



want<sup>+</sup>age parish

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE

# Annual Report & Accounts 2024

Cover Photo: Round Table in action at Holy Trinity Church

# Vicar's Foreword

They always say, if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans! We ended last year's foreword with the prediction that 2024 would be an exciting year in the Parish. In fact, of the many new developments we hoped to see flourishing in 2024, some have met with frustration, whilst others are only now beginning to bear fruit at the time of writing in Spring 2025. At the same time, there has been much to celebrate in the ongoing life of the parish, and much to give us hope for the future.



## People

The most significant development for us has been welcoming a new colleague in ministry. In April, we said goodbye to Fr Benji Tyler after nearly four years as curate in Wantage. Fr Benji accompanied our Parish in some of its most turbulent times, during Covid and the subsequent vacancy, and a whole coachload of Wantage folk made the trip to Chippenham to wish him well in his new post! In the Summer, we welcomed the Revd Dr Thomas Frances Caroe as our new curate, along with his wife Hannah. Combined with the retirement of Fr Robert Teare, this has meant our Parish has needed to adapt to having only one minister who is in priest's orders and able to celebrate the Eucharist, and we have been grateful for everyone's flexibility and understanding.





There have been several other goodbyes in 2024, but others who have stepped up into new or expanded ministries. In April, David Richardson handed over the Churchwarden's stave to Janet Kingdon, as he began training as an authorised lay preacher. He preached for the first time in this role in October 2024 and is now fully authorised by the Diocese and taking a regular preaching slot on the rota. In September, we sent Parish Assistant Rosi Bartlett on her way with our blessings, as she took up a role as a university chaplaincy assistant in London. She is now part way through the formal process of selection for ordained ministry. Meanwhile James Clarke has stayed on in a new expanded role as Parish Assistant for Children and Families, finally

beginning to fulfil an aspiration we have held in this Parish for several years. This means we now have four regular voices preaching in the Parish, alongside the generous support of The Revd Mary Harwood and Fr Nicholas Cheeseman.

Our loss was Chippenham's gain for the second time towards the end of the year, when Assistant Churchwarden Ian Stone and caretaker Lucy Stone moved away from the area. Their presence is much missed at Holy Trinity and across the Parish. This also leaves Holy Trinity significantly underrepresented at PCC. This is a shame, as Holy Trinity is increasingly central to our mission and outreach.



Around Table is going from strength to strength, celebrating its first anniversary in February 2024 and being awarded four stars for food hygiene. A substantial grant at the start of the year enabled new built-in storage at Holy Trinity to help ease some of the challenges of sharing the space. The far-sighted reordering project from 2017-18 to create a shared community space has borne fruit to an extent not envisaged at the time – but we can't ignore the real challenges that has posed for the worshipping community. The Churchwardens and I are grateful to everyone for their co-operation as we continue to manage how we make this work for everyone.



There have also been goodbyes of a more solemn kind. In 2024 we gathered for the funerals of Betty Collins, Win Colman and Helene Lister Cheese, as well as the interment of ashes for Michael Paterson who died in Scotland. We also formally brought to a close the Parish's longstanding link with Greenfields School in Thokoza, Johannesburg, as we could no longer guarantee the security of funds being transferred to South Africa. We are exploring alternative parish links. Many thanks are due to Judy Tren for all she has done and continues to do in her personal capacity to support the school.

## Projects

The new pattern of Saturday afternoon services, which was trialled between Easter and Advent, did not attract new worshippers from outside our existing community. So, it is back to the drawing board for that! There has also been disappointing take-up for the Personal Discipleship Plan, which was launched towards the end of 2023. We will see whether a relaunch in January 2025 increases the demand on our wonderful PDP Encouragers! Other frustrations have come from an ultimately fruitless Deanery and Diocesan bid to fund a team of children's and youth workers; the reduced scale of AlfredFest as well as of the ecumenical Palm Sunday celebrations; and limited progress on the proposed Parish Church refurbishment project. We're glad to say there are already good signs that 2025 will be a better year for some of these activities.

But the year has also had some notable highlights. After Easter, we welcomed +Steven, the Bishop of Oxford, to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. This was a significant moment in the life of our Parish, as Wantage had not welcomed the Diocesan bishop in many years. Bishop Steven was clearly conscious of the importance



of this moment, which set a seal on what our Parish began in inviting our first female Vicar. The day was made extra special by the confirmation candidates, including a last-minute entry from our brother Andrew Haines, as well as 93-year-old Vernon showing it is never too late to turn to Christ.

In Summer, the Parish Church showcased the remarkable creative talents in our congregation in visual arts. This was the first of what we hope will be a regular programme of exhibitions, co-ordinated by our newly appointed volunteer arts co-ordinator Bahar Murphy.



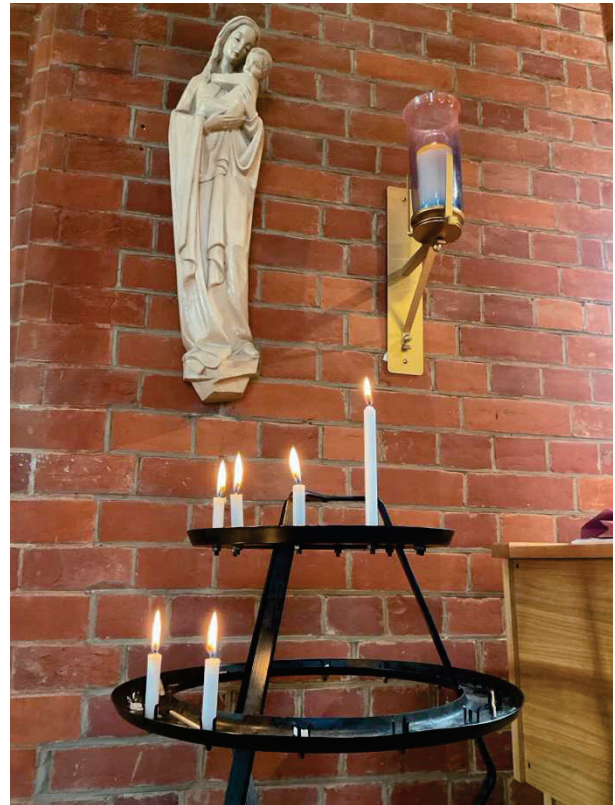
Our churches have also continued to be present for the community in times of both joy and sorrow, hosting the first Mayor's Big Thank You in April, and opening the doors to well over five hundred mourners after the tragic death of a young local footballer. So much of what we do is not measured in 'initiatives' of the type that show up in mission statistics or feature in grant applications, and much may not even be visible to the Sunday morning congregations, but rather it lies in responding to the opportunities God places in our way.

# Prediction Prayer

Last year, we ended this foreword with a look ahead to the coming year. But at the beginning of 2025, we are already living in a much more unsettled and unpredictable world. Yet within the parish, we are also seeing God at work in some remarkable ways we would not have foreseen a year ago.

We commend this Annual Report to your attention, with many thanks to all who have contributed to it, and most of all we ask you to keep all of them and everything we do in this Parish in your prayers throughout the year to come.

Katherine



# Trustees' Report

We, the Parochial Church Council of Wantage ("the PCC"), are pleased to present our annual report for 2024. The report reviews the life of the Parish of Wantage and our two churches: the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, and Holy Trinity Church in Charlton. It is a public account of Parish activities during 2024. The report is followed by the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024.



The PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission (registered number 1181640). Our full registered name is the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Peter & St Paul Wantage. PCC members are trustees, responsible for Parish affairs under charity law.

Our Parish is a member of the Wantage Deanery, in the Diocese of Oxford. As part of the wider Church of England, the Parish benefits from the work that goes into training and supporting clergy, as well as from the wider support and guidance of the Diocese.



# Growing, Praying & Flourishing as a Church community

We have been blessed to see a slow but steady growth in our congregation this year in all age groups. Four people were confirmed by the Bishop of Oxford, ranging in age from teens to 90s!

In 2024, following on from the Welcome Sunday, we went to the next stage by:

- holding a "Freshers Fair" type event where new members especially could find out about the various groups and activities and identify areas where they feel they might be able to contribute.
- helping new members of the congregation grow their sense of belonging and finding their niche, be that in reading at a service, helping with coffee, or one of the other areas that will help them feel part of the church family.

Whether people are new or not quite so new(!), there are plenty of social events that folk can join in and share fun, food and friendship. There has been a full social and community programme during the year, highlights including Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party, Patronal Festival (with art exhibition), film nights at Holy Trinity, Dickensian Evening, Harvest lunch and the Wantage Wassail, as well as the regular after-church refreshments, T Bar, Parish Breakfast, and the Around Table hospitality ministry.

It is encouraging to welcome newcomers to church week by week, and to see people taking up opportunities to explore and develop in their faith journey. Bible



Reading Book Club and Old Testament study group continued through 2024. Building on last year's progress, the Praying, Growing Flourishing Planning and Delivery Group informed or facilitated various new initiatives, mostly lay-led, with prayer as a particular focus. This has gone on to bear fruit in a number of new groups and initiatives in the start of 2025. Take-up of the Personal Discipleship Plan was muted during 2024 but has been relaunched at the start of 2025.



A group met weekly online in Advent using the 'Pray as you Go' retreat materials, following which we relaunched the online Julian prayer group monthly. A small group again appreciated an Advent quiet morning in church, streamed live online by a Church Times team. We also collated and circulated information about resources to support prayer and discipleship, particularly for Advent and Lent, which people have found useful, and we continue to provide free topical Bible-based resources for visitors to pick up in both churches.

Plans progress for a Parish Pilgrimage to Northern England in 2025, with good uptake.

The Parish Church is open every day, where our church watchers play an important role in guiding tourists and directing visitors with pastoral needs.

Pastoral visiting continues. In particular, we have forged close connections with the care homes in Wantage, where we now hold monthly services, predominantly of Holy Communion, in all but one (with conversations to establish a service progressing in this last). These are led by Frances, James, and Laurence. At Christmas, volunteers from the choir supported a Service of Lessons and Carols in each of the homes, which was very warmly welcomed, and which drew many who do not habitually attend worship.



**Next steps:** The start of 2025 has already seen the launch of a new home group, a book group and prayer initiatives, as well as a Bible study group for the secondary school age group. Next steps include producing welcome resources.

# Worship

By the beginning of 2024, the average attendance at the 10.30am Sunday Eucharist at the Parish Church had increased to over 90 and this level was sustained through the year. The number of worshippers at the 9.15am Sunday Eucharist

at Holy Trinity has remained at around 25. In contrast, the number attending the early 8am Eucharist at the Parish Church fell and by the end of the year was typically around 10. The weekday Eucharists continue to attract between 3 and 15 worshippers. Our choral evening services remain popular, with increased congregations over the year, with well over 300 at the Christmas carol service.

The Christmas Crib Service aimed at families with young children also drew over 300 people, a noticeable increase over the previous year. The main Eucharist services on Easter Day and at Christmas were well attended, with 225 worshippers across both churches at Easter and 190 at Christmas (similar numbers to 2023).

We experimented with two new service offerings on a Saturday afternoon following extensive consultation within the parish. After a trial period of several months, it has become clear that this is not fulfilling the identified needs. We are looking at other options moving forward.



We decided to drop livestreaming at the start of 2024. This had become excessively burdensome on the small number of volunteers involved, and faced repeated technical challenges. In spite of theoretical enthusiasm from care homes for screening the services to their residents, practical barriers meant this was not taken up in practice, and we have agreed that our ministry to those unable to attend in person is better served by providing home communion. However, an online offering has continued in the form of an online prayer group.



In 2024, we had 16 baptisms, 4 confirmations, 5 marriages (or prayer services following a civil marriage), and 20 funerals in our churches .



The minor changes in serving procedure at the 10.30 service are bedding in well, we have a good number of servers (adults and children) and are always recruiting more. We are trialling some new hypoallergenic fairtrade incense in response to feedback. We continue to respond to feedback on how we pick hymns in the Parish Church and Holy Trinity.

# Outreach & Service to our Town

Around Table celebrated its first anniversary in February 2024 and continues to be one of our major areas of outreach. It is perhaps not surprising that this initiative continues to grow but it is doubtful that we could have imagined the impact that it has had on so many lives within our community. Each week around 130 people access Around Table with the majority enjoying the companionship of eating together in Holy Trinity. A few people request their meal as a takeaway and our stalwart drivers deliver 25-30 meals to people at



home. None of this would be possible without the commitment of our team of 25 volunteers, many drawn from our own church but also an increasing number of others coming from other churches and the community. The kitchen team is ably led by James Hart, who is the mastermind behind sourcing all the food

from the hubs, planning the menu, and then cooking up the weekly feast: a 3-course meal with various options for children and those with special dietary needs. He has hardly had a week off in two years. The hard work and professionalism of the Around Table team have been recognised both in our 4\* hygiene rating and in the substantial grants we have received from the local council and others.

Around Table continues to be free to all, without question. Although we source as much as possible from local food hubs which distribute surplus food from supermarkets and elsewhere, this has become an increasing challenge, and we rely on grants and individual donations to keep going.

The Around Table Steering Group has worked hard through 2024 to make Around Table sustainable and compliant, as well as to ensure Holy Trinity remains suitable for worship and other users, including through upgrades to the kitchen and storage areas.

We continue to take sustainability seriously, and for Harvest Festival, invited the Revd Mark Newman, a local farmer and Farming Community Network representative, to preach at Evensong. A reception was arranged beforehand, taking up Mark's challenge to use only food grown and produced within 30 miles of Wantage.

Our churches remain central to the local community and to celebrations of the town's common life. AlfredFest was held again this year, albeit in slightly reduced circumstances, during which Mass in the Market again demonstrated our commitment to a public faith. National commemorations were held at the war memorial in the churchyard, including for the Battle of Britain and Remembrance



Sunday. The latter this year drew together many more people than in previous years, it seems, perhaps as a response to fears about conflict in Europe. It is good that we are able to provide a Christian witness to hope in worrying times.

Holy Trinity is well used by local community groups, which helps to generate revenue at the same time as demonstrating our openness to the community. Thanks to our new art advisor, there was a successful art exhibition alongside our Patronal festival last year, with plans in place for a multimedia art exhibition on the Cross in 2025.



We also continue to support local ecumenical projects such as Street Pastors and the Food Bank.

Dickensian Evening fell on a particularly wet and windy evening, and as well as providing the usual array of stalls, the church became a refuge providing warmth and a dry space. As part of the evening, the Lady Chapel was transformed



into a BeSpace prayer area, and the High Altar housed the traditional crib and opportunity to light candles; between them, these two offerings gave many a prayerful space of quiet in the midst of a busy Christmas season.

# Giving

At the heart of the Christian faith is the generosity of God who entered the world to save humankind for a relationship with himself. How do we respond in faith, hope and love towards the church and towards those in need in the world around us?

We are called to put our gifts at God's service, and that includes our financial resources, although we have often been reluctant to talk about this. The Church of England encourages church members to give 5% of their income to the Church and 5% to other charitable causes. There were just over 90 regular givers during 2024. Regular giving by church members was almost £78,000 (before the recovery of Gift Aid from the government), compared with just under £70,000 in 2023.

To give to the Church, we promote the use of the cost-effective Parish Giving Scheme to collect regular contributions, in place of previous giving methods. We recognize the declining use of cash in our society and a contactless "tap-and-pay" device for donations is now used regularly as a means of giving.

We supported a number of charities in the year and our Christmas Appeal raised a wonderful total of £2,772 which was divided between the local charity BeSpace, Sobell House Hospice and the British Red Cross Gaza Appeal.

We are most grateful for the practical and financial support of church members and the many volunteers who give their time and support to the Parish. The activities described throughout this report are made possible only by the generosity of church members.

# Deanery Synod

Deanery Synod is a great opportunity to hear about, support and engage with what is going on across the Deanery, to learn from each other, as well as to help shape what we might best do together rather than separately, and then to support engagement as appropriate from our own parish. The Personal Discipleship Plan was a case in point: we heard about it at Deanery Synod. Our parish wanted to engage, so we held the initial Deanery training for Encouragers in our church (and pleasingly had very high uptake from Wantage/Charlton as well as a few from other parishes in the Deanery).

Synod includes all the Deanery clergy and elected lay representatives from each benefice.

Following a presentation from the diocese in November 2023 the deanery was encouraged to develop a bid (to a national church fund via the diocese) for employment of children and families workers for the deanery.

Much work went into this before the diocese unexpectedly rejected it in October 2024. There has also been disappointing lack of progress on a school chaplaincy project, again partly due to difficulty accessing funds. We have, however, received some helpful feedback, and we are currently thinking about how we might nevertheless work closely as a deanery on work with children and families.

Area Dean John Durant was due to step down in April 2025, but has agreed to stay on to the end of 2025, when our vicar is expected to be taking over as Area Dean. She is supporting him in the role of Associate Area Dean in the meantime.

# Children, Schools and Families

We have a vision for an intergenerational community in which children are a full and equal part of our worshipping life. We are delighted that we have been able to appoint James Clark to an expanded role as Parish Assistant for Children and Families and he has taken the lead on developing this area of our mission both with children in our worshipping community and through outreach to schools and families.



**Trinity Tots** continues to provide an affordable, friendly and supportive toddler group at Holy Trinity. We aim to keep the cost per family as low as possible with only a small increase from 2023. Attracting new families almost weekly, we have in the region of 30 pre-school children registered, with the majority returning week after week. Each session offers play, crafts, singing, snack-time and story-time, always with a Christian theme. Tots is facilitated by a small and dedicated team of volunteers whose presence is deeply appreciated. James is increasingly growing the Christian content and volunteers are becoming more confident in leading the sessions.



**Storytime Service** was enjoyed by the few families that attended. However, it wasn't as popular as we had hoped. More thought is being put into what we do next to nurture the existing congregation's spirituality and in attracting and welcoming new families.

Two successful **Messy Church** events took place in 2024, one at the Parish Church and one at Holy Trinity, attracting about 30 families to one or both events.

We have seen continued and improved relationships with local schools. We have welcomed students from almost every primary school year to our churches for events such as Christingle, Passion Plays, concerts and Prayer Spaces.

The Vicar and Assistant Curate maintain a presence at Wantage Church of England Primary



School leading collective worship. Our **Open the Book** team continues to act out stories from the Bible every Friday morning during term time. At the end of the school year, a Prayer Space morning in the Parish Church helped to prepare year 6 students for moving on to secondary school, and school services provide bookends to the school year.

Other local schools have also been welcomed to our churches for educational trips and Christmas concerts. James Clarke has evolved the relationship with Stockham Primary School and plans to take Prayer Spaces into the school. It's particularly exciting that we now have a way in to King Alfred's College as volunteers have been invited in to facilitate a reflection space for students in Years 7 and 8 at King Alfred's West Site, working with other churches in the deanery to offer pastoral support for students.

**Christingle** at Holy Trinity and the **Crib Service** at the Parish Church were both well received. Scheduling around how festivals fall in relation to the weekend and the school holidays remains a challenge which we learn more from each year!



The children's area in the Parish Church has been expanded to meet increased demand, and James continues to work on ways to engage children of all ages with our shared worship. He has been developing resources related to the readings on Sunday, which are suitable for use by older children both in the choir and children's corner.

An exciting development across the Church of England is the increase in teenagers choosing to come to church which we have seen within our own Parish Community, and this will be something to build on. James responded to a request from the young people by putting on the new Teens' Bible Group every Monday after school hours during term time.

# Safeguarding

2024 was a difficult year for Safeguarding in the Church of England, with the publication in November of the Makin Review into church safeguarding failures and the subsequent resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby. At the same time, our own Diocese of Oxford received a very positive report from an independent audit of safeguarding functions, and we continue to be grateful for the support of Erica Hegg and others at the Diocese. Matt Godfrey, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, and the Vicar were able to respond to the Makin Report with a very timely Safeguarding Sunday presentation which was well received.

We acknowledge that we have a duty of care towards the vulnerable in our church community. We have maintained our commitment to compliance with the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, as set out in the Church of England Parish Safeguarding Handbook.

We had been asked to consider how Volunteer Agreements might be implemented in the parish. They are an important part of Safer Recruiting, which, in turn, is a component of Safeguarding. Currently implemented for Around Table, a consistent approach is proposed for Trinity Tots. When this has been implemented, the approach can be adopted more widely across Parish activities.

Matt Godfrey continued to play a key role as our Parish Safeguarding Officer through 2024, with Klara Ignell due to take up the post in 2025. Recruiting a new PSO to take over the role with no gap was an important priority.

Key activities in the year have included:

- Keeping our Parish safeguarding policy under review
- Displaying safeguarding posters in both our churches
- Ensuring that all necessary DBS checks are carried out for people in relevant positions within our church community – 14 DBS checks completed
- Ensuring that safeguarding training is completed by people in relevant roles, in line with diocesan requirements – 30 training courses completed
- Liaison, when necessary, with the diocesan safeguarding team and statutory bodies

- Working towards a more rigorous 'safer recruitment' process for all appointments to relevant positions, both paid and voluntary. Around Table became the first volunteer team to receive role descriptions, helping to ensure that volunteers know their responsibilities and how to access advice and support when needed
- Maintaining data for the Diocese's Parish Dashboards scheme to monitor our safeguarding status and produce an Action Plan

## The Bell Ringers

Our bellringers had another busy year in 2024. On Sunday, 14 April they rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles prior to the Confirmation Service presided over by the Bishop of Oxford, and in celebration of the life of Beryl Stoter, the mother of a longstanding ringer.



On Sunday, 30 June a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung to welcome our new curate, Frances Caroe, and on Tuesday, 16 July a quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples in memory of a member of the local Mind Group.

On Remembrance Sunday the bells were rung half muffled for the morning service prior to the parade.

Over the Christmas period, in addition to normal Sunday services, the bellringers rang for the Advent Carol service, Carols by Candlelight, the Crib Service, Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and the Christmas Day service.

On 31 December the Old Year was rung out and the New Year in on all eight bells thanks to a ringer from Steventon who joined us. The team rang diminishing rounds with the tenor tolling 12 times prior to ringing rounds at midnight and on 5 January they rang for the Epiphany Carol Service.

During the past year the bells have been rung for five weddings, one memorial service and seven funerals. For five funerals the 6th bell was tolled and for two funerals a band of six rang with bells half muffled. The bellringers have shown creativity and generosity in responding to unusual pastoral circumstances including the funerals of a young man and a baby.

Recently, two trainee ringers have joined the team. Anyone interested in learning to ring or finding out what that involves, is encouraged to contact Jenny Bennett, the newly appointed Tower Captain and Secretary.

## The Choir

Our Parish Choir maintains the Anglican choral tradition and is held to be among the best in the Diocese. There are currently 35 full-time adult members, a handful of occasional singers, and 13 trebles (junior members up to the age of 14). As well as singing on Sunday mornings, there are monthly choral evensong services, choral services on major festivals, and carol services for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.



Previous success with the Junior Choir (trebles) has been maintained, and numbers have increased slightly to a total of 13. As two of our older trebles outgrow the Junior Choir, they will be the starting point for a Young People's Choir which we plan to start developing later in 2025. The regular singing outreach visits to the Wantage

CE Primary school have continued, and our Assistant Director of Music has established an additional link with Charlton Primary school, which we plan to expand on over the coming year. Special thanks go to all of those who have helped with recruitment and supervision of our trebles and our outreach into schools. The work we do with children would not be possible without the volunteers who provide this support every single week.



Choir members funded a choir tour to Lancashire in the summer of 2024. They stayed at the world-renowned Stonyhurst College, where our organists and organ scholars had access to no fewer than five pipe organs! The tour included the chance to sing Evensong in Liverpool Cathedral, where the choir was given an extensive tour of the building and all of our organists, organ scholars, and organ enthusiasts were then treated to the opportunity to play the largest organ in the UK. The choir also sang a well-received concert at Broughton Parish Church and finished the tour with a weekend of services at Blackburn Cathedral (live-streamed worldwide). Choir tours, as well as being great fun, are a great opportunity to expand repertoire, reinforce a sense of purpose, and develop friendships through a shared love of music and the Christian faith.

Members of the choir are parishioners first and foremost, fully involved in the broader life and mission of the church. The choir plays a role in supporting worship, attracting new members to the congregation, and offers concerts and

fundraising events each year. This year, our supremely talented Sheenagh Dernie wrote a second pantomime for us – Dick Whittington, of Wantage fame – performed during the early part of 2025. This was a hugely successful and rewarding event, bringing together both members of the choir and members of the congregation to produce something special and to raise money to support the musical life of the church. This event, alongside the Wassail and others over the course of the year, raised a significant sum of money for the Wantage Parish Music Guild (WPMG).



WPMG is a separate charity set up to raise money to support music-making in the Parish. The WPMG supports the salary of our Assistant Director of Music, Barbara Kennedy, which in turn allows us to expand our musical outreach with children and young people. The WPMG (generously supported by the Community of St Mary the Virgin) also supports the musical education of our trebles (including introductory piano, organ and singing lessons), our organ and choral scholarships, and grants towards the cost of choir tours so that all choir members have an equal opportunity to participate.

The spiritual and musical education of children and young people through the choir is very important and would not be possible without support from WPMG, the Community of St Mary the Virgin, and many volunteers.

# Buildings and Infrastructure

We are fortunate to have two beautiful church buildings. The Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul, just off the Market Place in the centre of Wantage, dates from the medieval period and has a grade I listing because of its historical significance. Holy Trinity Church in the Charlton area of the town dates from the early 20th century.



Both churches are inspected every five years by our quinquennial architect, Christian Randall, a specialist conservation architect accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architects. The last inspection was carried out in September 2020. Points raised in the inspections, which were significant from a safety point of view or in terms of keeping the buildings weathertight, have been addressed, as have several more minor points. The next quinquennial inspection will take place in the latter part of 2025.

During 2024, a number of repairs were carried out at the Parish Church, most significantly:

- repair of an area of the south transept ceiling following a plaster fall;
- replacement of rotted timbers in the base of the south transept entrance lobby; and
- replacement of the roof flashings and some repointing in the north aisle to eliminate damp problems.

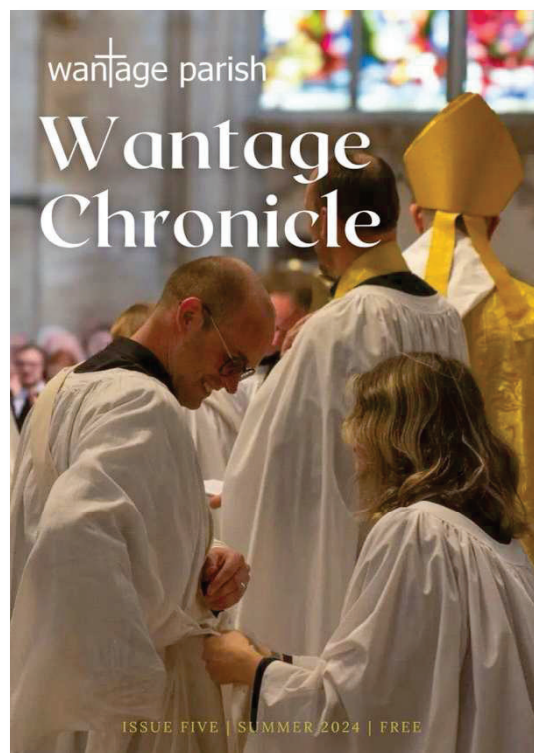
At Holy Trinity Church, some new storage cupboards and a worksurface were added in the vestry. The kitchen flooring was replaced to ensure continuing compliance with hygiene regulations.

Bluetooth receivers were added to the sound systems at both churches. This has been particularly valued at funerals, as CDs are no longer standard and proved a challenge for some families to provide. Routine maintenance tasks were undertaken as required during the year. The PCC is grateful to volunteers from the congregations who do much of this work.

## Communication and Administration

Over recent years, we have made a concerted effort to improve and streamline administrative processes. The main thrust so far has been implementing and managing the central cloud-based Parish Library (a shared drive), which is a means of providing secure access to all the parish administration documents, historical material, and a library of photographs and other resources for use in our communications and other publicity. We are using a powerful Microsoft online office application, and as a charity, we can access enormous amounts of storage for free for at least a ten-year period.

Three editions of the magazine were produced in 2024. Each edition has a theme highlighting things that are going on in the parish, particularly those things that members may not be aware of. We also now have A-frames outside the Parish Church to advertise when the church is open. Plans have been agreed for new external noticeboards.



# Governance

Our PCC's legal status and powers are determined by legislation, in particular the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 (as amended). Our PCC is a registered charity, and the members of the PCC are the charity's trustees under charity law.

The PCC is responsible for overseeing the life and activities of the Parish and for making decisions about all matters of general importance, including how the PCC's funds should be spent.

Membership of our PCC is governed by the Church Representation Rules. The Vicar, other clergy licensed to serve in the Parish and the Churchwardens are automatically members. Other members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting by church members who are on the Electoral Roll of the Parish. We encourage everyone (aged 16 and over) who attends our churches regularly to register on the Electoral Roll. Our PCC has the power to co-opt additional members to fill casual vacancies. Co-opted members serve until the next Annual Parochial Church Meeting when they may stand for election.

The Electoral Roll was reviewed in March/April 2024 and has been published in the churches. At the time of the review, the Roll stood at 186, there having been 6 additions, 4 deletions, and no amendments.

Churchwardens are elected each year at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, which is open to all residents of the Parish. They serve on the PCC from the date of their election and continue in office until their successor is admitted to office by the Bishop following the election.

The Vicar and the Churchwardens provide leadership and take day-to-day management decisions in the Parish. The Standing Committee normally consists of the Vicar, Churchwardens, and two other members of the PCC, and has delegated powers to take decisions between meetings of the PCC. Church members elect up to four people to serve on the Wantage Deanery Synod as well as on the PCC. Their term of office is three years. The current term runs to 30 June 2026. At the end of their term of office, Deanery Synod representatives may be re-elected for a second three-year term but must then take a break of at least a three-year term before standing again for election (unless the PCC decides otherwise).

We have agreed that there should be nine other elected PCC members, with a representative balance between those who normally worship at Holy Trinity Church and the Parish Church.

Trustees serve for terms of three years from the date of election. They may be re-elected for a second three-year term but must usually then take a break of at least a year before standing again for election.

The following are the members of our PCC at the date of this report. Except where shown, they served throughout 2024.

## Clergy

- Revd Katherine Price, Vicar
- Revd Frances Caroe, Curate (from 29 June 2024)

## Churchwardens

- Alastair Hunter
- Janet Kingdon (from 28 April 2024, PCC Secretary to 28 April 2024)

## Representatives on Deanery Synod

- Susie Lapwood
- Jan Ralston

## Elected and co-opted members

- Andrew Gregory
- Claire Hunter (PCC Treasurer)
- Ivie Johnson
- Peter King
- Ben Mabbett
- Bridget Procter
- David Richardson (Churchwarden to 28 April 2024)

In addition, the following were members of our PCC from the start of 2024 until the date shown:

- Fr Benji Tyler, Curate (to 7 April 2024)
- Simon Jones (to 28 April 2024)
- Ian Stone (to 2 December 2024)

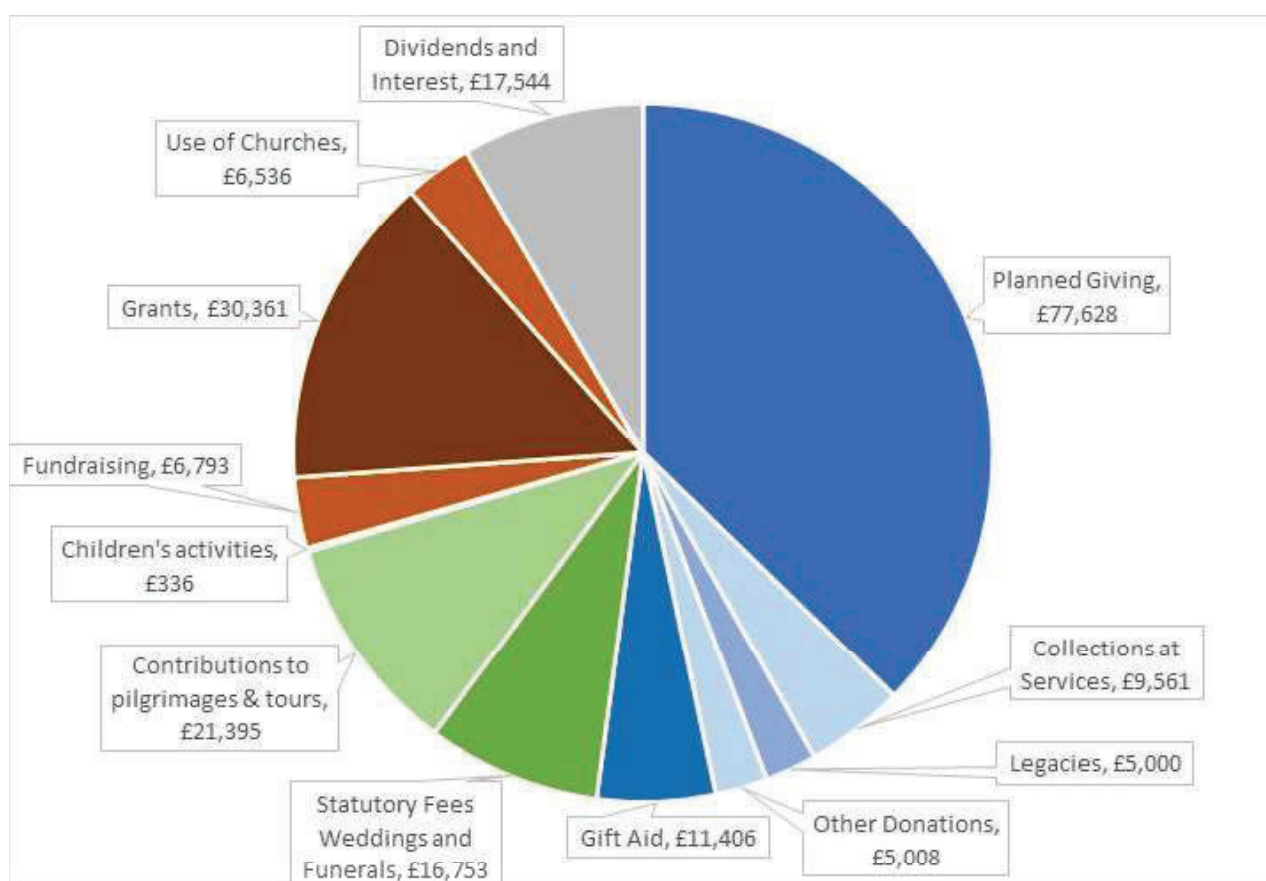
# Finance

## Financial position

At the end of this report are the PCC's Annual Accounts for 2024, which set out our financial performance for the year and our levels of funds going into next year. These funds comprise:

- unrestricted funds – day-to-day income which can be used for any purpose within the broad charitable objectives of the PCC; and
- restricted funds – money which can only be used for specific purposes based on the origin of the funds or the wishes of the original donors.

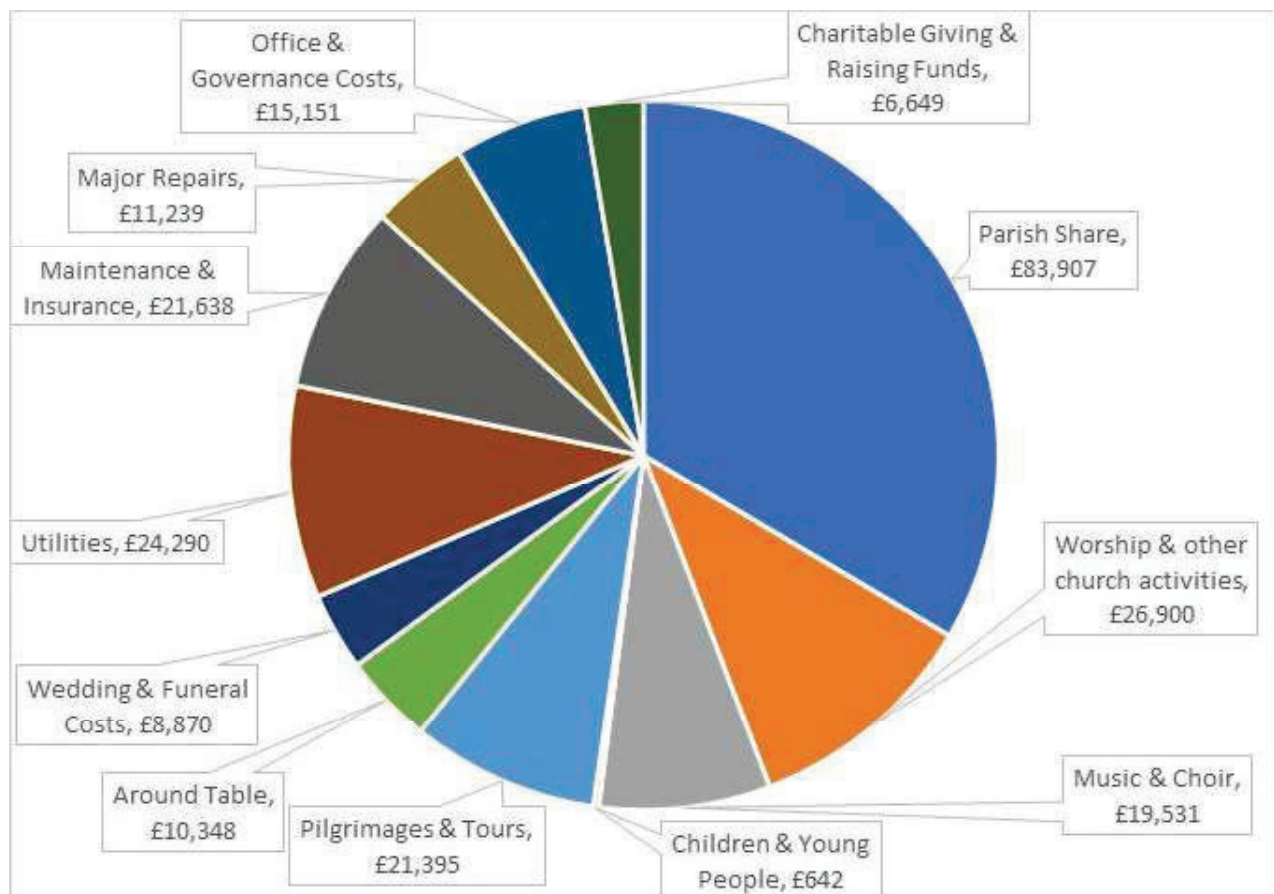
The Parish's income in 2024 was £208,320 (2023: £158,382). The chart below shows a breakdown of how this was generated. Income from giving of various sorts made up 49% of the total for 2024.



Of the total income received, £73,776 (35%) was for restricted uses. This was higher than in 2023 due to some particular grants and income. The Parish received £10,000 in external grants for the Around Table project, and £22,360 of

grants towards building repairs and running costs (from the Butler Trust and the government's VAT recovery scheme for listed places of worship). The contributions by participants to cover the costs of the Choir's successful tour to the Northwest of England, totalling £21,395, were also managed by the PCC this year, which is a change from previous years. It is matched by an equal increase in expenditure.

We spent £250,515 in 2024, increased from £187,316 in 2023. The chart below shows a breakdown of the expenditure. About a third represents the Parish Share which we pay to the Diocese for clergy stipends and training and other diocesan costs. Running our buildings accounts for 23% of our costs, and 33% is spent on worship, ministry, various Parish initiatives and external charitable giving.



Expenditure increased to reflect the higher income from grants (for Around Table and for building work at the Parish Church) and the costs of the choir tour (funded by contributions from participants). The PCC also decided to use its reserves to fund two Parish Assistants who are exploring their vocation. Utilities costs also remain high, costing £4,000 more than the previous year.

Overall, our outgoings exceeded our income by £42,195 (2023: £28,934), before taking account of changes in the value of our investments. Most of this was covered out of restricted funds, leaving only £6,161 (2023: £7,471) to come from unrestricted funds. The PCC is committed to seeking ways to reduce this deficit, with a particular focus on increasing income from giving by church members and from other activities. In February 2024, the PCC committed to a Financial Sustainability Action Plan which will continue to be delivered and monitored.

## Investments

During the year, the Parish saw its investments with CCLA increase in value by £13,495 (2023: £50,551). At the end of 2024, the PCC's investments were worth just over £602,000.

## Reserves policy and funds

It is the PCC's policy to maintain general unrestricted funds of approximately six months' unrestricted expenditure, to allow for fluctuations in income and unexpected repairs or other items of expenditure. This would amount to approximately £70,000. At the end of 2024 general unrestricted funds were £47,672. As mentioned above, the PCC is seeking to increase income in order to restore unrestricted reserves to their target level.

The PCC has designated part of its unrestricted funds to reflect the funds tied up in the house purchased for the use of an assistant curate training in the Parish. The amount (£40,000) represents the cost of the house when it was purchased many years ago (rather than its current value). For as long as these funds are tied up in the house, they are not available for other purposes.

The PCC is fortunate also to hold restricted funds, the largest element of which (totalling £581,017) arose from the sale of properties once owned by the PCC and a recent legacy. This money can be used at the PCC's discretion for any ecclesiastical purpose within the Parish. The PCC keeps under review the Parish's financial position and how these funds can best be used to:

- enable new ministry initiatives;
- invest in improvements to the Parish Church; and
- support Parish activities as work continues to increase current income to match day-to-day expenditure.

The PCC currently charges building costs to this fund, in order to maintain unrestricted funds at a prudent level. In 2024, the PCC also used some of these restricted funds to support the roles of the Parish Assistants. In total, £44,760 was used for these purposes (2023: £39,502).

Other restricted funds include:

- £40,000 designated for future work focused on children and young people;
- £8,552 for fabric and furnishing of Holy Trinity Church;
- £3,757 for the fabric of parish buildings generally;
- £1,250 for music in the Parish;
- £1,542 collected for external charitable giving;
- £270 for children's activities, (mostly used for Trinity Tots); and
- £1,115 for Around Table.

Overall, the Parish ended 2024 with total funds (restricted and unrestricted) of £725,215, a reduction of £28,700 compared with 2023.

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This report was approved by the PCC on 1 May 2025

**Revd. Katherine Price**

**Vicar**

# **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**

### **TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of Wantage for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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

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

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

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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no 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 accounting requirements of the 2011 Act; or
- 4 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.

**A Chapman FCA**  
**Chapman Worth Limited**  
2 Old Estate Yard  
East Hendred  
Oxfordshire  
OX12 8JY

May 2025

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

		General unrestricted funds £	Designated unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
	Notes					
<b>Income from:</b>						
Donations and legacies	2	103,018	-	5,585	108,603	101,231
Charitable activities	3	17,089	-	21,395	38,484	17,657
Other operating activities	4	13,211	-	30,478	43,689	22,265
Investments	5	1,226	-	16,318	17,544	17,229
<b>Total income</b>		<b>134,544</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>73,776</b>	<b>208,320</b>	<b>158,382</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Raising funds	6	3,151	-	-	3,151	3,556
Charitable activities	6	137,554	-	109,810	247,364	183,760
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>140,705</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>109,810</b>	<b>250,515</b>	<b>187,316</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains</b>		<b>(6,161)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(36,034)</b>	<b>(42,195)</b>	<b>(28,394)</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	9	-	-	13,495	13,495	50,551
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(6,161)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(22,539)</b>	<b>(28,700)</b>	<b>21,617</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	14	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(6,161)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(22,539)</b>	<b>(28,700)</b>	<b>21,617</b>
Fund balances at 1 January		53,833	40,000	660,082	753,915	732,298
<b>Fund balances at 31 December</b>	14	<b>47,672</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>637,543</b>	<b>725,215</b>	<b>753,915</b>

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The comparative figures for the previous year are analysed on the next page.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

<b>Comparative Figures for 2023</b>		<b>General</b>	<b>Designated</b>		
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>unrestricted funds</b>	<b>unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total 2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	99,941	-	1,290	101,231
Charitable activities	3	17,657	-	-	17,657
Other operating activities	4	13,889	-	8,376	22,265
Investments	5	1,139	-	16,090	17,229
<b>Total income</b>		<b>132,626</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,756</b>	<b>158,382</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	6	3,556	-	-	3,556
Charitable activities	6	136,541	-	47,219	183,760
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>140,097</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>47,219</b>	<b>187,316</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains</b>		<b>(7,471)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(21,463)</b>	<b>(28,934)</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	9	-	-	50,551	50,551
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(7,471)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,088</b>	<b>21,617</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(7,471)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,088</b>	<b>21,617</b>
Fund balances at 1 January		61,304	40,000	630,994	732,298
<b>Fund balances at 31 December</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53,833</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>660,082</b>	<b>753,915</b>

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

*All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.*

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

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	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	10		41,212		42,716
Investments	11		602,084		588,589
			<u>643,296</u>		<u>631,305</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	12	13,160		8,004	
Cash at bank and in hand		72,989		115,477	
		<u>86,149</u>		<u>123,481</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	(4,230)		(871)	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			81,919		122,610
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>725,215</u>		<u>753,915</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	14		637,543		660,082
Designated unrestricted funds	14		40,000		40,000
General unrestricted funds	14		47,672		53,833
			<u>725,215</u>		<u>753,915</u>

These accounts were approved on 1 May 2025

**Katherine Price**  
Vicar

**Claire Hunter**  
Treasurer

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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#### 1 Accounting policies

##### Charity information

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Peter & St Paul Wantage is a registered charity (number 1181640). References in these accounts to "the PCC" are references to this charity. The members of the PCC are the trustees of the charity under charity law and are referred to in these accounts as "the trustees".

The PCC constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

##### 1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts are for the year to 31 December 2024 and are presented in sterling, rounded to the nearest pound.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the subsequent notes.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102);
- the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS102 (Charities SORP); and

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation and uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are set out below.

##### 1.2 Charitable funds

The funds of the PCC are divided into the categories set out below, depending on the terms on which they were donated.

Endowment funds comprise capital sums which must be permanently held. The income which arises on endowment funds can be used for specified purposes in accordance with the terms under which the funds were given. The PCC holds no endowment funds at this time.

Restricted funds are held for specific purposes based on the origin of the funds or the wishes of the donors, and are not available for any other purpose. The PCC has designated certain restricted funds to be held for particular uses within the broader purposes specified. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in note 14 below.

Designated unrestricted funds are those which, although available for any purpose within the broad charitable objectives of the PCC, have been designated by the PCC to be held for a specified purpose.

General unrestricted funds are those which may be used for any purpose within the broad charitable objectives of the PCC.

##### 1.3 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees to make judgements and estimates. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are kept under review. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised.

Significant judgements and estimates are made from time to time in relation to:

- estimating the likely amount of legacy income once the PCC is aware of its entitlement to receive a legacy; and
- estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets.

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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#### **1 Accounting policies (continued)**

##### **1.4 Financial risk**

The main form of financial risk faced by the PCC relates to its investments and concerns volatility in equity and other investment markets due to wider economic conditions, the attitude of investors to investment risk, and changes in sentiment concerning equities and within particular investment sectors.

The PCC does not acquire options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments. Apart from its investments, the PCC only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments.

##### **1.5 Going concern**

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Because of the level of the PCC's financial reserves, the trustees have concluded that the PCC will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due and that the charity will be able to continue to operate as a going concern.

##### **1.6 Incoming resources**

Income is recognised once the PCC has entitlement to the incoming resources, any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations and grants are recognised when the PCC has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations and grants pledged but not received, the amount is recorded when the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions, the income is deferred and not recognised until either the conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of the conditions is wholly within the control of the PCC and it is probable that they will be fulfilled in the reporting period. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid is recognised at the same time as the related donation.

Legacies are recognised when there is sufficient evidence to place a value on the amount the PCC is likely to receive. This is when either confirmation has been received from the executors of the estate, or probate has been granted, or a distribution is received. Recognition of legacies in a form other than cash or listed investments is subject to the value being reliably measurable. Where the PCC has or may have entitlement to a legacy but there is uncertainty about the amount or value, information is disclosed about the potential future asset.

Investment income is recognised once the PCC has been notified of the amount that is receivable. Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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#### 1 Accounting policies (continued)

##### 1.7 Resources expended

Expenditure is included in the statement of financial activities when incurred. It includes irrecoverable VAT. Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the PCC to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure comprises direct costs and support costs. Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. The costs of each activity include both those costs directly attributable to the category and a proportion of general support costs. Governance costs comprise the costs relating to the public accountability of the charity and compliance with regulation and good practice.

The classification between activities is as follows:

- expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the PCC;
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the PCC, including governance costs.

Expenditure on charitable activities is split between:

- worship & ministry; and
- charitable giving in support of other charities and charitable activities.

No value is ascribed to the considerable effort of the many volunteers who support the ministry and other activities of the charity.

##### 1.8 Tangible fixed assets

There are two Anglican church buildings within the Parish: the Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul and Holy Trinity Church, Charlton. In accordance with church legislation, the PCC is responsible for the upkeep of these buildings, including fixtures and furnishings within them, but does not own them. Accordingly, the church buildings and their contents are not included in these financial statements. All expenditure on maintaining and improving the church buildings, and on their fixtures and furnishings, is charged directly to the statement of financial activities when incurred.

All other tangible assets or groups of tangible assets costing more than £500 and with an expected useful economic life exceeding one year are capitalised. Depreciation is provided in order to write off the cost less any expected residual value over the estimated useful life of each asset (or group of assets) at the following annual rates:

- residential property – no depreciation as the expected residual value exceeds the cost;
- fixtures & fittings in residential property – on a straight-line basis over ten years;
- office equipment – on a straight-line basis over four years.

##### 1.9 Fixed asset investments

The PCC's investments are held in investment funds managed by CCLA Investment Management. They are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing market price.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and the opening carrying value at the beginning of the financial year (or the purchase value if acquired during the year). Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and the previous carrying value. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are recorded in the year in which they arise.

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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#### 1 Accounting policies (continued)

##### 1.10 Debtors

Amounts of money owed to the PCC (referred to as debtors) are recognised at their settlement amount, less an allowance for any amounts which may not be recoverable. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors and prepayments are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

##### 1.11 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and balances that are available on demand or had an original maturity of less than three months. Term deposits for more than three months but less than one year are shown as short-term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is included as part of fixed asset investments.

##### 1.12 Creditors

Amounts of money owed by the PCC (referred to as creditors) and provisions for any other liabilities of the PCC are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the PCC anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They are discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

#### 2 Donations and legacies

	General unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Planned giving by church members	77,628	-	77,628	69,567
Collections at services	5,976	3,585	9,561	5,723
Legacies	5,000	-	5,000	-
Other donations	3,008	2,000	5,008	9,430
Tax recoverable on donations under Gift Aid	11,406	-	11,406	16,511
	<u>103,018</u>	<u>5,585</u>	<u>108,603</u>	<u>101,231</u>
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>				
Planned giving by church members	69,567	-		69,567
Collections at services	5,293	430		5,723
Legacies	-	-		-
Other donations	8,570	860		9,430
Tax recoverable on donations under Gift Aid	16,511	-		16,511
	<u>99,941</u>	<u>1,290</u>		<u>101,231</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	General unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fees & contributions for occasional offices	16,753	-	16,753	17,384
Publications, quiet days & children's activities	336	-	336	273
Contributions for pilgrimages and tours	-	21,395	21,395	-
	<u>17,089</u>	<u>21,395</u>	<u>38,484</u>	<u>17,657</u>
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>				
<i>Fees &amp; contributions for occasional offices</i>	17,384	-		17,384
<i>Publications, quiet days &amp; children's activities</i>	273	-		273
	<u>17,657</u>	<u>-</u>		<u>17,657</u>

Fees & contributions for occasional offices relate to baptisms, weddings and funerals held in the two Anglican churches of the Parish.

**4 Income from other operating activities**

	General unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fundraising	6,675	117	6,792	12,700
Grants	-	30,361	30,361	6,800
Use of churches by other organisations	6,536	-	6,536	2,765
Rental income	-	-	-	-
	<u>13,211</u>	<u>30,478</u>	<u>43,689</u>	<u>22,265</u>
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>				
<i>Fundraising</i>	11,124	1,576		12,700
<i>Grants</i>	-	6,800		6,800
<i>Use of churches by other organisations</i>	2,765	-		2,765
<i>Rental income</i>	-	-		-
	<u>13,889</u>	<u>8,376</u>		<u>22,265</u>

**5 Income from investments**

	General unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Investment income	1,226	16,318	17,544	17,229
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>	<u>1,139</u>	<u>16,090</u>		<u>17,229</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**6 Expenditure**

	Notes	Clergy costs £	Church buildings £	Other costs £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>						
Worship & ministry		89,411	56,554	96,386	242,351	179,537
Charitable giving	7	-	-	5,013	5,013	4,223
		89,411	56,554	101,399	247,364	183,760
<b>Costs of raising funds</b>		-	-	3,151	3,151	3,556
		89,411	56,554	104,550	250,515	187,316
<b>Analysis by type of fund:</b>						
Unrestricted funds		89,411	-	51,294	140,705	140,097
Restricted funds		-	56,554	53,256	109,810	47,219
		89,411	56,554	104,550	250,515	187,316
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>						
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>						
Worship & ministry		90,089	37,107	52,341		179,537
Charitable giving	7	-	-	4,223		4,223
		90,089	37,107	56,564		183,760
<b>Costs of raising funds</b>		-	-	3,556		3,556
		90,089	37,107	60,120		187,316
<b>Analysis by type of fund:</b>						
Unrestricted funds		90,089	-	50,008		140,097
Restricted funds		-	37,107	10,112		47,219
		90,089	37,107	60,120		187,316

Expenditure includes:

- staff costs of £43,752 in respect of 8 part-time employees employed for all or part of the year (2023: £24,764 for seven part-time employees).
- governance costs of £1,682 (2023: £2,430), being the cost of the independent examination of these accounts and assistance in their preparation.
- Clergy costs include £83,907 (2023: £83,075) paid to the Diocese of Oxford as the Parish's contribution to diocesan costs, principally stipend, training and other costs relating to parish clergy.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**7 Charitable giving**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
UNICEF Ukraine appeal	-	1,505
Bishops' Outreach Fund	813	105
Vale Community Impact	-	1,505
Support for Greenfields School, Thokoza	1,326	1,000
Wantage & Grove Street Pastors	-	108
Children's Society – Christingle Service	68	-
Sweatbox Wantage	1,403	-
Christian Aid	1,403	-
	<u>5,013</u>	<u>4,223</u>

**8 Trustees**

The members of the Parochial Church Council are the trustees of the charity and are responsible for the overall direction and control of the charity. The Vicar and Churchwardens provide leadership and take day-to-day management decisions.

In accordance with the Church of England's normal policy, the Assistant Curate in the Parish lives in a house provided by the PCC; from January 2024 to May 2024 this was occupied by Fr Benjamin Tyler, and from June 2024 by his successor, Fr Frances Caroe. Except as noted in this paragraph and in note 16, none of the trustees (or anyone connected with them) received from the PCC any remuneration, benefit or payment for services during the year (or the preceding year).

Five trustees were reimbursed a total of £3,651 for expenses which they incurred on behalf of the PCC (2023: *Four trustees reimbursed £4,619*). These expenses comprised travel and office costs for the clergy serving the Parish and goods and services purchased for use in our churches.

Trustees made unrestricted donations to the PCC totalling £11,936 (2023: *£14,991*) during the periods when they were trustees.

**9 Net gains/(losses) on investments**

	<b>General unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Revaluation of investments	-	13,495	13,495	50,551
	<u>-</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>50,551</u>
<b>Comparative figures for 2023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50,551</b>		<b>50,551</b>
	<u>-</u>	<u>50,551</u>		<u>50,551</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**10 Tangible fixed assets**

	<b>Freehold land and buildings £</b>	<b>Fixtures and £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 January 2024	40,000	15,036	55,036
Additions	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2024	40,000	15,036	55,036
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>			
At 1 January 2024	-	12,320	12,320
Depreciation charged in the year	-	1,504	1,504
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2024	-	13,824	13,824
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Carrying amount</b>			
At 31 December 2024	40,000	1,212	41,212
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2023	40,000	2,716	42,716
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The freehold property comprises a house which is provided for the assistant curate serving the Parish. As the residual value is greater than the original cost, no depreciation is provided. The property was valued at £270,000 in 2015 and will have gone up further in value since then.

**11 Fixed asset investments**

	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Managed investments</b>		
Market value at 1 January 2024	588,589	538,016
Additions	-	-
Withdrawals	-	-
Income reinvested	40	22
Unrealised gains/(losses)	13,455	50,551
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Market value at 31 December 2024	602,084	588,589
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Investments comprise holdings in the following funds managed by CCLA Investment Management:

CBF Church of England Investment Fund	601,310	587,854
CBF Church of England Deposit Fund	774	735
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	602,084	588,589
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

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**12 Debtors**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Tax recoverable on donations under Gift Aid	10,670	7,650
Other debtors & prepayments	2,490	354
	<u>13,160</u>	<u>8,004</u>

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Other creditors & accruals	4,229	871
	<u>4,229</u>	<u>871</u>

**14 Funds**

The table on the following page summarises the different funds held by the PCC (the subsequent page shows comparative figures for the previous year).

The largest element of the restricted reserves arose from the sale of properties once owned by the PCC and a restricted legacy. This element is available to be spent on any ecclesiastical purpose within the Parish. The funds concerned totalled £621,017 at the end of 2024 (2023: £635,964). The PCC previously designated £40,000 of this element of the restricted funds to cover the cost (net of grants to be received) of employing a Children and Families Worker for five years from 2022/23. This appointment did not go ahead, but the PCC has retained the designation with a view to developing other work with children and young people.

The PCC has designated £40,000 (2022: £40,000) of its unrestricted reserves as a curate's housing fund. This represents the cost of the property purchased by the PCC as a house for an assistant curate in training in the Parish. The amount has been designated as a separate fund since this cannot currently be realised and used for any other purpose.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WANTAGE**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**14 Funds (continued)**

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Revaluation gains and losses £	Transfers between reserves £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
Funds arising from properties once owned by the PCC and a legacy:						
Designated for work with children & young people	40,000	-	-	-	-	40,000
Available for any ecclesiastical purpose within the Parish	595,964	16,318	(44,760)	13,495	-	581,017
	<u>635,964</u>	<u>16,318</u>	<u>(44,760)</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>621,017</u>
Other restricted funds:						
Fabric of Parish buildings	5,125	22,360	(23,728)	-	-	3,757
Fabric & furnishing of Holy Trinity Church	11,277	-	(2,725)	-	-	8,552
Music in the Parish	5,000	-	(3,750)	-	-	1,250
Pilgrimages, choir tours and parish visits	-	21,395	(21,395)	-	-	-
Charitable giving fund	2,002	3,703	(4,162)	-	-	1,542
Children's activities	714	-	(445)	-	-	270
Around Table	-	10,000	(8,845)	-	-	1,155
	<u>660,082</u>	<u>73,776</u>	<u>(109,810)</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>637,543</u>
<b>Designated unrestricted funds</b>						
Curate's housing fund	40,000	-	-	-	-	40,000
<b>General unrestricted funds</b>	53,833	134,544	(140,705)	-	-	47,672
	<u>753,915</u>	<u>208,320</u>	<u>(250,515)</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>725,215</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>753,915</u>	<u>208,320</u>	<u>(250,515)</u>	<u>13,495</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>725,215</u>

# 14 Funds (continued)

## Comparative Figures for 2023

	Balance at 1 January 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Revaluation gains and losses £	Transfers between reserves £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
<i>Funds arising from properties once owned by the PCC and a legacy:</i>						
<i>Designated for work with children &amp; young people</i>	40,000	-	-	-	-	40,000
<i>Available for any ecclesiastical purpose within the Parish</i>	568,825	16,090	(39,502)	50,551	-	595,964
	<u>608,825</u>	<u>16,090</u>	<u>(39,502)</u>	<u>50,551</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>635,964</u>
<i>Other restricted funds:</i>						
<i>Fabric of Parish buildings</i>	4,790	-	335	-	-	5,125
<i>Fabric &amp; furnishing of Holy Trinity Church</i>	11,936	-	(659)	-	-	11,277
<i>Music in the Parish</i>	-	6,800	(1,800)	-	-	5,000
<i>Charitable giving fund</i>	4,217	2,007	(4,222)	-	-	2,002
<i>Children's activities</i>	1,226	-	(512)	-	-	714
<i>Around Table</i>	-	859	(859)	-	-	-
	<u>630,994</u>	<u>25,756</u>	<u>(47,219)</u>	<u>50,551</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>660,082</u>
<b>Designated unrestricted funds</b>						
<i>Curate's housing fund</i>	40,000	-	-	-	-	40,000
<b>General unrestricted funds</b>	61,304	132,626	(140,097)	-	-	53,833
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>732,298</u>	<u>158,382</u>	<u>(187,316)</u>	<u>50,551</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>753,915</u>

## 15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted funds	Designated unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 were represented by:				
Tangible assets	1,212	40,000	-	41,212
Investments	-	-	602,084	602,084
Other current assets/(liabilities)	46,460	-	35,459	81,919
	<u>47,672</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>637,543</u>	<u>725,215</u>

### Comparative figures for 2023

Fund balances at 31 December 2023 were represented by:

Tangible assets	2,716	40,000	-	42,716
Investments	-	-	588,589	588,589
Other current assets/(liabilities)	51,117	-	71,493	122,610
	<u>53,833</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>660,082</u>	<u>753,915</u>

## 16 Related party transactions

The husband of one trustee, Ivie Johnson, is employed by the PCC as Director of Music at an annual salary and expenses at the end of 2024 of £7,384 (2023: £6,970) under a contract which pre-dates her appointment as a trustee in April 2021. She takes no part in the determination of her husband's salary. The wife of another trustee, Ian Stone, who stood down in October 2024, was employed by the PCC as a caretaker to October 2024. Her remuneration during 2024 totalled £1,698 (2023: £2,071). These arrangements pre-date Ian Stone's appointment as a trustee in April 2022. He took no part in the determination of his wife's salary.

The William John Butler Memorial Fund (commonly referred to as the Butler Trust) is a charity whose objects are to advance the Christian religion, in particular (but not exclusively) by the maintenance, repair and improvement of the Parish Church in Wantage and Holy Trinity Church, Charlton. The trustees of the Butler Trust include the Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer who are also members of the PCC. In 2024, the PCC's income included £19,871 of grant from the Butler Trust towards roof repairs and building maintenance and running costs (2023: £nil). There were no amounts due to the PCC from the Butler Trust at the end of either 2024 or 2023.

The Wantage Parish Music Guild is a charity whose objects are to support music in the Parish. The trustees of the Music Guild during 2024 and 2023 included two individuals who are married to people who were members of the PCC for parts of 2024 and/or 2023. In 2024, the PCC's income included a grant of £5,000 from the Music Guild towards the cost of the PCC employing an Assistant Organist (2023: £6,800). There were no amounts due to the PCC from the Music Guild at the end of either 2023 or 2024.

## **Administrative information**

Our website is at

[www.wantageparish.com](http://www.wantageparish.com)

Address for correspondence:

Parish Office

The Butler Centre

Church Street

Wantage

OX12 8BL

The PCC's principal bankers:

CAF Bank Limited

25 Kings Hill Avenue

Kings Hill

West Malling

ME19 4JQ

Independent examiner of the PCC's accounts:

A Chapman FCA

Chapman Worth Limited

3 Old Estate Yard

East Hendred

OX12 8JY



wantage parish

## **WANTAGE PARISH**

### **The Parish Office**

Butler Centre, Church Street, Wantage OX12 8BL

[administrator@wantageparish.com](mailto:administrator@wantageparish.com)

01235 764533