performs a concert on Palm Sundays in the church. Helen Pearce continues to serve as organist and Terry Pearce as choirmaster.

Bells

The bells in Drayton, Milton, and Steventon have all rung regularly for services during 2023. Practices have been held most weeks at Drayton, Milton, and Steventon. Ringing at Sutton Courtenay during 2023 has been very limited because of the volume of the bells in ringing chamber after sound deadening was removed as part of the clear up following pigeons getting into the bell chamber. The bells at Appleford remain unringable.

In addition to services and weddings the bells have been rung for local and national events. Most notably this year was the ringing for the coronation of King Charles III in May. In November there was ringing at all the churches for Remembrance celebrations in our villages.

We are pleased to report that learners recruited at Drayton, Milton and Steventon have all been making good progress. Since regular ringing resumed at Sutton Courtenay in the autumn of 2023 some new recruits have started. All four of our ringable towers have been pleased to be able to welcome visiting bands and to host branch practices for ringers from the local area. During 2023 there were two peals and five quarter peals rung at Drayton; 22 peals and three quarter peals rung at Milton; one peal and two quarter peals rung at Steventon; and one quarter peal rung at Sutton Courtenay. Of note, the peal at Steventon was rung on the 100th anniversary of the first ever peal on Steventon bells; one of the peals at Milton was for the coronation of King Charles III and a new method called Coronation Alliance Major was rung and named. A quarter peal at Drayton was the first quarter peal for two of the new Drayton ringers and the first inside for one of the Steventon ringers.

Routine checks and maintenance of the bells has been carried out by the bellringers at each tower during the year. Steventon bells had an annual maintenance visit from Whites of Appleton. At Sutton Courtenay work was carried out by Drayton and Milton ringers to install insulation and a new floor under the bells to reduce the volume of sound in the ringing room. This has substantially improved the sound level at Sutton Courtenay and regular ringing of the bells was able to resume towards the end of 2023.

Flowers

All the churches in the Parish are decorated for festivals and special occasions. We thank the many volunteer flower arrangers and those who organise flower rotas for all their efforts to make our churches look so beautiful.

Drayton

Sally Dixon and Val Cross decorate the church for the festivals, Easter, Harvest and Christmas, they will also do a pedestal arrangement for St Peter's Day, our patronal festival, and for Remembrance Day. We do not do a pedestal arrangement on a regular basis but will

do an arrangement if requested by a member of the congregation in memory of a loved one.

Appleford

A small, but very dedicated and talented team keep the church decorated throughout the year. The Easter and Christmas arrangements were particularly beautiful. We are grateful to Richard Mathews who maintains the two tubs outside the church door with all year around blooms.

Milton

Whilst there is no flower arranging group at St Blaise, a variety of volunteers organised decoration of the church for Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Day, and Christmas.

Sutton Courtenay

The Flower arranging team, under the leadership of Ann White, have continued to provide a dedicated service, with most providing the flowers at their own expense despite their being funds available to compensate them. We are grateful to Richard Mathews who maintains the two tubs outside the church door with all year around blooms. The Easter Lilies continue to be very popular, and several people support their purchase to dedicate lilies in memory of loved ones who have died.

Steventon

Steventon church flower arrangers team provide flowers for church every Sunday and about twelve volunteers together decorate the church for the main festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas. The team joined families in providing floral decorations for weddings.

The highlight of 2023 was the flower festival called “Crowning Glory” held to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. There were 25 exhibitors and more than 400 people visited over the three days. This was a very successful way for villagers and for local voluntary organisation to collaborate in celebrating our king’s coronation.

Autumn 2023 saw the Flower Arrangers team launch a plan to support the Sustainable Church Flowers movement; in acknowledgement of the damage done to the environment by using floral foam (Oasis), this is no longer used. Also, to reduce the carbon footprint only local and seasonal flowers and foliage are used.

Schools

With the DAMASCUS Parish there are four primary schools of which the three in Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Steventon are Church of England schools. The clergy and lay people are actively involved in a variety of ways – as governors, taking assemblies, helping to deliver the RE curriculum, *Open the Book*, and as reading volunteers.

Drayton

Drayton Community School

Since the retirement of the Reverend Meg Heywood in autumn 2022, there has been very limited engagement with Drayton School.

Milton

Links with Milton School are strong. Reverend Phil Sutton is a Governor of St Blaise School and leads whole school and class-based assemblies every week. Church based school services are not possible due to the cost and hazard of transporting children across the A34 roundabout. Class visits to the church have taken place during the year. St Blaise church reached out to the school at Easter, providing a knitted chick with Easter egg for every child.

A substantive support programme for families struggling with food and fuel poverty has operated throughout 2023 providing, food, financial assistance through the Milton Welfare Trust & VOWH grants and working with Citizens Advice and Christians Against Poverty to improve family budgeting and quality of home life. The parish outreach is the only charitable organisation that operates within the boundaries of Milton Heights.

Sutton Courtenay

A small team has continued to take Open the Book assemblies to Sutton Courtenay Primary School. These are always well received and the Year 6's have enjoyed taking on roles too. Year 6 have also come to All Saints' for a variety of Experiences, including Holy week, Post Easter and Pentecost. The children have time to reflect and talk about the events surrounding the easter stories. Years 3 and 4 came to the Church for the Christmas Experience.

The school also come to All Saints' for end of term services at Easter, Summer leavers service and Christmas. Bryony Landsbert stepped down as a Foundation Governor during the year and the Reverend Helen Kendrick (Safeguarding Governor) and Rita Atkinson (Chair of Governors) continue in post.

Steventon

St Michael's church continues to resource a whole school act of worship each week with alternating Open the Book and contemporary faith stories. The school's two foundation governors play an active part in safeguarding, family support, staff well-being and developing a robust and open Christian ethos and values based for all aspects of school life and governance.

Fabric

In all five churches routine maintenance has taken place, including clearance of drains and gutters and servicing of boilers, fire extinguishers, lightning conductors, roof alarms, CCTV, clocks, and organs. No quinquennial inspections took place in the Parish during 2023. For each church other specific activity related to maintaining the building and churchyard is given in the following paragraphs.

Drayton

An extensive part of the south boundary wall was repaired in February due to the previous storm damage. Further work to the south boundary wall became evident in October 2023, repairs are in hand. Repair of the guttering which was also damaged in the storms is still outstanding. There is still some work to be done to the tower, which is outstanding from the Quinquennial report, but this is in hand.

Appleford

Mr Field continues to as paid contractor to mow the churchyard. Jacob Shepherd and William Finch coordinate voluntary work parties on Sunday mornings after Breakfast Church and these are attempting to bring the undergrowth under control. No major work was carried out in 2023 to the building. The electricity meter was updated – thanks to the persistence of Nicola Turner.

Milton

The church building and its interior are in good condition following the major projects in recent years, so no major work has been necessary in 2023. The five-year electrical inspection recommended some minor modifications which were undertaken during 2023. Further work has been clearing ivy from the churchyard walls. We would like to record our thanks to Paul Browning for the many tasks he has ably and enthusiastically carried out to maintain the church; to all those involved in cutting the churchyard grass and to the Churchyard Working Group that has done so much to keep the churchyard tidy.

Sutton Courtenay

Thanks go to Brian Blakeman, All Saints' clerk of works, for continuing to help maintain the fabric of the church and the River Room. Lightning protection was upgraded to include the River Room with new surge protection. The Inner Church porch doors were refurbished by a member of the congregation. Thanks to the wider bell ringing community for installing soundproofing on the bell chamber floor to reduce the sound level in the ringing room in the church tower. The brick pier to the south-west corner of churchyard was repaired which was work identified as required in last Quinquennial report.

An Energy audit took place during the year which has given ideas for further work which will begin in 2024.

Two churchyard working parties helped with clearing the drainage channels around the church, general tidying, and ivy removal as per 2022 tree survey recommendations. John Napper continues to offer faithful service as our Groundsman and keeps the churchyard beautifully.

Steventon

Repairs to leaking guttering, damaged perimeter wall and fences, door locks and hinges have been carried out. The church hall, church doors and all guttering and down pipes have all been repainted. The process of obtaining surveys and specifications for the repointing of the south wall and tower, internal redecoration and internal lime mortar repairs has commenced in readiness for fund raising and grant application activities in 2024/5.

Deanery Synod

During the year Rev Rob Glenny from Radley, Sunningwell and Kennington parish stepped up to the role of Area Dean, with Rev Nick Weldon of Marcham assuming the role of his deputy. Some four meetings were held, with DAMASCUS hosting a “prayer and party” meeting at St Blaise in May which was very well received. Other meetings were held in February, October, and November at Radley, and on Zoom.

Synod was thanked by the Diocese for meeting its parish share in full which prompted our 2.5% rebate. The mission grants and parish support funds became more established during the year, to provide a potential resource / buffer against unexpected hardship or need, to allow for a level of resilience in the finances of the Deanery as a whole. As ever Martin Steele, the Deanery Treasurer performed sterling work in managing the ongoing parish share discussions with the Diocese and with parish treasurers.

Discussions in meetings were otherwise primarily focussed on mission activities (and the Deanery Mission Action Plan), and there was a presentation from our new Associate Archdeacon, Jane Haslam, who grew up locally in Kingston Bagpuize.

Volunteers

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our five churches lively and vibrant communities. Particularly we thank welcomers, sidespeople, readers, intercessors, junior church leaders, refreshment providers and all those who assist with the financial processes, and all those who work behind the scenes who make for an efficient operation and ensuring we have well-presented buildings and churchyards.

Financial review

This financial review covers the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023. Income has exceeded £250,000 so we continue to prepare and present the accounts using the accruals method. Income and expenditure are therefore recognised as soon as entitlement is established, e.g., gift aid must be recognised when the income is received even though the actual claim may be received in the subsequent year.

Accruals accounts consist of a SOFA (Statement of Financial Activities), a balance sheet, a cash flow statement, and further explanatory notes. The SOFA is on page 20, the balance sheet is on page 21, the cash flow statement is on page 22 and the notes on pages 23-33.

Total unrestricted income during 2023 was £178,793, a small increase on the previous year's income of £176,052 primarily due to an increase in tax efficient planned giving and a minor increase in collections at services. Total income from fund raising activities during 2023 was similar to 2022, but this year more of the money raised was for restricted funds. Total income from interest was higher in 2023 due to the high interest rates, but most of this income is in restricted funds.

Total unrestricted expenditure decreased slightly from £166,343 to £158,175, this is mainly because the Parish share we paid was reduced as the basis of the return of statutory fees reverted to the system in 2021 and was via a monthly reduction in the Parish Share; in addition we received a further £5,000 reduction in the payment of the Parish Share in 2023 as recompense for the Rector taking the role of Acting Assistant Archdeacon during a vacancy; finally our underlying Parish share was reduced because we did not replace the house for duty post that was vacated in autumn 2022, however, the Rector's term as Area Dean ended so the allowance for this role ceased meaning the underlying Parish share was very similar to 2022. There was a substantial increase in the cost of church utilities from £9,132 in 2022 to £16,401 in 2023.

In 2023 there was a net gain in unrestricted funds of £22,833. Consequently, the unrestricted funds carried forward to 2024 are £77,387. The increase in unrestricted funds means we have a small cushion above the limit set by our reserves policy (see below). As we review our ministry staffing for the future, the modest gains in the unrestricted fund for two years despite increasing utility costs, will allow us to consider whether an increase in the ministry team might be sustainable.

Two designated funds were established in 2022 to handle short term grants for warm spaces projects, taking place during December 2022 to March 2023, one fund was entirely spent, the other mostly spent in the period but a balance of £3,677 remains and subject to agreement from the funder will be spent on further warm spaces projects.

The overall income to the restricted funds during 2023 was £74,794, a small decrease on the previous year's income of £78,794, there were fewer voluntary donations and associated gift aid to restricted funds as the River Room appeal has been completed, but income from interest has been substantially higher. The expenditure from the restricted funds was higher than in 2023 at £46,400 than in 2022 when it was £35,194. This increase in expenditure in

the unrestricted funds is mostly in church running costs because of several minor fabric repair projects across the five churches. Overall, there was an increase in the balance of the restricted funds of £29,187, though this is largely an increase in the balance of two of the restricted funds. All the church fabric funds have an adequate balance for day-to-day expenditure, but most would require fund raising if there are essential building repairs required.

The River Room has been financed from restricted funds and was completed in 2021 thanks to some loan finance. At the start of 2023 there was £19,000 of loan finance still to be repaid. This was all repaid during 2023, so all loans for this project have now been cleared.

Investment funds, which are all endowment funds, increased in value from £631,097 to £674,784. For most of these funds only interest or dividends may be spent.

In summary, we have had a successful year with modest increases in the overall balances of both the restricted and unrestricted funds despite increasing utility costs and high inflationary increases in other costs. All loans have been repaid. However, we must continue to pay close attention to the level of unrestricted funds, particularly the five church fabric funds if we are to keep the churches in good repair.

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets) which equates to at least two months unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £30,000. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. It is our policy to invest short term balances with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund and longer-term reserves in the CCLA Church of England Investment fund.

Structure, governance, and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. In the DAMASCUS Parish the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, other members of the clergy team, churchwardens, licensed lay ministers, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the parish. All those who are members of the congregations are encouraged to register on the electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC met eight times during the year - a mixture of remote zoom meeting and in-person meetings in the River Room. The Local Church Committees (LCC), with responsibility for considering local activity and provide local church feedback to the PCC and who act as a forum for the PCC to consult with the congregations of each of the five churches continued to meet in the alternative months to the PCC. Again, a mixture of in-person and zoom meetings. Each of the five LCCs provide a report to every PCC meeting. For each church Pro-Wardens, elected at the APCM, carry out roles ensuring the smooth running of their church and maintain order in the church and grounds.

A Standing Committee consisting of the incumbent, the churchwardens, the PCC Secretary, the PCC Treasurer and two other members of the PCC meet bi-monthly (in the months between PCC meetings) to transact business delegated to them by the PCC.

Administrative information

The Ministry team

Clergy

Parish Rector – The Reverend Helen Kendrick

Associate Priest (Half-Time Stipendiary) – The Reverend Phil Sutton

Associate Priest (SSM) - The Reverend Rosie Bruce

Retired PTO – The Reverend Canon Dr Phillip Tovey

PTO – The Reverend Geoff Morgan

Licensed Lay Ministers

Dr Tim Budd (PTO)

Mr Jack Jarvis (PTO)

Mrs Alex Landsbert (PTO)

Authorised Preacher

Mr Paul James

The DAMASCUS Parish is part of the Abingdon Deanery within the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Parish Office, All Saints Church, The Green, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4AE. The PCC is a body corporate

(PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission, with registered charity number 1175551.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2023 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members:

Incumbent: The Reverend Helen Kendrick (Chairman)

Associate Minister: The Reverend Phil Sutton

Associate Priest: The Reverend Rosie Bruce

Licensed Lay Minister: Mr Jack Jarvis

Licensed Lay Minister: Mrs Alex Landsbert

Churchwarden: Dr Hilary Otterburn

Mr Anton King representative in Deanery Synod

Mr Michael Murray representative in Deanery Synod

Mrs Sue Harris, Secretary

Mrs Sue Jenkins, Safeguarding Officer

Elected members:

Mrs Valerie Cross

Mrs Linda Johnson

Mrs Nicola Turner (Hon. Treasurer)

Dr Elaine Maxwell

Mrs Alison Budd

Professor David King

Mrs Caroline Miller

Mr Tony Sloggett

Local Church Committee members who have served at any time from 1 January 2023 until the date this report was approved are:

Appleford LCC: Elizabeth Duffield, William Finch, Sue Helby, Linda Payne, Iris Ramkissoo, Jacob Shepherd, Vicky Shepherd, and the Reverend Helen Kendrick. There are currently no pro-wardens in Appleford.

Drayton LCC: Valerie Cross (Pro-Warden), Gareth Davies, Sally Dixon, Sue Harris, Sue Icke, Linda Johnson (Pro-Warden), Anton King and the Reverend Helen Kendrick.

Milton LCC: Mike Blanch, Pat Capuzzimati, Elaine Maxwell (Pro-Warden), Janet Money, Janet Taylor, Nicola Turner (Pro-Warden) and the Reverend Helen Kendrick.

Sutton Courtenay: Brian Blakeman (Clerk of Works); Alison Budd (Pro-Warden), Sue Jenkins, David King, Alex Landsbert, Vivienne Maunders, Malcolm Ross; Phil Stubley, Mary Warrington, and the Reverend Helen Kendrick.

Steventon: Alan Binning (Pro-Warden), Diana Bowder, Doreen Goddard, Jack Jarvis, Andrew Loutit, Caroline Miller; Mike Murray; Hilary Otterburn (Pro-Warden), Terry Pearce; David Sandford, Tony Sloggett, and the Reverend Phil Sutton.

DAMASCUS PARISH
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PAROCHIAL
CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF DAMASCUS

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 20 to 33.

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').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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

Signed



Caroline Webster, FCA

UHY Ross Brooke
Suite I, Windrush Court, Abingdon Business Park, OX14 1SY

Date: 01/05/2024

DAMASCUS PARISH
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year to 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS							
Voluntary income	2a	137,013	-	23,224	-	160,237	178,461
Activities for generating funds	2b	15,868	-	19,952	-	35,820	35,659
Church activities	2c	18,291	-	5,705	-	23,996	19,218
Dividends, interest, income from property etc.	2d	2,251	-	25,713	-	27,964	17,301
Other incoming resources	2e	5,370	-	200	-	5,570	13,116
TOTAL INCOME		178,793	-	74,794	-	253,587	263,755
EXPENDITURE							
Church activities	3a	117,609	-	3,395	-	121,004	136,162
Church expenses	3b	39,335	1,964	40,497	-	81,796	58,048
Costs of generating income	3c	514	-	2,508	-	3,022	3,450
Major capital expenditure	3d	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other expenditure	3e	717	-	-	-	717	4,137
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		158,175	1,964	46,400	-	206,539	201,797
NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE BEFORE INVESTMENT GAINS		20,618	(1,964)	28,394	-	47,048	61,958
NET GAINS ON INVESTMENTS					43,687	43,687	(61,939)
NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE		20,618	(1,964)	28,394	43,687	90,735	19
TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS		2,215	(3,008)	793	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		22,833	(4,972)	29,187	43,687	90,735	19
Total funds brought forward		54,554	8,649	153,359	631,097	847,659	847,640
Total fund carried forward		77,387	3,677	182,546	674,784	938,394	847,659

DAMASCUS PARISH

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023 Total £	2022 Total £
	Notes		
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	6	-	203
Investments	7	674,784	631,097
		<u>674,784</u>	<u>631,300</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	8	13,271	11,511
Short-term deposits		170,402	99,018
Cash at bank and in hand		84,968	131,994
		<u>268,641</u>	<u>242,523</u>
LIABILITIES			
Creditors - amounts falling due in one year	9	5,031	10,164
NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)		<u>263,610</u>	<u>232,359</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		938,394	863,659
Creditors - amounts falling due after one year	10	-	16,000
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>938,394</u>	<u>847,659</u>
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted	11	81,064	63,204
Restricted	12	182,546	153,359
Endowment		674,784	631,097
		<u>938,394</u>	<u>847,659</u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 29 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

The Revd Helen Kendrick (Chair) H Kendrick

Nicola Turner (Treasurer) Nicola Turner

DAMASCUS PARISH
CASH FLOW STATEMENT AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net cash from operating activities	(3,606)	(11,885)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	27,964	17,301
Interest paid	-	-
Proceeds from sale of:		
Tangible fixed assets	-	-
Tangible fixed investments	-	-
Purchase of:		
Tangible fixed assets for the use of the PCC	-	-
Fixed asset investments	-	-
Cash flows from financing activities		
Loans (outstanding balances)	-	19,000
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	27,964	36,301
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	24,358	48,186
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	231,012	182,826
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December	<u>255,370</u>	<u>231,012</u>
Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) before investment gains		
Net income before investment gains 31 December	47,048	61,958
Adjustment for:		
Depreciation charges	203	203
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(27,964)	(17,301)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(1,760)	9,587
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	<u>(21,133)</u>	<u>(42,562)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(3,606)	(11,885)
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	84,968	131,994
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	<u>170,402</u>	<u>99,018</u>
	<u>255,370</u>	<u>231,012</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Parish is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared under The Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and with the Regulations "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 as the applicable accounting standard and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP (FRS102)). The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown as fair value.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis. There are no material uncertainties in respect of the charities ability to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

ASSETS

Consecrated and benefice property

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011. All expenditure incurred during the year on such property is written off as expenditure in the SOFA and separately disclosed

Moveable church furnishings

These are capitalised at cost and depreciated over their useful economic life (normally 20 years) other than when insufficient cost information is available. In this case the item is not capitalised, but all items are included in the Church's inventory in any case.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000. The Parish computer comes within this scope and has been depreciated over 5 years.

FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds

These represent the remaining income funds of the PCC available for spending on general purposes of the PCC. They include designated funds that have been set aside by the PCC for specific purposes.

Restricted Funds

These are income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and details of funds held and restrictions provided are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment Funds

These are restricted funds that must be retained as trust capital either permanently or subject to a discretionary power to spend capital as income.

INCOME

Collections and planned giving are recognised when received by or on behalf of the Parish. Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised. Grants and legacies to the church are accounted for as soon as the Parish is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due. Funds raised by fund-raising events are accounted for as gross. Sales of books and magazines are accounted for gross.

INVESTMENT INCOME

Interest on bank balances is accounted for on an accruals basis with interest recognised in the period to which the interest relates.

Dividend income is recognised on the date the share interest becomes ex-dividend or when the right to the dividend can be established.

EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal and constructive obligation and settlement is probable and quantifiable.

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

2 INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
2(a) Voluntary income						
All other giving and voluntary receipts, including Special Appeals (recurring and one-off)	7,512	-	9,644	-	17,156	31,185
Collections at services	15,706	-	870	-	16,576	16,410
Collections at services for charity	4,029	-	-	-	4,029	3,170
Gift Aid recovered	24,247	-	1,505	-	25,752	27,020
Grants (include recurring and one-off)	4,182	-	8,855	-	13,037	22,021
Other planned giving	2,216	-	-	-	2,216	1,880
Legacies received (capital value)	250	-	750	-	1,000	-
Tax efficient planned giving	78,871	-	1,600	-	80,471	76,775
	<u>137,013</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>23,224</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>160,237</u>	<u>178,461</u>
2(b) Activities for generating funds						
Gross income from fundraising activities	15,868	-	19,952	-	35,820	35,659
	<u>15,868</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,952</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35,820</u>	<u>35,659</u>
2(c) Church activities						
Additional wedding and funeral fees	1,416	-	-	-	1,416	1,968
Gross income from trading (e.g. hall lettings, magazine, bookstall). NOT fundraising.	6,256	-	5,705	-	11,961	8,235
Statutory fees retained by the PCC (weddings, funerals etc)	10,619	-	-	-	10,619	9,015
	<u>18,291</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,705</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>23,996</u>	<u>19,218</u>
2(d) Dividends, interest, income from property etc.						
Dividends, interest, income from property etc.	2,251	-	25,713	-	27,964	17,301
	<u>2,251</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,713</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,964</u>	<u>17,301</u>
2(e) Other incoming resources						
Other incoming resources	5,370	-	200	-	5,570	13,116
	<u>5,370</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,570</u>	<u>13,116</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>178,793</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>74,794</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>253,587</u>	<u>263,755</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
3(a) Church activities						
<i>Clergy and staff expenses</i>	3,319	-	-	-	3,319	4,313
<i>Diocesan parish share contribution</i>	96,292	-	-	-	96,292	115,117
<i>Mission giving and donations</i>	11,278	-	165	-	11,443	9,311
<i>Salaries, wages and honoraria</i>	6,720	-	3,230	-	9,950	7,421
	<u>117,609</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,395</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>121,004</u>	<u>136,162</u>
3(b) Church expenses						
<i>Mission and evangelism costs</i>	335	1,964	3,663	-	5,962	4,481
<i>Church running expenses</i>	19,642	-	31,886	-	51,528	36,963
<i>Church utility bills</i>	18,195	-	4,730	-	22,925	16,401
<i>Cost of trading</i>	-	-	218	-	218	-
<i>Independent examiner's costs</i>	960	-	-	-	960	-
<i>Depreciation on church equipment</i>	203	-	-	-	203	203
	<u>39,335</u>	<u>1,964</u>	<u>40,497</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,796</u>	<u>58,048</u>
3(c) Costs of generating income						
<i>Costs of fundraising activities</i>	514	-	2,508	-	3,022	3,450
	<u>514</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,508</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,022</u>	<u>3,450</u>
3(d) Major capital expenditure						
<i>Major repairs to the church building</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>New building work</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
3(e) Other expenditure						
<i>Other outgoing resources/ payments</i>	682	-	-	-	682	4,102
<i>Governance costs</i>	35	-	-	-	35	35
	<u>717</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>717</u>	<u>4,137</u>
	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	<u>158,175</u>	<u>1,964</u>	<u>46,400</u>	<u></u>	<u>206,539</u>	<u>201,797</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 STAFF COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Parish administrator	6,720	4,876
Cleaner	1,515	630
Groundsman	615	615
Gravedigger	-	-
Organist	1,100	1,150
Vergers	-	30
Bell ringers	-	120
	<u>9,950</u>	<u>7,421</u>

Note: All staff above are self-employed

Parish administrator	1	1
Cleaner	1	2
Groundsman	1	1
Gravedigger	-	-
Organist	5	4
Vergers	-	1
Bellringers	-	6

None of the Trustees received any remuneration or employee benefits during the year. The lay trustees, where applicable, who acted as agents to the PCC in making approved payments on its behalf, were reimbursed for these expenses on presentation of suitable documentary evidence.

Clergy working expenses were reimbursed in accordance with Church of England guidelines.

There were no related party transactions.

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

5 TRANSFER OF FUNDS

	Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total £
From Warm Spaces Grant (Designated Fund WARM) to General and restricted funds depending on the expenditure	2,215	(3,008)	793	0

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost of valuation		
At 1 January 2023	203	203
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31 December 2023	<u>203</u>	<u>203</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2023	-	-
Charge for the year	<u>203</u>	<u>203</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>203</u>	<u>203</u>
Net book value at 31 December 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net book value at 31 December 2022	<u>203</u>	<u>203</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

7 INVESTMENTS

	Market value at 31st December 2022 £	Additions £	Disposals £	Market value at 31st December 2023 £	Change in value Jan 1 to Dec 31 2023 £
Milton Milton - Church Lands CB3011996 (S) and CB3012096 (D)	563,949	-	-	601,309	37,360
Drayton Bradfield Trust CB3011545 (S)	9,695	-	-	10,607	912
Drayton Clerk's Piece CO3056670	854	-	-	933	79
Drayton Miss Emma Hyde for maintenance of church fabric CO3055160-001	2,381	-	-	2,600	219
Drayton Hyde's charity for psalmody CO3057211	818	-	-	893	75
Steventon CB3031650 - ENDOWMENT FUND	31,377	-	-	34,329	2,952
Steventon CB3031648 - N01 INVESTMENT FUND	22,012	-	-	24,101	2,090
DAMASCUS PCC CB3030966 *	11	-	-	12	1
	631,097	-	-	674,784	43,687

* This investment was purchased for £10.00 on 21 Aug 2018 by a parishioner for the Parish but was omitted from the investment list in 2018 to 2021 inclusive.

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

8 DEBTORS

	2023	2022
	£	£
HMRC Gift Aid	3,330	5,485
Statutory fees due	99	-
Collections to be banked	1,065	697
Fund raising to be banked	1,593	1,187
Parish share rebate	2,558	2,864
Grants from Oxford Diocese	-	1,070
Dividends, interest, income from property etc.	4,402	-
Miscellaneous debtors	224	208
TOTAL	<u>13,271</u>	<u>11,511</u>

9 CREDITORS falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accounts examination costs	960	-
Individual 1 loan	-	1,000
Individual 2 loan	-	1,000
Individual 3 loan	-	1,000
Mission and evangelism costs	732	1,212
Clergy expenses	-	192
Church running expenses	812	1,234
Mission giving	1,627	3,226
Parish Administrator	560	560
Organist	175	150
Cleaner	165	-
Miscellaneous creditors	-	590
TOTAL	<u>5,031</u>	<u>10,164</u>

10 CREDITORS falling due after one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Individual 1 loan	-	7,000
Individual 2 loan	-	7,000
Individual 3 loan	-	2,000
TOTAL	<u>-</u>	<u>16,000</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

11 UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	Carried forward £
General funds	54,554	178,793	158,175	2,215	77,387
Designated funds					
DAMASCUS Warm Spaces	8,034	-	1,349	(3,008)	3,677
Steventon Roots and Shoots	615	-	615	-	-
	<u>8,649</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,964</u>	<u>(3,008)</u>	<u>3,677</u>

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS IN 2022

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	Carried forward £
General funds	45,539	176,052	166,343	(694)	54,554
Designated funds					
DAMASCUS Warm Spaces	-	8,130	96	-	8,034
Steventon Roots and Shoots	-	779	164	-	615
	<u>-</u>	<u>8,909</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,649</u>

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

12 RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	Carried forward £
Drayton fabric	9,317	6,014	6,015	-	9,316
Drayton Carpenters legacy	1,269	45	-	-	1,314
Drayton Bells	3,244	358	-	-	3,602
Drayton Clerk's Piece	398	26	-	-	424
Drayton Hydes for Psalmody	665	25	-	-	690
Appleford fabric fund	10,498	4,308	1,027	-	13,779
Milton bells	13,224	1,302	65	-	14,461
Milton building	12,779	2,899	1,192	-	14,486
Milton Church Lands	54,084	21,632	5,723	85	70,078
* Sutton Courtenay Fabric	14,008	25,333	18,809	708	21,240
Sutton Courtenay Ringers	705	16	475	-	246
Sutton Courtenay Fun Day	8,732	4,573	5,143	-	8,162
** Steventon Fabric	6,880	7,144	7,003	-	7,021
Steventon Churchyard	14,871	516	600	-	14,787
Steventon Tower	2,685	603	348	-	2,940
	153,359	74,794	46,400	793	182,546

* During 2023 the Restricted Fund called Sutton Courtenay River Room was merged with Sutton Courtenay Fabric

** During 2023 the Restricted Fund called Steventon Church Repair was merged with Steventon Fabric

RESTRICTED FUNDS IN 2022

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	Carried forward £
Drayton fabric	11,364	3,521	5,628	60	9,317
Drayton Carpenters legacy	1,269	-	-	-	1,269
Drayton Bells	2,871	355	-	18	3,244
Drayton Clerk's Piece	373	25	-	-	398
Drayton Hydes for Psalmody	641	24	-	-	665
Appleford fabric fund	11,089	999	1,652	62	10,498
Milton bells	12,799	943	593	75	13,224
Milton building	10,199	2,968	455	67	12,779
Milton Church Lands	45,241	14,300	5,745	288	54,084
Sutton Courtenay Fabric	4,553	8,048	9,775	21	2,847
Sutton Courtenay River Room	(20,688)	34,660	2,811	-	11,161
Sutton Courtenay Ringers	357	345	-	3	705
Sutton Courtenay Fun Day	10,859	2,783	4,964	54	8,732
Steventon Fabric	695	9,563	3,333	-	6,925
Steventon Churchyard	14,641	230	-	-	14,871
Steventon Tower	2,847	30	238	46	2,685
Steventon Church Repair	(45)	-	-	-	(45)
	109,065	78,794	35,194	694	153,359

DAMASCUS PARISH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

SUMMARY OF ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	TOTAL 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Investment fixed assets	-	-	674,784	674,784
Current assets	84,384	184,257	-	268,641
Liabilities				
<i>Amounts falling due in one year</i>	(3,320)	(1,711)	-	(5,031)
<i>Amounts falling due after one year</i>	-	-	-	-
	<hr/> 81,064	<hr/> 182,546	<hr/> 674,784	<hr/> 938,394