

Vale and Cotswold Edge Benefice

St Peter and St Paul, Blockley

Annual Reports for 2023

Electoral Roll Report

There are currently 80 people on Blockley Church electoral roll, compared to 75 last year. This encouragingly reflects 9 more people joining since the last APCM, and taking off three people who have moved away, and sadly one - Kathri Lewis, a former deputy warden - who died last year. Being on the electoral roll entitles people to vote in the annual Church meetings, and to become office holders, such as members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC). The Church of England rules require us to renew the full roll from scratch every few years. The next of these will be next year: in 2025. Between times it is simply updated each year.

Anne Packer, Electoral Roll officer

Proceedings of the PCC for 2023

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) performed its duties, which include consulting together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish, promoting the whole mission of the Church in the parish: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical and maintaining its relationship with the Diocese. The following activities were of particular note over the last year:

safeguarding and appointment of a new Safeguarding Officer
the proposed Re-ordering Scheme and its funding

Revd Canon Charles Masheder, secretary

Treasurer's Report and Appointment of Independent Examiner

Enclosed as an attached document

Churchwardens' Report

One of the privileges of being Churchwardens is that members and others feel able to share their thoughts on the church and how it is doing. And happily, what we hear is a quiet yet clear positivity, with the sense that the parish church is valued across the broad range of worshipping members and also the wider community of parishioners. Which is a useful cross-check of what we ourselves sense - positive growth and development.

For example, the Electoral Roll, which is now 80, compared with 75 at the 2023 APCM. The church was literally filled at both the Christmas and Easter services, including lots of young people. And on that front, we now have Junior Church for school-age children every third Sunday of the month – adding to Open Door on the first Sunday. We filled the Jubilee Hall to capacity for the New Year Party (including 11 new friends from St Eadburgha's) so that no one was turned away; we shared both our home-made food and a sense of 'village life being back vibrantly after the pandemic'. The alpha course has been followed through into three ongoing home groups. We thrived during the winter migration to the Jubilee Hall and enjoyed its warm hospitality. But it is also very good to be back in the church itself this spring.

And on that score, we now have all of the planning and Diocesan permissions in place for our new heating and the rest of our major re-ordering project. We now need to generate the funds to enable it to happen, and work is in hand for applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and a range of grant making charitable trusts, together with valuable help from members and local supporters.

Finally, as last year, we reflect that none of this would happen, but for the time and energy which more people than we can list bring to the church community. Above all, we are indebted to the strong clergy

resource that we happily enjoy - now including Charles Masheder, who with <redacted> arrived in September, and was swiftly given the Bishop's Permission to Officiate.

But we are above all indebted to Dana, who looks after us, as we, all of us, with Adrian, help to look after Dana, while she works through <redacted>. There is a parable, somewhere in there.

Sarah Brazier and Anne Packer, Churchwardens

Safeguarding Annual Report

Following the PCC meeting in January 2024, I took over the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer from Carol Willott, who we thank very much for taking on the role for so many years. Liz Jones, administrator at Chipping Campden, will continue to be responsible for DBS checks.

While records are in very good order, some changes have recently been made to the training requirements for members of the PCC and Churchwardens, so officers are currently being asked to add to current training and refresh training were necessary. We use a website called Parish Dashboard, this gives the PCC a clear indication of the duties and requirements of their safeguard responsibilities. An Action Plan can be generated from the Dashboard for PCC meetings which allows the PCC to clearly see which duties are fulfilled and where areas may be lacking. We use the Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal for online safeguard training and training can also be completed in person for those who prefer face to face training.

Church Activity groups are being asked to check their safeguarding procedures and update risk assessments, training is being completed where required. The PCC is committed to the importance and necessity of good safeguarding procedures and training.

The Vicar felt it is important that people within the church who have safeguarding roles are supported and has, therefore, asked <redacted> to co-ordinate a Pastoral Support Group. The first of these was in mid-April and the group will meet around 3 times a year.

<redacted>, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Children and Youth Leader

Church Services:

1st Sunday of the month – TEN all age service St James Church – Amy

1st Sunday of the month – Open Door Blockley- Clara

3rd Sunday of the month -Family service St James -Amy

3rd Sunday of the month – Family service Willersey – Clara

4th Sunday of the month – Family service Mickleton – Amy. Now Junior Church in Blockley

1st Sunday – Muddy church lead by Kate Irvin

School work:

Bright Sparks after school club – Blockley Bright sparks lunch time club – Willersey

Bright Sparks after school club – Pebworth Bright Sparks Lunch time club – St James school

CCS Mentoring KS3 TLG mentoring KS2

Collective worship St James and Ebrington school, Mickleton and Honeybourne schools

Reading Honeybourne school – building on relationships within school

Church Visits – Mickleton, Willersey, Pebworth, Honeybourne, St James & Ebrington school and Blockley “Experience packs”

Supporting OpenThe Book team in Willersey – with the view to develop an OTB team across the VaCE as other schools have expressed an interest.

School-led Service within each church across the VaCE team.

Looking forward into the new term:

Prayer/mindfulness Spaces in school – Soul Space CCS

Family activities/ supporting event in our community.

Youth service/ socials

CU – ecumenical working within CCS. Student lead and support from church youth leaders.

Engage with church toddler groups to help build relationship with new families in the community.

Summer Holiday activity day.

Clara has continued to work 10hrs a week for the children and youth ministry. Clara has been focusing on building relationships with the schools across the Vale. Her work has been immeasurable, with

relationships between the school and church community growing from strength to strength. As a team we continue to grow and develop. We look forward to the development with our young people from across the VaCE and all that God has in store for the year.

Junior Church. Starting in February 2024, Junior church has been offered during the main 9:30 service at Blockley on the third Sunday of each month. It has had a very positive start.

Amy and Clara

Deanery Synod Report

The synod met three times in 2023. The work of the deanery synod has continued to inform best practice in our churches, and to consider the staffing of the deanery. The Deanery Plan includes aspirations for work with schools and families, the farming community and poverty.

Outward giving Report

The PCC has a policy of contributing annually to charities – generally 10 of these – which work locally, nationally or internationally. In 2023 the church contributed £250 to each, as for a number of previous years. The charities chosen were Cotswold Friends, Campden Home Nursing, North Cotswolds Foodbank, the Samaritans (Cheltenham Branch), the Children's Society, Christian Aid, the Air Ambulance (Great Western), Fare Share (South West), Gloucestershire Historic Churches' Trust and our linked diocese of Tamale in Ghana.

For 2024 the giving will increase from £250 to £300 and the chosen charities are

1. Buddy Bag Foundation
Making a difference to children in care
2. POP - Power of Parenting
Helping to create 'Life as it should be' for foster children
3. Replenished Life
Supporting those who have experienced abuse & trauma within faith
4. Home Start Cotswolds
Supporting parents with young children
5. Christians Against Poverty
UK churches tackling the causes of poverty in their local area
6. Médecins San Frontières
Worldwide emergency surgery response
7. Kidney Care
Ensuring no one faces kidney disease alone
8. Bag Books
Multi-sensory stories for people with learning disabilities
9. Campden Home Nursing
Providing support for serious illness, hospice care and bereavement
10. Diocese of Tamale, Ghana <redacted>

Sacristans

<redacted> was a very hard act to follow, but hopefully is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement from sacristan duties. Many thanks are due to <redacted> for all her hard work over the years. The current team of four sacristans is working well, thanks to my three colleagues <redacted>, <redacted> and <redacted>. They are unfailingly efficient, organised and flexible. Tasked with the sacristan rota (which has the potential to be challenging), I have been very grateful for their good humour, help and support.

The dual arrangement for Sunday services at the Jubilee Hall as well as the church has presented some challenges, not least the transporting of the Eucharist silver which raises potential safeguarding issues. However, all has gone smoothly to date.

Additional sacristans would be welcome, especially at times of the year when other commitments make the rota more difficult to fill. It is a worthwhile and enjoyable role. Once again, my thanks to <redacted>, <redacted> and <redacted> for all that they do.

<redacted>

Blockley Benefice Choir Report

An unusual year, but the warmth and comfort of Jubilee Hall for choir rehearsals and services during the worst of the winter months, has been appreciated by us all. A special thank you to the Churchwardens for all their help. Our return to church for Easter was a great joy! On Good Friday, we sang the cantata, "Olivet to Calvary" by J H Maunder. There were some extremely special moments for us all as, when Jesus tells us "a New Commandment give I unto you, to love one another". The three soloists, John, Bryan and Meriel were much appreciated and especially so John, who managed to be with us in spite of his family problems.

This year, we have sung at three funerals and one remembrance service – some services were for friends of members of the choir. Sadly, <redacted> <redacted> has now left us as she was finding it difficult to manage at home on her own and her sister <redacted> advises us that she is now happily settled in a Residential Home in Stow. It has been a great delight to welcome <redacted> and <redacted> in to the choir. As well as all the other contributions they make, they are both excellent choristers and their warmth and friendship is much appreciated. <redacted>, with a fine soprano voice from Ebrington church, is also welcomed as a part time member, wishing to keep her roots in her home church. Also <redacted> for coming in to help out on special occasions. In June we enjoyed a trip to Gloucester Cathedral to support <redacted> and <redacted> when they received their St. Kyneburgha award. So well deserved.

As a group, we never cease to be amazed at and appreciate, the Organist's musical skills and her willingness to help us all on an individual basis. Likewise, we so appreciate the mutual support and camaraderie we share with our fellow choristers in singing together. We now look forward to new musical challenges in the coming year.
<redacted>

Church Flowers

Our overall aim continues: To present beautiful, sustainable flower displays in Church. Our work in Church has been made so much easier this year by having a higher level of water pressure through the only tap available in the servery. The task of clearing up and washing vases is now much quicker. Sincere thanks to whoever organised this change. Last spring and summer we were again able to use local Blockley flowers thanks to the generosity of allotment growers and generous residents. We continue to use foraged local foliage throughout the year.

We were very lucky to have a large number of beautiful silk poppies donated by Liz Horn to use for Remembrance Sunday. These were added to our own collection of the same, and enabled us to produce a magnificent display. These will be used for many years to come.

When the congregation moved up to the Jubilee Hall for winter services the decision was taken not to have flowers because of the practical difficulties. However, during Advent we did make a re-usable advent ring with LED Advent colour candles. This can be used next year too.

With Christmas services back in Church we were able to forage for fresh foliage and were also donated a large amount of beautiful Christmas foliage by Jane Sked, our talented local freelance florist. We re-used the lovely growing collection of silk flowers we purchased last year. When we moved back into Church at Easter we were able to use fresh flowers again. The Easter Lilies were funded by generous donations from members of the congregation in remembrance of loved ones. The collection just covered the cost of the flowers.

We have noticed that the cost of flowers has risen considerably over the past year. We will have to be mindful of the expense and seek to use local Blockley flowers as often as possible. <redacted> continues to cultivate useful flowers on the small church allotment, and these are extremely useful. For special occasions we hope to be able to increasingly use local growers through 'Flowers from the Farm' co-operative.

<redacted> and I love doing the flowers in Church, and now that we are able to produce beautiful displays using natural method, we get tremendous joy from doing so.
<redacted>

Report on the Home Groups

Following our Alpha course, which finished in April last year, we were delighted that the majority of those who attended decided to sign up to join a home group. As a result, with around 25 people wanting to be involved, we needed to expand from one group to three. These three groups, led by <redacted>, <redacted> and myself, meet on alternate Monday evenings through most of the year, but with breaks during school holidays. The groups meet in the homes of various members according to who is around and has the space. Each group also has a second leader, which not only provides flexibility around holidays, etc., but also variety. The second leaders are <redacted>, <redacted> and <redacted>.

We started in this new configuration last summer by doing a series of Bible studies from the Gospel of John on the theme of 'Encounters with Jesus', using the very simple Discovery Bible Study method. In the autumn, we started using the Church of England's Pilgrim Course, beginning with a set of studies on the Creed and moving on this Spring to the second set of studies on the Lord's Prayer, which we have just finished. Throughout the year, we have all been encouraged by how stimulating our discussions have been, and by how each group has gelled into a mini-community of its own, where strong friendships have formed and people feel very comfortable sharing their thoughts and questions with one another.

Each group is made up of people at different stages on their faith journey. Some have been Christians for years, some are just starting out, and others are still very much at the uncommitted 'enquirer' stage. Many are regular attenders of one or more of our monthly services at Blockley Church, one or two attend other churches on Sundays, while some don't go to church at all. But everyone seems to get encouragement from attending the home groups and is hopefully, gently growing in faith. We are now looking forward to our next challenge, when – in response to demand - the three groups will come together again in the Little Village Hall for a ten-session course about the Bible as a whole.
<redacted>

Bell Ringers

2023 was a terrific year for Blockley Bell Tower. Three people who took up the challenge to ring for the King have mastered the skill and are able to take part in the Sunday morning team, making it possible for us to ring all 10 bells. The enthusiasm and commitment they have given to the tower has been a real contribution. We all enjoy ringing when it goes well, and the challenge to learn new methods means we never get bored!

In May we went on tour to Pershore Abbey, St Giles Church in Bredon and Tewkesbury Abbey. The experience in Pershore of venturing up to the "cage", high above and open to the nave is something we will never forget; some of us even deciding 'Never again!'

We are fortunate to have such fine set of 10 bells, and teams from other churches far and wide come to ring them. It is wonderful to hear a quarter peal rung well with perfect rhythm. It is something for us to aim for. Many thanks to <redacted>, our 'Steeple keeper' for maintaining the bells in good and safe order. Over the year he has learned the demands of such a responsibility, and his commitment has proved invaluable.

Anyone who'd like to have a go at ringing or just to see what we do is always welcome. Please come up to the tower on a Thursday evening. We are there from 7.30 to 9 o'clock.

<redacted>

Handbell Ringers

Our team of six ringers continues to practise with the bells owned by the church at least once a month, though we do try to make it twice; but so often, holidays and other activities get in the way! Nevertheless, we performed at the Church Carol Service in December and felt that our standard had improved since 2022. Although our plan to ring in the open at Church Gates when the garden was open to the public last summer didn't materialise (the weather wasn't kind on the Mondays we had available), we did play to Cakes and Company in March this year in the Little Village Hall, and that seemed to go down well. We're hoping that we can ring in the open sometime this summer.

We remain grateful to the church for allowing us to use the bells and the Church Room in which to practise, and as always, we would welcome one or two more people (who must be able to read music) to join our team to ensure that we always have a full complement of ringers.

<redacted>

Open the Book

"Open the Book" happens on Tuesday mornings at Blockley Primary School, with a team of storytellers who are members of the church community. We read and enact stories from the Bible, with enthusiastic input from the children, from Reception Class upwards.

"Open the Book" is a Bible Society initiative, and the Tuesday morning sessions are based on stories in a Children's Bible, specially produced by the Society. The latest version contains 90 stories, starting with Genesis and finishing with Revelation. The children are encouraged to take part: sometimes the whole school becomes an army, a sea or a queue of animals waiting to board Noah's Ark. At other times, a number of pupils have speaking parts. Costumes and props are provided. The school has a seemingly endless supply of talented and enthusiastic young actors, and the Tuesday morning sessions are great fun, not only for the children but also for the "Open the Book" team.

None of this could happen without the support of the school, and the team is very grateful to the Head Teacher, staff and pupils. There is currently a core storytelling team of five: <redacted> and myself. We are required to have mandatory safeguarding checks, and also to register with the Bible Society. New members would be welcome, but in general "Open the Book" seems to be thriving; my thanks to the team for all that they do.

<redacted>

The Voice Magazine

Last year was a time of change and innovation for the magazine. Following the relaunch in February 2023 made possible by crowd-funding, an editorial team was set up and <redacted> was appointed editor on a remunerated basis but decided subsequently to retire. Deputy editor <redacted> generously took over the editor's baton and steered us through the rest of the year to a very positive position. The editorial team decided that to ensure a stable future for the magazine a professional editor was required. Advertising in the Cotswold Times attracted three applicants and Emily Wood was the unanimous choice of the team. Emily has brought enthusiasm, expertise and commitment to her role.

Financing the magazine, like any small business, is a permanent preoccupation. Given our new cost structure, increasing the cover price to £2 was unavoidable. The price had remained at £1 for many years. We have substantially increased our advertising revenue. The digital edition which we launched in July 2023 is crucial to this. This edition is getting more than 400 views each month. The SumUp feature on the web site allows viewers to make a donation or order a subscription online. <redacted> skilfully enabled this.

Blockley Parish Council have been very helpful both in grant aiding our digital edition and offering their support to the magazine. Vale Press too have been hugely supportive. Ebrington has been added to our masthead and brought new subscribers and enthusiasm.

Our ambition is to be a community - based magazine reporting regularly and thoroughly on events in the villages but also offering thoughtful and stimulating reading by commissioning articles from the extraordinary wealth of writing talent in our area.

Changes to the editorial team have seen the retirement of <redacted> who was responsible for subscriptions and delivery for many years and <redacted>, one of the original crowd-funders and a contributor. <redacted> and <redacted> have joined the team bringing great talent and enthusiasm. I am grateful to all for their support. Additionally I would like to thank <redacted> who has acted as treasurer for The Voice bank account and who has been helpful and supportive during our transition.

Nigel Moor, Chair of The Voice Editorial Team

Cakes and Company

2023 started well with our first meeting in February. It was lovely to be able to welcome our members back for tea after Christmas. <redacted> organized a quiz on Father Brown.

Our March meeting was a very special event for us. One of our own members, <redacted>, entertained us on the piano where we all joined in singing the good old favourites loved by all. Sadly, we lost <redacted> at Christmas. It was an afternoon we shall remember with great fondness as <redacted> was the life and soul of the party.

At our meeting in May we celebrated the King's Coronation with a quintessential English tea. <redacted> made the official Coronation Quiche which was a big hit with our members. <redacted> put together a slide presentation looking back at past Coronation street parties and celebrations held in Blockley. In August we were able to hold our first Cake Sale since the Covid pandemic. Our team of ladies excelled themselves with a huge selection of cakes and savoury bakes. We raised just under £500 on the cake stall and £250 on the raffle. We opened the stall at 10.00 am and by 11.40 am we were sold out! The money from the sale will go towards a catered lunch for our members and helpers, either at Christmas or a Summer Lunch in 2024.

Cakes & Company celebrated their 21st birthday in September and we looked back at 75 years of the Blockley's Horticultural Society. A special cake was made by <redacted> and we toasted the occasion with a glass of prosecco. In December we held our Christmas Party, where we were delighted to present all our members with a Christmas cake and a chocolate Santa. We had a wonderful afternoon singing along to all the old Christmas favourites lead by <redacted> on the piano.

We'd like to thank everyone who graciously gave up their time to come and entertain us in 2023. We would also like to thank the PCC who very kindly covers the hire of the Little Village Hall for our meetings, which we greatly appreciate. The bank balance as at 26th December, 2023 stands at £1218.79 which provides a sound foundation for 2024.

<redacted> hugely appreciates the continued support she receives from the 'helpers' and thanks them very much for providing all the wonderful cakes etc. and for all their hard work. All the food provided for the afternoon tea is donated by these wonderful ladies.

<redacted>

Blockley Forum

The Forum is the monthly Wednesday daytime space where we discuss topical issues, after coffee, tea and biscuits. It's also where we meet the local people in positions of power – thanking them for the hard work they do for us, alongside holding them to account.

So the Forum is where we brought together candidates Sue Jepson and Clare Turner for a Cotswold District Council election hustings, after which (*As a result of which?*) the Blockley seat changed political hands. (And looking ahead, another Forum hustings is planned for the candidates at the forthcoming General Election.) In November, Clare stood in as Deputy Chair of Blockley Parish Council to present the annual *State of the Parish Address*, setting out what the council had been up to, and planned for the year ahead.

Dr Furn Davies, Senior Partner at Mann Cottage, talked a large gathering through changes in the NHS locally. James Slattery, Head of Careers at Chipping Campden School talked about its close support for youngsters finding the right next step – whether university, or into good quality work – to an audience including directly-interested Blockley parents. Other Forum sessions dealt with the Cotswold Veg Box venture; Cotswold Friends' varied support programmes; Gloucestershire CPRE's care for good standards in both the countryside and built environment; and how the National Trust run Snowhill Manor, with 130 volunteers. And much else. Many thanks above all to the Forum presenters, happy to take time and travel some distance to be with us; to the 'volunteers' who chair the sessions; to coffee makers. And to everyone who comes along and makes every session lively and enjoyable.

<redacted>

Church Reordering

The word "Reordering" has been hanging around Blockley church for years, and, like the elephant in the room, has brought excitement, consternation, concern and dread in various measures throughout the congregation. In spite of some "consultation" days, pouring over architects' plans and discussing what seemed theoretical options, nothing seemed to be happening. Not so.

In fact, a great deal of work has been going on behind the scenes in overcoming national and Diocesan bureaucracy. At last, all appropriate permissions have been obtained and the project can now begin to go ahead.

The full Reordering Project, which certainly isn't cheap or short, divides naturally into two separate projects. The first, currently well under way, is to secure the necessary funding to enable the work to go out to contract. The second, of course, is the physical reordering itself.

A vast amount of work has been done by a few volunteers to put us in a position where we can approach the various funding bodies to ask them to support us. With the help of two specialist consultants, we are now in a position to move forward rapidly. We have a timescale, with appropriate deadlines, for applying to the National Heritage Lottery Fund for a sizeable chunk of commitment and we anticipate an answer from that body by the autumn (you have no idea of the amount of detailed information that organisation demands!)

In parallel, we now have a (long) list of Charitable Trusts, each of whom supports aspects of what we want to do, such as heritage, inclusivity, disadvantaged people, increased usage, interpretation or increased numbers (whether faith-based or secular). As a result, each application has to be individually tailored to the Trust applied to – no small task.

We intend to have the first four applications made within the next few weeks and we then await responses (watch this space!). Meantime, subsequent applications will be prepared. The order of preparation is important as many Trustees meet only once or twice a year.

Finally, a plea: the work is being done, part time, by small group, each of whom has many other commitments, priorities and demands on their time. It would be wonderful if half a dozen of the congregation would be prepared to offer some of **their** time to help the team. Time is not on our side and it's important, if we really want our church to become warmer, brighter, safer and more welcoming we get our projects completed in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

<redacted>

Vicar's Report for 2023

January 2023 began with an excellent church party at the Jubilee Hall. We also started our first Alpha Course with a mixture of church community and new people who soon got stuck into difficult questions and wonderful puddings.

Open Door, our all age, intergenerational worship on the first Sunday of the month, went from strength to strength, as we shared leadership of words and music, and welcomed Clara as VaCE children and youth worker.

In February Open Door children, youth and adults wrote our prayers in chalk on the pavement outside church which caused some confusion. Through the year we also held pet services, prayer walks, nature hunts and laughed a lot. Our music is enhanced by <redacted>, <redacted> and the wonderful young people who play in the band.

On the theme of music, the choir continued to richly enhance our worship, and we have become established as a venue for chamber music (thanks to <redacted>) and for occasional concerts by local and international musicians.

The bell ringers attracted new people interested in ringing for the Jubilee, and a very wet group of people gathered on Coronation Day in June at Blockley Vicarage for cake, tea with delightful accompaniment from the bells.

In fact, the celebration of the music we enjoy was completed by Bishop Rachel admitting Ann and Jeremy Bourne to the Order of St Kyneburgha. They join Doreen Robinson and Tony Skellet as recipients of this award. We are thankful that Ann and Jeremy continue to sing with the choir.



The summer also saw the return of the BBC Father Brown filming crew and actors, to the delight of tourists.

Some of our friends left Blockley Church to move to other places, and others joined us following the Alpha Course. We miss them, and others who have died, especially Kathri Lewis.

When they come visiting it is wonderful – like seeing family again after a break. The <redacted> family came to the Pet Service in August, but weren't able to bring pets from <redacted>, so brought an original collection of soft toys.

Our parish BBQ was excellent, although it looked as though it threatened rain all afternoon. As a church community we offer hospitality in so many ways, and we are known for our welcome. Jesus would be proud. I wonder if, in the course of the year, we offer not quite 6 stone water jars of wine, but not far off!

In September, Blockley and Bourton on the Hill ran the church stand at the Moreton Show. It's a brilliant opportunity to show the local and wider community what we do, and why we do it. We plan to run another one this year. Thank you to <redacted>, <redacted> and <redacted> and all the erectors of the tent.

Blockley and Bourton on the Hill welcomed Ebrington into our southern group of churches in the Vale and Cotswold Edge. While making parish ministry more complex for me, there are many advantages in our joint working, and I can't wait to see new partnerships developing over the coming years.

We had full immersion baptisms, reaffirmations of baptismal vows, confirmations and a number of children admitted to Holy Communion. These services at the beginning of November were magical, sparkling with energy and faith, and many of us found them very encouraging.

After Remembrance Day we moved out of the church to the Jubilee Hall. It came with blessings (warmth) and opportunities but a lot of extra work for the choir and musicians, sacristans and welcomers. My thanks to you all for making the transition look so easy.

Then in December we moved back to church for the usual services with school, community and visitors. As usual, Blockley Church put on a splendid show, and we survived the cold. Our cleaners coped with the cobwebs and 6 weeks accumulation of dust. Thank you.

Thank you to my amazing wardens, <redacted> and <redacted>, and to the PCC for their vision and care. Thank you to <redacted> for being our careful and gentle treasurer, and to <redacted> for bodily taking on being PCC treasurer.

Thank you too the growing number of people involved in the pastoral care of our church. Joining Revd David Quin as licenced associate minister was Revd Canin Charles Masheder. <redacted> <redacted> began her training to be a licenced funeral minister.

And thank you to those who are stepping down from roles in the church at this APCM, including Rob Greenstock, Graham and Vera New, Jane Elliman, Derek Luff among others. Well done, good and faithful servants of the Lord (Matthew 25.23).

2024 brings new opportunities for parties and joy. We remain full of hope for the success of fundraising for our reordering project. And we look forward to all that God has in store for us. Don't forget that in our offering of hospitality we may be entertaining angel unawares (Hebrews 13)!

Vale and Cotswold Edge Team

St Peter and St Paul

Blockley with Aston Magna

Annual Accounts 2023

ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH, BLOCKLEY WITH ASTON MAGNA

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2023.

The accounts for 2023 are attached with the Independent Examiner's Report which, due to lack of time, had not been signed at the time this report was printed. However a fully signed copy of the accounts should be available at the APCM on 28th April, 2024. The accounts were approved by the PCC at its meeting on 5th March, 2024 subject to Independent Examination.

I would like to draw your attention to the following points:

- ❖ As is shown near the bottom of page two (left hand column) there was a surplus on General Funds. This was £8,909 before adjusting for transfers between funds and the gains reflecting the increase in the market value of the two CBF investments. For ease of reference I have highlighted this figure in green on the Receipts and Payments account. This compares with a deficit of £8,688 in 2022. There are a number of factors that have led to this improvement but three significant items were:
 - An increase in income from the BBC from £5,300 to £11,640.
 - Last year's figures included £6,166 for the replacement of the churchyard lighting.
 - No deficit on The Voice following its relaunch at the beginning of 2023. It is now self funding and the balance on The Voice bank account has been generated during 2023.
- ❖ Expenditure has continued on the reordering project and during the year, as mentioned in Note 2 to the accounts, this amounted to £80,935. I have highlighted this figure in yellow on the Receipts and Payments account. This expenditure was partially offset by a grant from the Listed Places of Worship scheme of £7,849 which I have highlighted in blue. This grant was a repayment of part of the VAT on the Reordering. A further claim will be submitted for expenditure incurred after the date of the claim.
- ❖ As a result of the net expenditure on the refurbishment project the designated fund for that work has reduced to £48,840. However there are also restricted funds for this project of £9,835 as shown in Note 3 to the accounts.
- ❖ Details of the funds held in bank and investment accounts are shown on page 3. At 31st December, 2023 these totalled £163,634.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Philip Gee

Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Report

To the members and trustees of the Parochial Church Council of Blockley with Aston Magna.

This report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.

Respective responsibilities of the trustees of the charity and the examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The trustees consider that an audit is not required under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

It is the examiner's responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- To state whether particular matters have come to the Examiner's attention.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. That examination includes a review of the accounting records and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - * to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, and
 - * to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Acthave not been met; or
- 2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed.....



Name John Wilkinson

Date.....

23/04/2024 .

Address Croft House
Station Road
Chipping Campden
GL55 6HY

ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH, BLOCKLEY WITH ASTON MAGNA
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Notes	Unrestricted		Restricted	2023	2022
	General Funds	Designated Funds		TOTAL	TOTAL
INCOME					
Giving					
Parish Giving Scheme	26,237			26,237	24,380
Other giving and donations	13,117			13,117	12,751
Tax recovered through Gift Aid	5,875			5,875	5,308
Church activities					
Father Brown income from BBC	11,640			11,640	5,300
Father Brown income from merchandise sales					2,989
The Voice - subscriptions & donations		5,197		5,197	2,379
- advertising		2,973		2,973	1,068
- funding for 2023					950
Legacy					500
Parochial Fees income	4,860			4,860	7,277
Concerts in church	600			600	746
Donations for use of church					120
Sundry income	4,801		378	5,179	249
Investment income					
Interest & investment income	855	601	618	2,074	1,431
Income from extraordinary activities					
Grant re VAT refund		7,849		7,849	16,100
Donations from the Brownes	430			430	450
Special collections			1,770	1,770	
Total incoming resources	68,415	16,620	2,766	87,801	81,998
EXPENDITURE					
Outward Giving					
Donations	(2,650)		(1,579)	(4,229)	(3,146)
Running expenses					
Parish Share	(33,375)			(33,375)	(33,375)
Minor repairs & routine maintenance	(4,298)			(4,298)	(4,403)
Replacement of churchyard lighting					(6,166)
Clergy expenses	(3,009)			(3,009)	(2,109)
Heating & lighting	(4,535)			(4,535)	(6,917)
The Voice costs		(4,592)	(950)	(5,542)	(5,307)
Father Brown costs	(600)			(600)	
Father Brown merchandise costs					(921)
Insurance	(2,686)			(2,686)	(2,505)
Altar supplies	(506)			(506)	(513)
Music costs	(180)			(180)	(306)
Administration costs	(1,255)			(1,255)	(753)
Flowers	(308)			(308)	(207)
Youth work costs	(1,817)			(1,817)	(1,817)
Sundry costs	(4,287)			(4,287)	(3,747)
	(59,506)	(4,592)	(2,529)	(66,627)	(72,192)
Extraordinary expenditure					
Reordering project		(80,935)		(80,935)	(84,731)
Total resources expended	(59,506)	(85,527)	(2,529)	(147,562)	(156,923)
(Deficit)/surplus before gains & losses					
Transfers between funds	8,909	(68,907)	237	(59,761)	(74,925)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before gains	(500)		500		
Gains/(Losses) on investment assets- unrealised	8,409	(68,907)	737	(59,761)	(74,925)
	2,825	1,984	2,039	6,848	(6,377)
Net movement in funds	11,234	(66,923)	2,776	(52,913)	(81,302)
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2023	49,344	119,341	47,862	216,547	297,849
Funds carried forward at 31 December 2023	£60,578	£52,418	£50,638	£163,634	£216,547

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ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH, BLOCKLEY WITH ASTON MAGNA
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
(CONTINUED)

2023	2022
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Total funds are represented by:

Lloyds Treasurers' account
Lloyds Instant Saver
Lloyds re Voice
CBF Investment Fund (accumulated income units) at Market Value.
CBF Investment Fund (income units) at Market Value.
United Trust Bank
Unbanked cash and cheques at 31st December

6,744	61,676
31,412	1,571
3,578	8,928
47,041	41,759
18,062	16,496
55,212	85,000
1,585	1,117
£163,634	£216,547

Accounts approved at a meeting of the Parochial Church Council on 5th March, 2024.


Sarah Brazier (Churchwarden)


Anne Packer (Churchwarden)


Philip Gee (Treasurer)

ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH, BLOCKLEY WITH ASTON MAGNA

Notes to the Receipts & Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2023

1. The accounts have been prepared on the Receipts & Payments basis and are in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.
2. The amount of £80,935 represents expenditure (mainly professional fees) relating to the ongoing major refurbishment scheme for the church.
3. After the financial activity during 2023, the detailed allocation of funds at 31st December, 2023 is:

Restricted Funds:

Chancel	32,265	
Robinson Organ	7,233	
Bells	879	
Reordering	9,835	
Charity collections (to be paid over in 2024)	<u>426</u>	50,638

Designated Funds:

Future refurbishment work	48,840	
The Voice	<u>3,578</u>	52,418

Unrestricted Funds

60,578

£163,634

Each year £500 is credited to the Organ Fund. This is a donation from Doreen Robinson in lieu of notional payments that she would receive for playing the organ in regular services.