

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WIDCOMBE, BATH

England & Wales - Charity number 1182372

Details

Other names	WIDCOMBE PCC, BATH
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2019-03-07
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

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

Activities: Promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church

Classification

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

Geography

- Bath And North East Somerset

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£132,082	£118,833	-	-
2024-12-31	£270,313	£201,388	-	-
2023-12-31	£214,371	£179,039	-	-
2022-12-31	£164,345	£147,569	-	-
2021-12-31	£184,030	£190,380	-	-
2020-12-31	£147,696	£156,960	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Laura Doe	Chair	2025-05-11
Andrew Donald Udale-Smith		2025-05-11
Barnaby William Wardale		2026-04-26
Dr Frederick William Sherratt		2025-05-11
Dr Harry Collin		2024-04-28
Ellen Rachel Levenson		2025-05-11
Grace Poppy Carter		2026-04-26
Jill Mary Ann Oldham		2025-05-11
Joel Lloyd-Carter MMus. BA		2021-05-24
Mary Udale-Smith Dr		2021-05-24
Rev Judith Harries		2018-04-24
Sarena Rachael Anne Sherratt		2024-04-28

Accounts

**Trustees' Report
for the year ended 31 December 2025**

**for the Parochial Church Council of
St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church,
Widcombe, Bath**

15 April 2026

Registered Charity No:1182372

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PCC Membership and Parish Officers

The following served during the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025:

Incumbent/PCC Chair	Rev Laura Doe	<i>From 10 April 2025</i>
PCC Vice-Chair	Andrew Udale-Smith	
Churchwardens (St Thomas a Becket)	Fiona Coverdale Tony Coverdale	<i>Until APCM - Wardening team thereafter</i> <i>Until APCM – Wardening team thereafter</i>
Chapelwardens (St Matthew's)	Miles Andrews Sarena Sherratt	
Treasurer	Tony Coverdale Freddie Sherratt	<i>Until APCM</i> <i>From APCM</i>
Ex-officio members of PCC	Rev Judith Harries Dr Mary Udale-Smith	<i>PTO</i> <i>Reader & Deanery Synod representative</i> <i>(approved by APCM)</i>
Elected lay members of PCC	Carol Tottle Jill Oldham Joel Lloyd-Carter Jamie Duncan Harry Collin David Mathews Rachel Levenson Freddie Sherratt Andrew Udale-Smith	<i>Deanery Synod representative</i> <i>Parish Safeguarding Officer</i> <i>Until 24 November 2025</i> <i>From APCM</i> <i>From APCM</i> <i>Co-Opted until APCM, elected thereafter</i>
Secretariat	Jane Blackburn Angela Frith	 PCC Secretary Parish Electoral Roll Officer

Purpose and Responsibilities

Widcombe Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the main decision maker of the benefice.

Its members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation. Legally, the PCC is responsible for the finances of the parish. It also has ultimate responsibility for the care and maintenance of all church buildings and their contents. Although these responsibilities are executed by the churchwardens, all PCC members must share in the oversight. It has a voice in the forms of Service used by the church and may make representations to the bishop on matters that affect the welfare of the parish.

Background

The ancient parish of Widcombe has existed since Anglo-Saxon times, but the current bounds of the parish of Widcombe, Bath were established in 1972, when St Mark's Lyncombe was closed and part of the neighbouring parish of Lyncombe was absorbed. We are part of the Bath Deanery.

Widcombe, Bath is a benefice, having two churches, St Thomas a Becket (dating from 1502) and the larger church of St Matthew's (consecrated in 1847), more recently known as St Matt's. In 2000, the status of the parish was reduced to 'house for duty', with services only taking place at St Thomas a Becket.

However, in 2013 St Matt's was selected as a location for a 'church plant' to create a new worshipping community. In 2014, a vicar, Tim Buckley, was appointed to serve both the new congregation of St Matt's and the established congregation of St Thomas a Becket.

In addition, the Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continued to use St Thomas a Becket church for their monthly services, as it has done for over forty years.

Tim Buckley left the parish in November 2023. After more than a year of vacancy, a new Interim Minister, Laura Doe, was appointed in April 2025 to help the benefice discern, with God, its future direction.

Incumbent's Report

Rev Laura Doe

I began my role in April 2025 and it has been a real blessing to serve the benefice over this past year. I am most grateful to the two great core teams and the PCC that have supported me to make the day to day "stuff of church life" happen.

At my first PCC meeting in May 2025, I shared three key areas of focus for the year ahead, namely the "three P's":

- **People** – how we equip our community to reach out and serve others
- **Place** – making the most of our buildings and their location
- **Purpose** – discerning our unique calling, particularly in light of our different worship styles

Alongside this, I highlighted a few priorities. During the vacancy, the focus had understandably been on consolidation - keeping things going faithfully. But now felt like the right time to begin looking outward again, with a renewed focus on mission and outreach. I suggested having someone on the PCC take a particular lead in this area.

I also noted some key practical and spiritual considerations:

- The challenge of current service times, especially for me in terms of being able to be present at all of them
- The importance of student ministry as part of our mission field
- The central role of prayer in shaping our vision and direction
- And the question of finances — how we resource what God is calling us to do

In July 2025, we held a PCC Vision Day, followed by meetings with both the St Thomas and St Matt's teams over the summer. These were really helpful conversations, giving space to reflect on hopes and

areas for growth in each church. PCC members were also invited to feed into developing a set of shared values for the benefice.

On a side note, I have really enjoyed our PCC meetings this year, which have been an encouraging and appropriately challenging space. We have prayerfully considered lots of questions, scenarios and situations, including those around relationships and leadership within the life of the church. I am very grateful for the way we have worked together in all aspects of decision making and church life.

The vision and team days resulted in a new service pattern at St Thomas. The congregation now meets at 9:30am each Sunday (except the second Sunday, when there is an 8am service only), with combined benefice services at 10:30am (soon to be 10.45am!) on fifth Sundays. This has made it much more possible for me to be involved across the life of the benefice.

In September 2025, we welcomed our new Church Coordinator, Ellie Clark. Ellie has been a fantastic addition to the team - from refreshing our social media, to helping with all sorts of practical jobs (including the occasional dump run!), to getting fully stuck in (even wearing an inflatable costume for an all-age service!).

Last September also saw the launch of a couple of really encouraging initiatives:

- **“Roots and Shoots”**, our weekly multi-generational playtime, has been a real highlight. We saw around 30 people each week over the winter and around 20 currently. It’s been great to connect with people from across the benefice and community, including one mum who later joined Alpha.
- We also ran an **Alpha course** with around 10 guests and a team of 10–15. This was a really encouraging time, with several guests continuing to come along to church afterwards.

Towards the end of 2025, we spent some time strengthening some of our structures and processes. This included:

- Putting in place a new Procurement and Expenses Policy
- Agreeing a detailed budget for 2026
- Improving safeguarding awareness, including updated signage in both churches

We set up a building committee for St Matt’s in May 2025 to help coordinate a way forward for the building. More details on that can be found in the Buildings Report. In the short term in 2025 we did a large clear out of St Matt’s, painted the interior doors and have done a gardening afternoon.

Christmas was a very special time across the benefice. We introduced a new “Alternative Carols” service and welcomed 525 people across our Advent and Christmas services. We also delivered 1,000 flyers to homes locally.

Our Christmas collections supported:

- LUX Youth Project
- Restore Rebuild Burundi

Together, we raised £1,425.66 — a great expression of the benefice’s generosity. We also had a wonderful wedding at St Thomas on the 22nd December!

In January 2026, the PCC approved a new Vision and Values statement (the full statement is on our website with the other 2026 APCM documents):

“May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me.” – John 17:23

We are two churches, one benefice — distinct in style, united in mission. Together, we aim to:

- Authentically follow Jesus
- Joyfully serve others
- Boldly share His love with the world

Our shared values are:

- Wholehearted
- Spirit-led
- Empowering
- Generous
- Missional

We also carried out a Benefice survey in January 2026 and received 49 responses. It was really encouraging to hear positive feedback about the health of the churches, and especially that over 80% of people said they would be willing to volunteer in some way in the future. A summary of the results of the survey is on our website with the other 2026 APCM documents.

As a result of the feedback:

- The St Matt's service time has moved to 10:45am (from 10:30am).
- There's a clear appetite for deeper, Bible-based preaching — with upcoming series including Ecclesiastes.

We've also continued to support Found Youth, who meet in the St Matt's building, recognising how important this is as our young people grow older.

In March 2026 the PCC also approved the appointment of a Families Worker (10 hours per week, initially as a 12-month contract), which we hope will really strengthen our work with children and families.

In terms of attendance, looking at January and February 2026 services, at St Matt's we are now averaging 42 people per service (the highest of the 8 Sundays was 54, the lowest 34). Looking at the same 8 Sundays for St Thomas, we are averaging 12 people per service (with the highest 23, lowest 6).

It has been very special to see our student ministry grow at St Matt's. We now have a WhatsApp group with 13 people on it, including 3 "leaders". Ellie has also worked on creating student mentoring connections and a student team has been formed.

I have also really enjoyed getting to know the staff and pupils at Widcombe Junior school over the past year. I have taken several assemblies and also spoke at their Christmas service. In March 2026 we interviewed 14 pupils to take on a new role as Pupil Chaplains in the school. We are appointing 8 students to take on this role, with the idea being to invest in them as individuals so that they in-turn can instil and demonstrate the school's Christian values to other pupils. We are looking forward to officially launching this project when the Bishop visits the school on 22 June this year.

Looking ahead, we plan to attend the Focus (Revitalise) festival together as a church family in July 2026. This should be a really valuable time together for teaching, encouragement, and building relationships.

We also have some great events planned at St Thomas à Becket, such as a Community Afternoon to thank people for donating to the St Thomas roof appeal and a series of talks, to help engage the community and invite them into the church building.

Another key aim for the coming year is to try to discern a way forward for the use of the St Matt's building and potentially look to renovate the kitchen and toilets and make the building more accessible.

Also looking forward, we are excited that we have Simon Winchcombe, a new PTO, joining the Ministry team. We believe he will bring (indeed he is already bringing) so much to the life and work of the Benefice and are very grateful for his commitment to help serve the community of Widcombe.

In summary, it's been a year of listening, building foundations and beginning to look outward again. I'm really grateful for all that God is doing among us and have a sense of great anticipation for what lies ahead, as we continue to grow together as one benefice, united in Christ and His mission.

Reader's Report (includes Widcombe Junior School and Deanery Synod Reports) Dr Mary Udale-Smith

It has been a great joy to support Laura in her first year as minister, in my capacity as Lay Reader and also occasionally in my capacity as once-upon-a-time-administrator, dredging my memory and my Dropbox archive at times. I've continued leading services and preaching regularly at both churches and have enjoyed being part of the PCC. I continued to work towards my Masters in Theology, Ministry and Mission at Trinity College, Bristol, which is both challenging and fruitful, feeding into ministry and preaching. Unbelievably, I reached the 5 year mark as a Reader in October which means I have recently had to apply to be relicensed for the next 5 years and I'm pleased to be able to say the diocese has confirmed my licence has been renewed.

I'm also a Foundation governor at Widcombe Junior School, although I will be stepping down at the end of the current academic year. The highlight of 2025 was the school's Ofsted inspection, which resulted in outstanding grades in all 4 areas. The school continues to use St Matt's for their Easter, Leavers, Harvest and Christmas services. Laura is also building strong links, taking assemblies regularly.

Finally, I have enjoyed being a Deanery Synod representative, together with Carol Tottle. Of particular note in 2025 was the Synod held at St Matt's which focussed on youth work around the Deanery. The Synod was really encouraged to hear from many diverse projects, including LUX where our own Libby Piggott is helping grow the youth groups and mentoring programme. Communications from the Deanery have been somewhat intermittent over recent years but a new Lay Dean, Dr Christine Absalon, was appointed towards the end of 2025. A new deanery administrator has also been appointed recently and an overhaul of the computerised records is in hand.

Deanery Synod representatives are elected every three years across the synod and are due in 2026. We will therefore need to elect two representatives at this year's APCM.

Churchwardens and Chapelwardens

St Thomas à Becket – Churchwardens Report Rachel Levenson

The St Thomas congregation were delighted to welcome Laura Doe in April 2025. Tony and Fiona Coverdale had decided to step down after their wonderful work for several years as Churchwardens and, sadly, no one else came forward to take their place. Mary Udale-Smith and Laura, with the help of church volunteers, put together a list of all the tasks the Churchwardens are responsible for throughout the year. A small group of congregation members then agreed to form a team to look after these duties. We have been meeting regularly since the Summer to plan for future services, discuss pastoral care, building maintenance and events, and to explore different ways to connect with the local community.

In July, we held a consultative event with the wider congregation to get their thoughts, ideas and wishes for the church's future. We are hoping to keep our regular traditional services going and find better ways to use our beautiful building by opening it up for retreats or small events.

A new service schedule started in September, with an 8am service once a month and 9.30am Holy Communion and Morning Prayer services on the other Sundays, apart from every fifth Sunday when a joint service is held at St Matts. Our services continue to be supported faithfully by the congregation, who volunteer as duty wardens, sidespeople, readers and intercessors, as well as decorating the church with weekly flowers plus our two organists, Chloe Keenan and Richard Allen. We are also very pleased to share our church with the German Lutherans who meet at St Thomas monthly.

In 2025, we also held one wedding, three baptisms, one funeral and one memorial service. Our established 'Tea with the Word' meetings continue to be well supported.

The church was open for two hours on several Sundays in June, July and August, welcoming over 200 local people and visitors to Bath to explore the building outside of church times.

St Thomas à Becket – Fabric Report Charles Oldham

Introduction

The responsibility for the condition of the fabric of St Thomas' Widcombe, the Churchyard surrounding the church and the nearby graveyard currently lies in the hands of Edward Nash (a retired architect) and Charles Oldham. They took over responsibility in the latter part of 2025 following the departure of the previous Churchwardens.

We are pleased to report that the fabric is generally in good condition, with no significant defects as far as we are aware.

Property terrier and maintenance records

The Property Terrier and Maintenance records are up to date and the fabric, ornaments and furniture are all present, and in the condition described in the register.

Property inspections

The Church is inspected on a monthly basis by either Edward Nash or Charles Oldham, and a report recording each inspection is lodged in the property section of the church shared drive.

All statutory inspections are up to date and annual servicing of boilers and fire appliances were carried out.

In December 2025, an inspection of the roof was carried out, including from the tower. Minor defects with flashings, plant growth in the guttering and a blocked downpipe adjacent to the porch were noted. Quotes have been subsequently sought to remedy the defects, and received, and work will be undertaken in Q2 of 2026.

Maintenance work undertaken

Repairs to the tower roof were satisfactorily completed in February 2025.

Since that time, minor repairs have been undertaken and the churchyard kept tidy by Edward Nash and Charles Oldham.

St Matthew's - Chapelwardens Report Sarena Sherratt

It has been a year of growth and change since Laura joined us in April 2025! St Matt's morning service has seen attendance increase from an average of 25 people for April - June 2025, to an average of 43 people for January - March 2026 (figures include adults, students and children). Notable services were the joint Easter service with St Thomas that had 65 attendees, and the Christmas services that attracted between 37-67 people including children. Students have also become regular attendees and have joined various ministries which is wonderful to see. There have also been a couple of student socials hosted at St Matt's this year. This is very encouraging and we continue to have new visitors most Sundays as well.

Our children's groups, Matt's Minis and Sunday Science Club, are now running for three Sundays a month, and on average there are 7-8 children each Sunday between the two groups. Both groups appear to be thoroughly enjoyed by the children who attend. Additionally, Roots & Shoots was launched in September 2024 as our new multigenerational mid-week group and now has a steady attendance of 21 people (8 children and 13 adults) on average.

The Papers and Pastries service started in 2024 has now become a short Cafe Church service, with the addition of worship and a short talk or interview, which has been very well received for the first few months.

An Alpha course was run during October and November which was attended by around 23 people each week, some of which have either visited or joined St Matt's following this.

Attendance throughout the year for Sunday services in red, Roots & Shoots in green, Alpha in orange, and the total in black can be seen in the chart on the next page.



St Matt's has continued to be used by various groups in and around Widcombe, as well as city wide. Regular bookings have included BODS, Found Youth, Widcombe Junior School, Pilates/fitness classes, Bell ringing, and Genesis Trust. Occasional bookings have included Just Love Bath's 10 year anniversary celebration, Panto acrobat rehearsals, Bath CU, birthday parties, Fusion/UCCF prayer night and Engineering Ministries International meetings.

It has been an exciting year of development for St Matt's both for church activities and as we have started more outreach-focussed events. We look forward to seeing how these changes continue as Laura becomes more established, supported by a church community which is keen to reach out to those around us.

St Matthew's - Fabric Report

Miles Andrews

Since the last APCM, we have spent a lot of time caring for our building. The quinquennial review carried out in 2023 had identified several areas of deficiency, the most urgent of which we have focused on as a priority. Whilst we have done our best to address many of these areas, lack of available funding and resources have meant that some of these issues have not yet been resolved. Fortunately, we have a team of people in the congregation who have willingly stepped up to help keep our building running smoothly and we are so thankful for all they do.

Future Plans

There is a desire within the congregation and the team to make better use of the space we have at St Matt's. To help guide this vision, we have formed a building committee tasked with exploring how the building can better serve both the congregation and the local community.

We have already looked into several options for the space, including the possibility of a climbing wall or soft play area and have sent out invitations to several companies to submit formal proposals. It is our view that, in the short term, we should focus on improving our accessibility and core facilities. This would involve installing a ramp and upgrading the toilets and kitchen. There is also an interest in making the building more accessible to those visiting by cycle. We are currently investigating the installation of bike racks to encourage sustainable travel and to provide a secure space for visitors to leave their bicycles.

While we recognise that some of these changes will require a Faculty, we are hopeful that these steps will ensure the building remains a safe and welcoming environment for years to come.

Roof and Gutters

Following a significant leak in the roof last year, several slipped slates were replaced and cracked lead flashing was repaired. To prevent further leaks in the future, we have now employed Ellis & Co to carry out a regular twice-yearly inspection of the whole of the St Matt's roof. The north ridge and office wing of the church were re-roofed a year or two before the pandemic. We have been advised that, in the long term and when sufficient funds are available, the remainder of the roof will also need to be re-roofed and insulated.

There is evidence that the majority of gutters around the building are blocked allowing rainwater to overspill. This is most likely being caused by the leafguard being dislodged, allowing vegetation to fill the gutters. The gutters will need to be cleaned and the leafguard replaced. Ellis & Co will be able to do this as part of their ongoing remit. Some gutters are showing signs of structural deterioration and will require repair.

Redecoration

The internal doors have been repainted and the internal areas rearranged.

Electoral Roll Angela Frith

The Parish listed 68 on the Roll at the 2025 APCM.

Revision of the Electoral Roll for the 2026 APCM was completed on 11 April 2026 and published on the notice boards of both churches on 12 April 2026. It now lists 73 people.

There are 6 new entries, with one name removed as they have moved away from the area.

PCC Secretariat

The 2025 APCM was held at St Matthew's Church on 11 May 2025. Since the APCM, the full PCC have met 5 times, with an average level of attendance of 76%.

In 2025, there were:

3 Baptisms	St Thomas à Becket
1 Wedding	St Thomas à Becket
1 Funeral	St Thomas à Becket
1 Memorial service	St Thomas à Becket

Safeguarding Report Jill Oldham

There were two safeguarding concerns raised during the year. Both of these were addressed and resolved in line with Diocesan safeguarding procedures.

Throughout the year, the organisation Thirtyone:eight handled DBS applications efficiently. Four people received a clear DBS check for their role working with children during our Sunday services at St. Matthew's church.

Our benefice continued to use the Diocesan 'Parish Dashboard' self-audit tool during the year, retaining its (top) Level 3 status. Policies were reviewed as required and updated. As additional Dashboard requirements were added throughout the year, these were raised at PCC meetings, addressed and compliance confirmed.

As regards safeguarding training, our benefice's secure safeguarding training database was updated throughout the year as training was completed by those in the parish required to do it, with several people undertaking three-yearly refresher training.

Our parish website meets national church requirements for safeguarding, including providing clear signposting arrangements and links to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Parish Safeguarding Policy on the home page.

Groups for Children and Adults

Matt's Minis Andrew Udale-Smith

The number of children in Matt's Minis (aimed at pre-school children and those in reception year) has continued to grow, with at least 6 regulars. Building on the foundations established in 2024, we now run 3 sessions a month. The children love the mixture of songs, bible story (we have looked at Jesus' miracles and also some Old Testament stories), craft and play time (usually involving Duplo). A heartfelt thank you to our talented and highly committed team of leaders and helpers, which includes both parents and those who like to spend time tackling craft activities on a Sunday morning!

Sunday Science Club

Mary Udale-Smith

Issy Andrews, Stef Federle and I continued to run SSC throughout 2025, although we had variable numbers of children. Issy and Stef continue to amaze me with their creative ideas and passion for teaching children science in enjoyable ways, which also bring glory to God. Thank you so much! Congratulations, too, to Issy for getting her PhD recently. A big thank you is also owed to Joel, Miles, Barney, Janek and Tom for helping deliver sessions with such enthusiasm. We particularly enjoyed running an All-Age service at the end of March which the children helped plan and deliver. Some of the adults became quite competitive in the experiment measuring lung-capacity! In the autumn, we introduced a large collection of colour-coded Lego bricks which were originally donated for Big BriX. This has enabled us to offer an additional session each month – the fourth Sunday is now Lego Sunday. Please let us know if you would like to join in the fun.

Home groups

Harry Collin

Home groups are an essential part of our community at St Matt's, where we are able to go deeper, share our lives and connect with others. Meeting midweek, we encourage each other and grow in spiritual maturity. At the moment, we have three home groups running across the city - one in Southdown (15 members), one in Batheaston (10 members) and one in Weston (16 members). They currently all meet on a Wednesday evening. Homegroups are exceedingly popular, and we are currently trying to expand our capacity. We hope to start one that isn't on a Wednesday evening soon.

Most of the homegroups are self-governing, often organising worship, prayer and Bible study nights. We have also taken advantage of the incredible resources provided by Practicing The Way, by John Mark Comer.

Matt's Men

Andrew Udale-Smith

A new monthly gathering of St Matt's men kicked off in the summer of 2025. The model is simple – we meet at one of our homes for a walk typically up a hill (like Kelston Round Hill or Solsbury Hill), have a short thought or story at the top, and talk and pray together about this on the way back down. We then eat together (and if Harry is cooking, we eat very well!). Numbers are obviously not important, but it's been encouraging to see so many men prioritising these “walk and talk and eat together” sessions.

Red Tent

Izzy Piper

The St Matt's women's group has been meeting regularly over the last year at our Red Tent evenings. The purpose of the sessions is to create a safe space where we can connect as women, go deeper with each other and God, and encourage one another in faith. We come together over a simple meal, then take time to explore a topic or theme through scripture, prompting questions, crafts, and other creative activities. It's been wonderful to share what's on our hearts and both learn from and support each other, while rooting ourselves in God, his word, and community.

Financial Review

The PCC's financial position at the end of 2025 remains stable, with total income of £132,082 and expenditure of £118,833, resulting in a surplus of £13,249. The year-end balance sheet shows total funds of £214,637, including £154,950 (2024: £102,333) in unrestricted funds and £59,687 (2024: £99,055) in restricted funds.

The headline position is influenced by several one-off factors. These include a £25,000 legacy, the final stages of expenditure relating to the St Thomas roof project, and the transfer of £45,000 from restricted to unrestricted funds in line with its restriction. These factors mean that underlying income and expenditure trends require careful attention.

Income was significantly lower than in 2024 (£270,313); 2024 was an exceptional year due to major fundraising for the St Thomas roof repairs. Excluding this, underlying income has declined, most notably in planned giving, which fell to £61,373 (2024: £68,606). Other income streams, including lettings, also down on the previous year.

Historically gift aid has been claimed once, at the end of the year, but in 2024 to support the works on St Thomas church roof it was claimed throughout the year. The gift aid for 2025-2026 financial year has not yet been claimed.

The St Thomas Restoration Fund at £54,500 was bolstered by a £25,000 legacy from the late Thomas Keane. This, along with the extensive recent works at St Thomas, provides a strong position for ongoing upkeep of the building.

Expenditure was broadly in line with expectations. The largest single cost continues to be the Parish Share, with £55,000 paid during the year. Other notable costs included parish administration, supported by a generous donation of £45,000 made in 2024, and building-related expenses across both churches.

The Parish Share request for 2025 was £75,745, of which £55,000 was paid (including a one-off £10,000 contribution funded from 2024 surplus). For 2026, the request is £71,629, and the PCC has currently committed to paying £51,400.

There was significant fundraising that occurred during the year. BODS (Bath Operatic and Dramatic Society) put on a concert of musical numbers which raised £1045.74 to go towards St Matt's building restricted fund. At Laura's licensing service a collection of £352.22 was taken and donated to Genesis. Similarly, offerings were collected at the Christmas services across the parish to a sum of £1425.66 which was split equally between LUX and The Ovens.

In summary, while the Church holds strong reserves and remains financially stable, there is a clear need to increase regular income. This will be essential to sustain ministry, meet the Parish Share in full, continue staffing provision, and support the growth of mission and church activities in the coming years.

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiners Report to the trustees/members of Widcombe PCC - Year Ended 31 December 2025

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2025 as set out on pages 14 to 16.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and;
- to state whether matters have come to my attention.

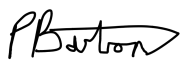
Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

During my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the PCC have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



.....
Peter Barton FCCA
ART Accountants Ltd
11 Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JQ

Date 14 April 2026

Statement of Financial Activities

WIDCOMBE PCC - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES- Year Ended 31 Dec' 2025

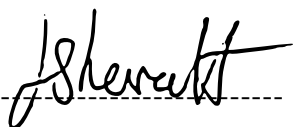
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 2024 £ £	
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary receipts:				
Planned giving	61,373	180	61,553	68,606
Other giving & donations	15,444	3,000	18,444	77,403
Grants	-	3,082	3,082	11,753
Gift aid tax recovered	7,183	-	7,183	29,743
Legacies	-	25,000	25,000	-
Activities for generating funds:				
Fundraising	-	243	243	52,873
Lettings	4,455	1,046	5,501	5,108
Parochial fees	1,318	-	1,318	2,921
Investment income	5,041	-	5,041	3,334
Other income	4,717	-	4,717	18,572
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total incoming resources	99,531	32,551	132,082	270,313
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Church activities:				
<i>Parish expenses:</i>				
Parish Share for year	55,000	-	55,000	42,500
Parish administration	9,056	-	9,056	5,160
Church services	3,677	-	3,677	3,705
Clergy expenses	-	-	-	29
Mission & charitable giving	3,009	-	3,009	43,779
Parish sundries	158	89	247	1,424
Parochial fees	231	-	231	1,266
Bank fees	78	6	84	375
<i>St Thomas Church expenses:</i>				
Heat & light	2,022	-	2,022	1,484
Insurance	1,846	-	1,846	1,372
Church repairs & maintenance	194	21,444	21,638	61,668
Fundraising	-	-	-	360
<i>St Matthew's Church expenses:</i>				
Heat, light & water	4,702	-	4,702	11,685
Insurance	3,141	-	3,141	2,962
Church repairs & maintenance	11,773	2,407	14,180	3,604
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total resources expended	94,887	23,946	118,833	181,373
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	4,644	8,605	13,249	88,940
Balances brought forward	102,333	99,055	201,388	112,448
Transfers	47,973	(47,973)	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	154,950	59,687	214,637	201,388
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Balance Sheet

WIDCOMBE PCC - BALANCE SHEET – Year Ended 31 December 2025

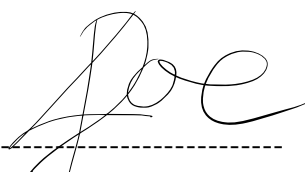
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds	
			2025 £	2024 £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	1,500	-	1,500	676
Bank Current Account	155,574	36,766	192,340	180,010
Deposit Funds	487	22,921	23,408	22,400
	<u>157,561</u>	<u>59,687</u>	<u>217,248</u>	<u>203,086</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	2,611	-	2,611	1,698
	<u>2,611</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,611</u>	<u>1,698</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>154,950</u>	<u>59,687</u>	<u>214,637</u>	<u>201,388</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			154,950	102,333
Restricted funds		Note 1	59,687	99,055
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>214,637</u>	<u>201,388</u>

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf:



Frederick Sherratt (Treasurer of Widcombe PCC)

Date..... 14/04/2026



Laura Doe (Chair of Widcombe PCC)

Date..... 14/04/2026

Notes to the Accounts

WIDCOMBE PCC - NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year Ended 31 December 2025

1 RESTRICTED FUNDS

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance carried forward
St Thomas' Restoration Fund	50,214	28,505	(19,508)	(4,710)	54,501
Organ Fund	2,107		(205)		1,902
St Matthew's Regeneration Fund	1,700	4,046	(2,496)		3,250
Missionary Fund	34				34
Churchwarden's Contingency Fund	45,000		(1,737)	(43,263)	-
	<u>99,055</u>	<u>32,551</u>	<u>(23,946)</u>	<u>(47,973)</u>	<u>59,687</u>

- The St Thomas' Restoration Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas a Becket Church building or curtilage.
- The Organ Fund is restricted to expenditure on any organ repairs that may be required at St Thomas a Becket Church or St Matthews Church.
- The St Matthew's Regeneration Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the church roof and to the future re-ordering of the church building.
- The Missionary Fund covers any gifts made to the church towards specific individuals and causes.
- The Churchwarden's Contingency Fund has been transferred to unrestricted funds in accordance with the donors instructions.

Accounts

**Trustees' Report
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

**for the Parochial Church Council of
St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church,
Widcombe, Bath**

Registered Charity No:1182372

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PCC Membership

The following served during the period 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Incumbent / PCC Chair	Vacant	
PCC Vice-Chair	Andrew Udale-Smith Tony Coverdale Andrew Udale-Smith	<i>From 1 Jan 24 to 6 Feb 2024</i> <i>From 12 Feb 24 to 11 Nov 2024</i> <i>From 11 Nov 24</i>
Churchwardens	Fiona Coverdale Tony Coverdale	
Chapelwardens	Andrew Udale-Smith Jonathan Hilsden Miles Andrews Sarena Sherratt	<i>Until 6 Feb 2024</i> <i>Until APCM</i> <i>From APCM</i> <i>From APCM</i>
Treasurer	Mark Nish Tony Coverdale	<i>Until APCM</i> <i>From APCM – Ex Officio</i>

Elected Members

Mary Udale-Smith	<i>Reader – From APCM</i>
Wayne McMaster	<i>Until APCM</i>
Joel Lloyd-Carter	
Jamie Duncan	
Carol Tottle	<i>Deanery Synod Rep</i>
David Matthews	<i>From APCM</i>
Harry Collin	<i>From APCM</i>
Jill Oldham	<i>From APCM</i>

Co-Opted Members

Reverend Judith Harries	<i>PTO</i>
Mary Udale-Smith	<i>Reader – Until APCM</i>
David Matthews	<i>Until APCM</i>

Secretariat

Secretary	Samatha Forrester Jane Blackbourn	<i>Until Feb 2024</i> <i>From 11 Nov 24</i>
Electoral Role Administrator	Angie Frith	<i>From APCM</i>

Purpose and Responsibilities

Widcombe Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the main decision maker of the benefice.

Its members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation and can principally be found in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

The parish was in vacancy throughout 2024; hence the PCC took on responsibility for promoting the mission of God in Widcombe Benefice.

Legally, the PCC is responsible for the finances of the parish. It also has ultimate responsibility for the care and maintenance of all church buildings and their contents. Although these responsibilities are executed by the churchwardens, all PCC members must share in the oversight. It has a voice in the forms of Service used by the church and may make representations to the bishop on matters that affect the welfare of the parish.

Background

When asked, which commandment is first of all, Christ replied:

"The first is you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:29-31

These commandments have been at the heart of Mission in Widcombe for over 1000 years and while there are many forms of Worship to express ones love for God, the aim is unwavering.

The ancient parish of Widcombe has existed since Anglo-Saxon times, but the current bounds of the parish of Widcombe, Bath were not established until 1972, when St Mark's Lyncombe was closed and part of the neighbouring parish of Lyncombe was absorbed. The parish is part of the Bath Deanery, the neighbouring parishes being Bath Abbey with St James; St Michael Without; St Bartholomew; St Luke; Holy Trinity, Combe Down; St Mary, Claverton; and Bathwick St Mary.

Widcombe, Bath is a benefice, having two churches, St Thomas a Becket (dating from 1502) and the larger church of St Matthew (consecrated in 1847). In the early 1970's, falling congregation numbers were unable to support two churches and in 1975 St Matthew's was converted into a parish hall by building a dividing wall across the nave, converting the western nave into a hall and meeting rooms, and leaving the eastern nave and chancel as a chapel.

St Thomas à Becket church became the predominant place of worship, orientated on the Common Worship prayer book, the cycle of services revolving around Holy Communion Order One, Holy Communion Order Two (BCP), and Morning Prayer (the latter often being lay led). More recently a programme of evening prayer, compline or similar evening service has been introduced, again with many services being lay-led.

In 2000, the status of the parish was reduced to 'House for Duty' but in 2013, St Matthew's was selected as a location for a 'Church Plant' to create a new worshipping community focused on the 'Fresh Expression' form of worship. In 2014, a stipendiary member of clergy was appointed to serve both the new congregation of St Matthew's (St Matt's) and the established congregation of St Thomas à Becket.

In addition, the Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continued to use St Thomas à Becket church for their services as it has done for over forty years.

Nationally, declining congregations have resulted in a reduced number of clergy and the diocese has determined that the Bath Deanery must reduce the number of paid stipendiary posts from 22 to 17. This situation was compounded by the resignation of the incumbent in Widcombe in November 2023, leaving the benefice in vacancy. The two parts of the Widcombe Church family have undertaken discernment. The St Thomas à Becket part of the family wish to continue with Common Worship orientated services, while the St Matt's are considering how 'Fresh Expression' might evolve.

Incumbent

The parish was in vacancy throughout 2024.

Vice-Chair's Report

Vice-Chair: Anthony Coverdale and Andrew Udale-Smith

2024 was a turbulent year for Widcombe Parish and for the PCC. The incumbent, the Revd Tim Buckley, had resigned in November 2023, leaving the Parish in vacancy. At the time, a Deanery plan was already in development to reduce the number of clergy serving the city, requiring some reorganisation of the Benefice structure and, possibly, the amalgamation of Widcombe with a neighbouring parish. In the wake of Revd. Buckley's leaving there were many changes in parish leadership and size of congregation, the latter resulting in a dramatic fall in income.

The parish church of St Thomas a Becket continued its cycle of services based on the Common Worship prayer book, with help from the Bath Deanery and retired clergy, particularly the Revd Judith Harries, and the two university chaplains, the Revd Nigel Rawlinson and Revd Katy Garner.

The St Matthew's Chapel Wardens continued with weekly contemporary services at St Matt's. However, without the Revd Buckley, the members of his staff team were unsure about whether and how to carry on. In the run-up to the APCM in April 2024, many of them decided to leave St Matt's.

There were also changes in the PCC during the first few months of the year. The parish administrator resigned in February, which meant their duties passed to the Church and Chapel wardens. The Parish Reader was seriously ill and her husband, a St Matthew's Chapel Warden and Vice-Chair of the PCC, resigned to support her. One of the St Thomas Churchwardens was elected as Vice-Chair of the PCC. The remaining St Matthew's Chapel Warden and the Treasurer said they would not be standing again at the APCM.

This was the uncertain situation as the APCM approached. However, at the APCM two younger members of the St Matts congregation stood as St Matthew's Chapel Wardens and were duly elected, and four new PCC members were elected. However, no one came forward to be Treasurer; hence one of the St Thomas Churchwardens became the ex-officio Treasurer.

In discussion with the Archdeacon, three options were considered for the Parish – for St Thomas a Becket to form a Benefice with the neighbouring Parish of St Lukes, for St Matt's to leave the PCC and operate as an independent mission church based in the Parish, or for the PCC to continue to operate as a single organisation supporting the two existing churches. After the APCM, once it was clear that the St Matt's congregation wanted to continue as part of Widcombe Parish, the Archdeacon explored options to identify a member of clergy who might lead the Parish in the direction of Option 3. However, the Archdeacon resigned in June 2024 and the situation remained on hold until a new Archdeacon was in post in September.

Following the APCM, the now predominantly younger St Matt's congregation reorganised themselves and moved to a new pattern of Sunday morning services from September 2024. Two children's groups were started (Matt's Minis and Sunday Science Club) for ages 1 to 11 on two Sunday mornings each month, attracting several new families.

However, St Matt's currently has no families with teenagers attending. In recent years, the PCC has funded a contracted Outreach worker, to work with teenagers and students. This led to the development of Friday youth evenings at St Matt's, happening in conjunction with several other churches most weeks and a city-wide youth event known as A2 once a month. This meant our Outreach worker no longer had any capacity for student ministry. However, the changing demographic at St Matt's, reorganisation within A2 and developments in other churches involved in Friday youth meant that the opportunities for our Outreach worker were closed down and they ceased work in November 2024. In parallel, A2 was established as a separate charitable organisation and withdrew its funds from the PCC accounts in July 2024. The two youth groups continue to use the St Matt's church building for their youth meetings.

2024 was also the year that a major building repair project was undertaken to repair the roof of St Thomas a Becket church with a budget of £90,000. Lead was stolen from the vestry in 2023, the chancel required re-felting and replacement of the slate, and the asphalt roof of the tower was holed. A fundraising campaign was undertaken approaching not only members of the Church community, but also members of the local and wider community. Over £90,000 was raised by a combination of donations, Gift Aid, insurance settlement for the theft of the lead and a grant from the Listed Places of Worship Scheme to pay the VAT. The cost of

the roof repairs was covered without having to draw down PCC reserves. The vestry and chancel roof works were completed in early December.

The best news of 2024 came right at the end of the year, when we learnt that the Revd Laura Doe will become our new minister from around April 2025. Laura's role, during the three years of her appointment, will be to help discern the best shape of ministry for our two churches going forward and, God willing, to give time for the Parish to grow and be established on a firm footing for the future.

Reader's Report

Dr Mary Udale-Smith - Reader

After having been seriously ill in the second half of 2023, I made a staged return to ministry in mid-April 2024. My health remains slightly fragile, but I was almost back to full strength by the end of the year.

In the months May – December, I led 9 services and preached 7 times across St Thomas' and St Matt's. I am also part of the St Matt's services planning team and head up the children's Sunday groups, see below for more information. I am a Foundation Governor at Widcombe Junior School which involves 5 governor's meetings a year, regular school visits and quite a lot of training! I was delighted to be able to restart my MA in Theology in September.

Church Wardens and Chapel Wardens

St Thomas à Becket - Churchwarden

Fiona Coverdale – Churchwarden

2024 saw us in vacancy for the whole year, but despite this we have been able to continue to offer twice a month 8am BCP HC services, 10.30am HC and Morning Prayer services and a monthly evening service. This could not have happened without continued support from clergy within the Deanery and from our loyal band of volunteer duty wardens, sides-people, preachers, readers, and intercessors.

With respect to our wider Parish duties, we were very pleased to hold four weddings, one baptism, two funerals and two interments of ashes during 2024.

The German Lutheran congregation continued to meet at St Thomas on a regular basis – we are pleased to be able to share our building with them.

Our now well established, twice monthly, afternoon 'Tea with the Word' get-togethers were well attended and much appreciated. Volunteers again opened the Church to visitors on Sunday afternoons from June to September – with an increased footfall from those also visiting the NT Prior Park Gardens.

The year was dominated by our 'Raise the Roof' campaign. The theft of lead from the vestry roof in 2023 coupled with roof issues highlighted in the 2023 Quinquennial Report resulted in £90,000 needing to be raised to repair the Vestry, Chancel and Tower roofs. A fund-raising team got behind the wardens and together we worked to address this seemingly huge mountain to climb. A well-publicised 'Teas in the Churchyard' weekend followed by a leafleting campaign within the parish galvanised both Church and local community members. An amazing £53,000 was raised which, together with the insurance payout for the lead theft, a grant to cover VAT from the Listed Places of Worship scheme and Gift Aid resulted in us reaching our target amount. Huge thanks go to all who helped in any way. Very generous donations came not just from Church members but also from people within Widcombe who value the Church highly although they are not congregation members.

St Thomas a Becket – Fabric Report

Anthony Coverdale – Churchwarden

In late 2022, the lower vestry at St Thomas a Becket church developed a leak caused by deterioration of the bituminous felt covering and slipped slates on the adjacent chancel. A temporary repair was affected but while plans were being made to replace the bituminous roof the problem was compounded by the theft of lead from the adjoining upper vestry roof (March 2023). 2023 was also a year of quinquennial review which

identified that the asphalt roof of the tower had also failed and needed repair. In September 2023, the PCC resolved that:

Repair of the vestry, chancel and tower roofs of St Thomas a Becket Church should be pursued and a faculty raised to obtain approval for the work. The use of an alternative to lead for the vestry roof should be pursued and a faculty raised to obtain approval with advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches for the work (DAC).

The repairs dominated work relating to the fabric of St Thomas a Becket Church in 2024.

St Thomas a Becket Church is grade II* listed. A faculty was submitted in 2023 to use a single ply membrane (EBPM) as an alternative to lead for the vestry roof but was rejected. A revised design scheme was prepared by the Church architect, using Terne Coated Stainless Steel (TCSS) as an alternative to lead. Following consultation with the DAC and local council planners, it was agreed that the roofs of the upper and lower vestries should be replaced with the same material - TCSS (both roofs had originally been lead, but the lower roof was replaced with a bituminous covering following theft of the lead in the 1970s). It was also agreed that the chancel and tower roofs should be replaced, like for like.

The design scheme was approved by the Diocese and Local Council in June. Invitations to tender were sent to several roofing companies in response to which three compliant bids were received and the contract awarded to Emery Bros. of Bath on grounds of cost.

The estimated cost of the work was £90K, including VAT, covering the architect's fees and contractor's costs. A major fundraising campaign was embarked upon, which in combination with the insurance claim for the theft of the lead, Gift Aid on eligible donations and a grant from the Listed Places of Worship Scheme raised the required funds without having to call upon the PCC's reserves. Over £50K was raised by donations from congregation members and non-church congregation who value the building as an important asset in the Widcombe landscape.

Work commenced on the vestry and chancel roofs in Oct 2024 and completed in December. Work on the tower remains outstanding, awaiting the availability of a skilled asphalter. Work is hoped to take place in Q1 2025.

St Matthews - Chapel Wardens Report

Sarena Sherratt - Chapel Warden

St Matt's was in vacancy for the whole of 2024; the previous vicar, Revd Tim Buckley, left in November 2023. During the first few months of the year a lot of people chose to leave the church, including most of the previous leadership team which had supported Tim. We approached the 2024 APCM concerned for the future of our church, but with a core fellowship which believed that God was not finished with St Matts and wanted it to continue. Consequently, Miles and I felt called to be chapel wardens for St Matts and we were then elected at the APCM, along with new members for the PCC as well.

Since the APCM, a new team consisting of the St Matts members of the PCC have met regularly to plan our contemporary services. We continued with the twice monthly morning and twice monthly evening service pattern until August. We arranged a variety of different meetings for the Sundays during August including a walk, a worship evening and an Iona style service.

The team made the decision to move all Sunday services to 10:30 am from September to facilitate providing children's work regularly and make it easier for visitors to attend by having a consistent service time. This was well received by the families and congregation in general, with our two new children's groups - Matt's Mini's and Sunday Science Club - being run twice monthly. Once a month we had an alternative style service called Papers and Pastries, which consisted of a cafe and a short 'Thought for the week' to prompt discussion. This was designed to be a gateway service to invite non-Christians into church. By the end of the year, our service congregations were averaging 23 adults and 5 children.

Our church soul groups (mid-week meetings) have continued to be central to the church community throughout 2024. There was some re-organisation of these after the APCM due to several of the soul group leaders and hosts having left the church. We re-formed into three soul groups meeting in various homes around Bath and with new leaders for two of the groups.

St Matt's held one wedding during 2024. St Matt's was booked regularly by Bath Operatic and Dramatic Society, and by the youth groups Found and A2. We also had a new regular booking for Pilates classes and had several one-off bookings for birthday parties and other events.

Although we are now a smaller church family, we are a group of committed believers who have grown closer together through the challenges this year. Everyone has been more involved in soul groups and services and the generosity of people's time and skills is what has enabled us to continue with everything we do. We are looking forward to welcoming Revd Laura Doe in April 2025 and the changes that will bring.

St Matthews - Fabric Report

Miles Andrews - Chapel Warden

Following the APCM, when Sarena and I started as Chapelwardens at St Matthew's, the building had been neglected for some time. The quinquennial review carried out in 2023 had identified several areas of deficiency, the most urgent of which are highlighted in this report. Whilst we have done our best to address many of these areas, lack of available funding and resources have meant that some of these issues have not yet been resolved. Fortunately, we have a team of people in the congregation who have willingly stepped up to help keep our building running smoothly and we are so thankful for all that they do.

Roof Slates - South Ridge

There are several slipped slates on the northern pitch of the south ridge which is allowing water ingress into the building. In the short term, the slates need to be lifted, the roofing membrane replaced, and the slates re-laid, replacing the broken tiles. In the long term and when sufficient funds are available, the entire south ridge will need to be reroofed.

Roof Slates - Middle Ridge

There is no evidence of slipped slates on either pitch of the middle ridge therefore no action is required in the short term. In the long term and when sufficient funds are available, the entire middle ridge will need to be reroofed.

Roof Slates - North Ridge

There is no evidence of slipped slates on either pitch of the north ridge. The entire north ridge was previously reroofed, and no action is anticipated in the short or long term.

Gutters

There is evidence that most gutters around the building are blocked allowing rainwater to overspill. This is most likely being caused by the leaf guard being dislodged, allowing vegetation to fill the gutters. The gutters will need to be cleaned, and the leaf guard replaced. Some gutters are showing signs of structural deterioration, and this will require repair also.

Boilers and Energy

The existing boilers are still working and continue to be serviced on an annual basis. Their housings are in a significant state of disrepair and will need to be replaced soon if the boilers are to remain as the main source of heating for the building. This work will require a faculty. A potential alternative, highlighted by Bruce Clark (church architect, Nash Partnership) is to switch to alternative energy sources such as solar. This is in line with the General Synod February 2020 vote to move towards carbon zero.

Tower

The tower was last inspected at height circa. 1976. There is no proper access internally and the inside is poorly lit, so it is difficult to assess its condition. However, given the length of time that has elapsed since the last inspection, this should be carried out as a matter of urgency.

West Wall

There has been much discussion regarding the crack in the west wall and whether this needs an urgent repair. The crack has occurred almost central to the large window and through the entire thickness of the wall. The occurrence of the crack is thought to be due to movement of an existing steel beam in the crypt. A crack gauge was at some point installed to monitor the crack and is currently showing a dilation of 2mm. It is my view that a full repair of the crack is not possible especially where it has travelled through the window

tracery. It may be possible to install crack stitching above and below the window, but this would require a faculty.

Fire

We continue to strive to make our church building safe in the case of fire. Early in 2024, a fireproof cabinet was installed in the building containing a high vis jacket, the most recent electrical survey (from September 2023), a map of the church which has been recently updated for the fire exits, extinguishers, fuse boxes, water valve, gas valve, etc (copies pinned to the noticeboard) and the fire safety instructions. Further to this, we have reordered and rearranged various spaces in the building that were at risk, including removing flammable stored items from alcoves in fire exits and from the electrical cupboard. The locks on all designated fire escapes will need to be reviewed to ensure they can be opened without difficulty in case of fire. It is believed that there is no fire compartmentalisation between the parish hall and the main church, and this should be verified and/or rectified as a matter of urgency, although it is noted this will require a faculty.

Electoral Roll

The Benefice listed 78 on the Roll at the end of 2024, a fall of 30 from the figures at the end of 2023. This reflected a major review of the Roll undertaken as part of preparations for the APCM to ensure that the Roll correctly reflected the state of the parish.

PCC Secretariat

The 2024 APCM was held at St Matthew's Church on 28 April 2024. Since the APCM, the full PCC have met 5 times, with an average level of attendance of 73%.

In 2024, there were:

- 2 Baptisms St Thomas à Becket
- 4 Weddings St Thomas à Becket
- 1 Wedding St Matthew's
- 2 Funerals St Thomas à Becket
- 2 Interment of Ashes St Thomas à Becket

Safeguarding Report 2024

Jill Oldham, Parish Safeguarding Officer

There was one safeguarding concern raised during the year regarding a member of Youth Church. No one else was implicated. The matter was addressed in line with Diocesan safeguarding procedures, and the young person in question received the necessary support.

Throughout the year, the organisation Thirtyone:eight handled DBS applications efficiently and gave advice when sought. Eight people received a clear DBS check for their role within our two churches: two Chapelwardens, five Children's Activity Leaders and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (DBS renewal). In addition, four young people received a clear DBS check via Widcombe Benefice for their role with Youth Alpha.

Our Benefice continued to use the Diocesan 'Parish Dashboard' self-audit tool during the year, retaining its (top) Level 3 status. Policies were reviewed as required and updated. As additional Dashboard requirements were added throughout the year, these were raised at PCC meetings, addressed and compliance confirmed.

As regards safeguarding training, our Benefice's secure safeguarding training database was updated throughout the year as training was completed by those in the Parish required to do it, with several people undertaking three-yearly refresher training.

Our Parish website meets national church requirements for safeguarding, including providing clear signposting arrangements and links to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Parish Safeguarding Policy on the home page.

Mission

Widcombe Junior School

Dr Mary Udale-Smith – Foundation Governor

The school held their Harvest, Easter, and Christmas services at St Matt's in 2024, and a Leavers' service at the end of the summer term. The school's vision is 'Be the best you can be' and they weave this into the fabric of school life and teaching. It is based on Acts 2:1-4, when the Holy Spirit equipped the believers to go out into the world.

I have very much enjoyed visiting the school this year and am always impressed by the dedication of the staff and the behaviour and engagement of the children. Highlights were seeing a rehearsal of the year 6 production of Matilda and the Harvest Festival at St Matt's.

The PCC were very pleased to be able to give £600 to pay for two students to attend the year 6 residential trip. The school is still looking for one further Foundation Governor.

St Matt's Children's Groups

Dr Mary Udale-Smith

Sadly, we were not able to continue with our occasional Saturday morning Lego club, Big BriX, in 2024 as Revd Buckley had left and I was ill, leaving the team very depleted. However, we did continue with the Sunday morning Little BriX group for the first half of the year.

Children do get older each year though and it was becoming apparent that the older ones needed something different to engage them appropriately. Over the summer, a small group of us discussed starting a Sunday Science Club for school years 1-6. This started in September and is proving great fun for adults and children alike. Meanwhile, Little BriX was transformed into Matt's Minis and is aimed at pre-school children and Reception. These two groups run on the first and third Sundays of the month. 12 children from 7 families came to one or more sessions between September – December. Weekly numbers are usually between 3-6 at Matt's Minis and 1-5 at Sunday Science Club.

I am hugely grateful to Issy Andrews and Stef Federle for their help planning and leading Sunday Science club, along with a growing band of helpers. It must be one of the most highly qualified Sunday School teams in the country. I am also extremely grateful to an enthusiastic and creative team of parents and volunteer leaders who took on Matt's Minis at the end of the year – thank you all, you know who you are!

St Matt's Men's Ministry

Andrew Udale-Smith

The Widcombe Warriors are a group of men (mainly from St Matt's) who, since 2019, have been learning to "walk with God" whilst navigating life's ups and downs together.

Having met weekly in the spring of 2024 for teaching and discussion, we decided to focus on doing something practical over the summer. This turned out to be serving the food and drink to the youngsters at the citywide Youth Alpha that took place at St Matt's in May and June. It was a real privilege to see around 50 young people come along every Wednesday evening (and they were very polite to the old-timers who were serving them!).

In September 2024, as we had done the last few years, we hosted a Wild at Heart retreat for a group of men from Bath, Bristol and beyond at The Poplars, a Christian conference centre near the Malvern Hills. This year 49 men made it to The Poplars for what was a rich time of teaching (based on the book Wild at Heart), fellowship and fun! This year's retreat will take place from the evening of Friday 26 September until the evening of Sunday 28 September 2025.

St Matt's Women's ministry – the Red Tent

Jane Blackburn

The Red Tent is a new initiative as part of the women's ministry at St Matt's. It is based on the Old Testament principal of women withdrawing from the community once a month and finding sanctuary with one another, traditionally identified as the Red Tent. It was seen as a time of rest from serving the men, instead focusing on care and support among each other. From teenagers to mothers to grandmothers, the women would share

in worship, storytelling and growing in love for one another. The hope is to emulate this way of community by gathering the women of St Matt's once a month to share in vulnerability and identify how Jesus is present in every aspect of our lives.

There have been two gatherings so far with around 6-8 women attending. These have taken part in the homes of church family members where a meal has been shared and questions on life discussed around the table. Each gathering has a theme (e.g light and darkness) with prompt questions available to probe vulnerability and an adjacent activity such as a craft or game based on the theme. Listeners are encouraged to offer insights or places they see God working in each other's stories.

Already, it has been a joy and great blessing to see the depths of the hearts of the women at St Matt's and grow in fellowship and community with one another. There is great anticipation to see where the group goes, with different members facilitating sessions and bringing their own experiences, as well as having an awareness of where God might be moving any given season.

Youth (A2 and Found)

2024 has been a significant year for the young individuals of Bath. We have witnessed the impactful movement of God's spirit at Found Youth, which convenes on Friday evenings, as well as within the monthly city-wide Youth initiative known as A2. The attendance at both initiatives, which meet at St Matt's, has increased, with young people inviting their friends to learn about the good news of Jesus. There is an evident hunger for God among the new generation, which is both compelling and crucial to the work God is doing within His Church.

In March, churches collectively engaged in prayer to support a planned school's mission. Our Youth and Outreach Worker, Libby Piggott, was heavily involved. This outreach initiative, executed in April, was supported by the band LZ7. Hundreds of young individuals were introduced to the gospel through a week of school assemblies across the city, culminating in a youth event at the Forum on the Friday night of that week. Subsequently, we ran Youth Alpha sessions at St Matt's during May and June for those whose hearts were moved by what they had heard.

Sadly, towards the end of 2024, we bid farewell to Libby. She has had a profound impact on the young people of both our parish and Bath in general during her tenure and played a key role in the development of both Found and A2. Since her departure, we have been working diligently to understand how to continue supporting the youth movement across the city, while also recognizing the demographic shift within our parish, where we have an increasing number of young families joining the congregation.

Financial Review

The major financial drivers in 2024 were the reduction in congregation size and corresponding reduction in income, and the cost of repair of the St Thomas a Becket Church roof and associated fundraising campaign.

Planned giving fell from £84,628 in 2023 to £68,606 in 2024 and may fall further in 2025 as people left the church community in the first quarter of 2024. Following the theft of lead from the St Thomas a Becket vestry roof in 2023 and repairs arising from the quinquennial inspection, the PCC faced the challenge of a £90,000 repair project.

The St Thomas roof fundraising campaign raised £53,000. Gift aid on those donations added an additional £8,686. An insurance settlement was agreed with Ecclesiastical Insurance for £18,490 and a grant was obtained from the Listed Places of Worship Scheme for £11,750 resulting in a total of £94,488. The repair is therefore being funded without drawing on the PCC reserves. Work on the vestry and chancel completed in December for which £56,444 has been paid. Work is ongoing on the tower which is planned to complete in the first quarter of 2025.

In November 2024 a major restricted donation of £45,000 was made to the PCC. This had been promised at the start of the fundraising campaign as insurance against being unable to raise funds by other means. Having raised sufficient funds for the roof the promised donation was made but with restrictions on its use. The minimum sum held in the restricted St Thomas Restoration fund was to be raised to £25,000 as insurance against future urgent work that may arise. Internal fittings, such as carpets, damaged by the leaking roof were to be replaced and a Parish Secretary should be funded to ease the load on the Churchwardens.

The major routine spend is for the Benefice share. The Diocese of Bath and Wells requested a contribution of £75,210, against which the PCC agreed to contribute £42,500.

Two other major commitments were the A2 youth mission work and the contracting of a Youth Mission worker. The nature of these two initiatives had changed by early 2024 from what was originally conceived. The A2 initiative involved several churches across Bath with leadership being centred on the Bath City Church. The A2 group set up as an independent Charitable Organisation in 2024 and withdrew their funds from the PCC account where they had been hosted during the start-up phase of the project. The Youth Mission work had also changed in nature and was no longer targeting young people in the St Matts congregation. Funding for the Youth Mission worker therefore stopped in November 2024.

Donations had also been amassed for a Sri Lankan mission project but links with the project were lost with the departure of the Revd Tim Buckley. The residual funds were therefore transferred to the charity and the restricted fund closed.

£600 was also donated to Widcombe Juniors School to support a school camp project and £680 was donated to two selected charities, Grow for Life and Burundi Mission and Development, from funds raised at the parish's Christmas Services.

The expenditure from unrestricted funds falls into three categories: PCC expenses, including Benefice Share and charitable donations, St Thomas à Becket's expenses; and St Matthew's expenses.

Unrestricted donations come predominantly from planned giving, with a small amount received from lettings of St Matthews Church.

The PCC met its legal liabilities in 2024 and continues to aim is to maintain a reserve of Unrestricted Funds in the order of £30,000, equivalent to approximately three month's routine operating costs.

Over the year, the PCC's surplus rose from £112,448 on 31 Dec 2023 to £201,388 on 31 Dec 2024, noting that a large proportion of the surplus is in Restricted Funds (£99,055).

Unrestricted funds rose by £16,985 (from 85,348 in 2023 to £102,333 in 2024). A key driver for this was the reduction in Parish Share (£42,500 down from £65,400).

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiners Report to the trustees/members of Widcombe PCC - Year Ended 31 December 2024

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2024 as set out on pages 14 to 16.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and;
- to state whether matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

During my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the PCC have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Peter Barton FCCA
ART Accountants Ltd
11 Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JQ

Date 26 March 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

WIDCOMBE PCC - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES- Year Ended 31 Dec' 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 2023 £ £	
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary receipts:				
Planned giving	67,198	1,408	68,606	84,628
Other giving & donations	12,315	65,088	77,403	24,023
Grants	-	11,753	11,753	-
Gift aid tax recovered	20,993	8,750	29,743	21,047
Activities for generating funds:				
Fundraising	-	52,873	52,873	1,766
Lettings	5,108	-	5,108	8,771
Parochial fees	2,921	-	2,921	1,676
Investment income	3,334	-	3,334	2,448
Other income	82	18,490	18,572	70,012
Total incoming resources	111,951	158,362	270,313	214,371
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Church activities:				
<i>St Parish expenses:</i>				
Parish Share for year	42,500	-	42,500	65,400
Parish administration	5,160	-	5,160	17,002
Church services	3,462	243	3,705	5,241
Clergy expenses	29	-	29	143
Mission & charitable giving	19,778	24,001	43,779	35,845
Parish sundries	1,424	-	1,424	2,800
Parochial fees	1,266	-	1,266	857
Bank fees	77	298	375	225
<i>St Thomas Church expenses:</i>				
Heat & light	1,484	-	1,484	1,011
Insurance	1,372	-	1,372	1,202
Church repairs & maintenance	163	61,505	61,668	11,648
Legal fees	-	-	-	2,485
Fundraising	-	360	360	2,485
<i>St Matthew's Church expenses:</i>				
Heat, light & water	11,685	-	11,685	15,634
Insurance	2,962	-	2,962	2,803
Church repairs & maintenance	3,604	-	3,604	16,742
Total resources expended	94,966	86,407	181,373	179,039
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	16,985	71,955	88,940	35,332
Balances brought forward	85,348	27,100	112,448	77,115
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	102,333	99,055	201,388	112,448

Balance Sheet

WIDCOMBE PCC - BALANCE SHEET – Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds	
			2024 £	2023 £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	390	286	676	1,622
Bank Current Account	103,170	76,840	180,010	100,422
Deposit Funds	471	21,929	22,400	21,278
	<u>104,031</u>	<u>99,055</u>	<u>203,086</u>	<u>123,321</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	1,698	-	1,698	10,874
	<u>1,698</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,698</u>	<u>10,874</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>102,333</u>	<u>99,055</u>	<u>201,388</u>	<u>112,448</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			102,333	85,348
Restricted funds		Note 1	99,055	27,100
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>201,388</u>	<u>112,448</u>

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf:



Anthony Coverdale (Treasurer of Widcombe PCC)

Date... 25 March 2025



Andrew Udale-Smith (Vice Chair of Widcombe PCC)

Date... 25 March 2025

Notes to the Accounts

WIDCOMBE PCC - NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year Ended 31 December 2024

1 RESTRICTED FUNDS

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance carried forward
St Thomas' Restoration Fund	20,288	92,046	(62,120)		50,214
Organ Fund	2,350		(243)		2,107
St Matthew's Regeneration Fund	1,700				1,700
Missionary Fund	2,762	21,316	(24,044)		34
Churchwarden's Contingency Fund	-	45,000			45,000
	<u>27,100</u>	<u>158,362</u>	<u>(86,407)</u>	<u></u>	<u>99,055</u>

- The St Thomas' Restoration Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas a Becket Church building or curtilage.
- The Organ Fund is restricted to expenditure on any organ repairs that may be required at St Thomas a Becket Church or St Matthews Church.
- The St Matthew's Regeneration Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the church roof and to the future re-ordering of the church building.
- The Missionary Fund covers any gifts made to the church towards specific individuals and causes.
- The Churchwarden's Contingency Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas a Becket Church building or curtilage, or costs to support employment of a Parish Administrator.

Accounts

**Trustees' Report
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

**for the Parochial Church Council of
St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church,
Widcombe, Bath**

Registered Charity No:1182372

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PCC Membership

The following served during the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Ex-officio members

Incumbent / PCC Chair	Rev Timothy Buckley	<i>Until 31 Nov 2023</i>
PCC Vice-Chair	Andrew Udale-Smith	
Churchwardens	Fiona Coverdale Tony Coverdale	<i>From APCM 23 Apr 2023</i>
Chapelwardens	Andrew Udale-Smith Jonathan Hilsden	
Treasurer	Mark Nish	

Elected Members

Jonathan Potter	<i>Until 7 Nov 2023</i>
Wayne McMaster	
Joel Lloyd-Carter	
Carol Tottle	<i>Deanery Synod rep</i>

Co-Opted Members

Reverend Judith Harries	<i>PTO</i>
Mary Udale-Smith	<i>Reader</i>
David Matthews	<i>From 7 Nov 2023</i>

Secretariat

Secretary	Samatha Forrester	
Electoral Role Administrator	Jonathan Potter	<i>Until 7 Nov 2023</i>

Purpose and Responsibilities

Widcombe Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the main decision maker of the benefice.

Its members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation and can principally be found in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

It is responsible, with the incumbent, for promoting the mission of God in Widcombe Benefice.

Legally, the PCC is responsible for the finances of the parish. It also has ultimate responsibility for the care and maintenance of all church buildings and their contents. Although these responsibilities are executed by the churchwardens, all PCC members must share in the oversight. It has a voice in the forms of Service used by the church and may make representations to the bishop on matters that affect the welfare of the parish.

Background

When asked, which commandment is first of all, Christ replied:

"The first is you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:29-31

These commandments have been at the heart of Mission in Widcombe for over 1000 years and while there are many forms of Worship to express ones love for God, the aim is unwavering.

The ancient parish of Widcombe has existed since Anglo-Saxon times, but the current bounds of the parish of Widcombe, Bath were not established until 1972, when St Mark's Lyncombe was closed and part of the neighbouring parish of Lyncombe was absorbed. The parish is part of the Bath Deanery, the neighbouring parishes being: Bath Abbey with St James; St Michael Without; St Bartholomew; St Luke; Holy Trinity, Combe Down; St Mary, Claverton; and Bathwick St Mary.

Widcombe, Bath is a benefice, having two churches, St Thomas a Becket (dating from 1502) and the larger church of St Matthew (consecrated in 1847). In the early 1970's, falling congregation numbers were unable to support two churches and in 1975 St Matthew's was converted into a parish hall by building a dividing wall across the nave, converting the western nave into a hall and meeting rooms, and leaving the eastern nave and chancel as a chapel.

St Thomas à Becket church became the predominant place of worship, orientated on the Common Worship prayer book, the cycle of services revolving around Holy Communion Order One, Holy Communion Order Two (BCP), and Morning Prayer (the latter often being lay-led). More recently a programme of evening prayer, compline or similar evening service has been introduced, again with many services being lay-led.

In 2000, the status of the parish was reduced to 'House for Duty' but in 2013, St Matthew's was selected as a location for a 'Church Plant' to create a new worshipping community focused on the 'Fresh Expression' form of worship. In 2014, a stipendiary member of clergy was appointed to serve both the new congregation of St Matthew's (St Matt's) and the established congregation of St Thomas à Becket.

In addition, the Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continued to use St Thomas à Becket church for their services as it has done for over forty years.

Nationally, declining congregations have resulted in a reduced number of clergy and the diocese has determined that the Bath Deanery must reduce the number of paid stipendiary posts from 22 to 17. This situation was compounded by the resignation of the incumbent in Widcombe in November 2023, leaving the benefice in vacancy. The two parts of the Widcombe Church family have undertaken discernment. The St Thomas à Becket part of the family wish to continue with Common Worship orientated services, while the St Matt's are considering how 'Fresh Expression' might evolve.

The most probable future is that the Widcombe Benefice will need to form a cluster with a neighbouring parish or benefice served by a common member of clergy to provide spiritual leadership. Looking at our neighbours in turn:

Bath Abbey and St Michael Without already have close links.

St Bartholomew's (St Bart's) have two congregations holding services at St Bart's Oldfield and St Bart's Riverside, meeting at Hayesfield School.

St Luke's (in vacancy since May 2023) hold a range of services based upon one church on Wellsway.

Holy Trinity Combe Down support four churches in three parishes: Holy Trinity Combe Down; St Andrew's Community Church, Foxhill; St James the Great, South Stoke; and St Micheal's, Monkton Combe.

St Mary's Claverton are part of a Benefice with St Nicholas, Bathampton.

Bathwick, St Mary are part of the United Benefice of Bathwick with St John's Church.

Objectives and Activities

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

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit, and particularly the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of the parish community through: worship and prayer, learning from the Gospels; pastoral care for people living in the parish and beyond; and missionary and outreach work.

Achievements and Performance

Vicar's Report

Reverend Tim Buckley - Incumbent

2023 quickly felt like it was going to be a year of significant change – little did I know how true that would later become.

It was always hoped that I would be able to take a three-month sabbatical during the year, which is gifted in the Diocese of Bath and Wells after 10 years of ministry and, early in the new year, this 'away from Parish ministry' was confirmed by the diocese for June-August.

With that in mind, early 2023 meant a time of detailed planning and preparation for my time away in terms of service and pastoral cover. Big thanks to the wardens, PCC, staff team and volunteers for their great support and partnership in this, particularly Sam Forrester for her brilliant oversight as Parish administrator and PCC secretary.

For many, this past year continued to bring great challenges. But despite the problems facing the national church in terms of finances, reducing clergy numbers and theological discussions and disagreements, here in Widcombe we had much to celebrate and be thankful for - not least in what we witnessed and experienced in the exciting and growing sphere of youth and children's ministry over the weeks and months.

In the light of some of the post-covid challenges, we at St Matt's took some time over several weeks to study the book of Nehemiah, to consider the challenges of hearing God's voice and re-envisioning and rebuilding together - themes that would carry even great significance no doubt, later in the year.

After a wonderful Easter season, we embarked on a challenging teaching series from Revelation covering the letters to the churches before I finally heading off on my sabbatical.

During this wonderful time, I was able to walk the St Cuthbert's Way on pilgrimage to Lindisfarne and spend time on silent retreat on the Inner Hebrides Isle of Seil, reflecting and praying, and capturing on film the beauty of God's creation. I then headed to Chicago for two weeks to meet with several church leaders and their congregations. Finally, my family joined me for the last month of my sabbatical as we drove the West Coast Route from Seattle to San Diego covering some 3000 miles. I returned to the UK with a definite sense of the Lord having spoken clearly to me during this time about moving onto new adventures.

As I wrote in my letter to the Parish in mid-September...

"I returned from sabbatical with a definite sense of God calling us as a family to new things, and so immediately upon my return I wrote to the Bishop to inform him of my sense of God's leading for me to stand down as vicar of the parish....both Sarah's and my conviction (and helpfully that of our children too) is that God is very much leading us to take a step away from parish ministry in the Church of England in this season and to explore new adventures, new ways of shaping and resourcing church and their communities."

Whilst inevitably a difficult and somewhat sad announcement for our parish family, we felt very supported and affirmed by all after the decision was made public.

My final service was held on the morning of Sunday 26th November and was a joint gathering of the congregations of St Matthew's and St Thomas à Becket and we enjoyed a wonderful warm farewell. We were very grateful to all for the kindness and generosity shown at our departure.

As ever, church life can only happen because all play their part in family life. We have been deeply blessed over the years, and not least during this past year, with an incredible team of volunteers and staff throughout the parish who have worked tirelessly to serve and facilitate the many varied worship services, events, and ministries. For all the endless generosity of time, resources, and energy, for your selfless, creative, humble, and enthusiastic partnership, ministry, and wise and prayerful counsel – a deep thank you!

The PCC, along with our amazing wardens and service teams at St Matt's & St Thomas à Becket, have always been central in making sure church life, with its joys, challenges, diversity, and outflowing ministry, work so seamlessly. It has therefore been my utmost privilege and joy to lead alongside these heroes of the faith and I'm personally so grateful for their faithful support and hard work throughout, not just this last year, but over the last decade.

Thank you to everyone who has been or continues to be part of the family of churches in Widcombe, both at St Thomas à Becket and at St Matts. Even in this uncertain new season, we can all be encouraged that God will continue to make a way as you seek to serve the lost and bring blessing in His name to all around you, honouring and loving God, loving each other, and loving this fabulous community.

Thank you and bless you all!

Reader's report

Dr Mary Udale-Smith - Reader

In the first half of 2023, I led and preached at services in both St Thomas' and St Matt's and received a licence from the Bishop to allow me to officiate at Holy Communion when the elements have previously been consecrated by a priest at a service within the parish. I was happy to be able to offer support to both churches during Reverend Tim Buckley's sabbatical, including planning the sermon and service series at St Matt's and taking one 8am Communion service at St Thomas'.

Sadly, ill-health took me out of action for most of the autumn. Having had a significant procedure towards the end of the year, I hope to start a staged return to ministry in 2024. I also have had to suspend my MA in Theology completely this academic year but hope to pick that back up in 2024.

Churchwarden - St Thomas à Becket

Fiona Coverdale – Churchwarden

It has been a challenging year, but our small, loyal congregation are pulling together and are positive about the future.

Since the last APCM St Thomas' have been able to continue to offer twice a month 8am BCP HC services, 10.30am HC and Morning Prayer services and a monthly evening service. Following the departure of Reverend Tim Buckley this has been with the help of visiting clergy, to whom we are extremely grateful. The Morning Prayer and evening service provide a welcome opportunity for the continuation of our well established lay-led services. The smooth running of all our services owes much to the band of volunteer duty wardens, sides-people, readers, and intercessors.

The German Lutheran congregation continue to meet at St Thomas on a regular basis and are very grateful to us for the use of the building.

Our outreach activities have ranged from the twice monthly afternoon 'tea with the word' get-togethers to 'teas in the Churchyard' and a range of events where the Church building has been open out with the normal Sunday service times. We also support the weekly coffee morning held on a Wednesday at St Matt's.

Summer Sunday afternoon opening in June/July/August worked well and there were 182 visitors in total. Visitor numbers varied widely from week to week – dependent on the weather/sporting fixtures etc. – the most in the 2 hours was 37 whilst the least was 5!

We held a 'St Thomas' weekend' in June – with a fascinating talk about the history of the Church building and the parish, 'teas in the Churchyard' and an uplifting evening prayer with hymns service. This was one of several events to begin the process of raising money for the Church roof repairs.

Chapelwarden - St Matthew

Jonathan Hilsden – Chapelwarden

Over the summer Tim went on sabbatical for three months requiring the congregation to step up to organize services thereby creating the opportunity for different voices to speak and offer a range of perspectives. When Tim returned from sabbatical, he announced he would be stepping down as vicar of Widcombe Parish at the end of November. Tim's last service was 26 November which was very well attended and a provided a lovely send off for him and his family from the whole parish.

We continued the pattern of two Sunday evening services and two Sunday morning services. Over the year we held one wedding and two adult baptisms in St Matt's. The quinquennial review of the fabric of St Matthew's was completed in the summer of 2023.

Churchwarden - Fabric

Tony Coverdale – Churchwarden

St Thomas a Becket Church

In late 2022, the lower vestry roof began to leak caused by a combination of damaged chancel tiles and deterioration of the bituminous roof on the lower vestry. Plans were in hand for repair when, in March 2023, the lead was stolen from the upper vestry roof (this was the fourth occasion that the lead had been targeted by thieves and on this occasion, several churches in Bath had also been targeted). 2023 was also a year for quinquennial review. An architectural survey was carried out by Bruce Clark of Nash Partnerships and an electrical survey by EPS (Bristol) Ltd. In addition to the chancel and vestry roofs, the architectural survey also identified that the tower roof had reached the end of its serviceable life, the asphalt roof having blistered and spilt. An area of dry rot was also detected in the porch. The electrical review identified that the chancel lights were not earthed and hence did not meet current safety standards.

Vestry Roof

Following discussion with the architect, it was agreed that the repair to the upper and lower vestry roof should be of one design (both roofs were originally lead but the lower vestry was replaced with a bituminous roof following the theft of lead c.1975). A proposal was worked up to replace both roofs with a rubber-based material, EPDM, as an alternative to lead. The DAC and council planners however opposed the proposal as it would likely have a short lifespan, but did advise that Terne-Coated Stainless Steel (TCCS) may be an acceptable alternative. A design was worked up by the church architect and a submission made to the DAC and Council Planning department for Listed Building Consent (St Thomas a Becket Church is listed Grade II*). At the turn of the year, a decision was awaited.

Chancel Roof

There are several broken or slipped slates on the chancel roof. The slates need to be lifted, the roofing membrane replaced, and the slates re-laid, replacing broken tiles.

Tower Roof

The bell tower is capped with a concrete slab covered with an asphalt roof. The asphalt has reached the end of its life, having split in several places, necessitating gorilla tape patches. It is proposed to replace the roof, like for like. One issue that we are in discussion with the council is the need, or not, to conduct a full bat survey before the work commences.

Cost and Funding

The original estimate to repair the chancel room and replace the bituminous lower vestry roof was £15,200 (+VAT). The additional work to replace both vestry roofs with TCCS and repair the tower roof like-for-like will be much more than this. Architect's fees to date are £8,500.00 (+VAT). We have received a donation of £5,000 towards the roof and have raised a further £1,950 through fundraising events, but a fund-raising campaign will be required once we know the likely costs to avoid excessively depleting church funds.

Chancel Lighting

New LED light fittings have been installed in the chancel. After experimentation with intensity and colour, a satisfactory solution has been achieved using 4.3W led lamps (83W equivalent), 600 lm, colour temperature 2700K.

Dry Rot

Small areas of dry rot were identified in the porch. The rot has been mechanically removed and the areas treated with clear Ronseal wood hardener.

Electoral Roll

The Benefice listed 108 on the Roll at the end of 2023.

If anyone is unsure whether they are listed, please contact the Electoral Roll Administrator on electoralroll@widcombe.church.

If you would like to be added to the Electoral Roll you can apply online at <https://widcombe.churchsuite.com/forms/nhyminy> or contact the Electoral Roll Administrator for a paper application form.

PCC Secretariat

The 2023 APCM was held at St Matthew's Church on 23 April 2023. Since the APCM, the full PCC have met 5 times, with an average level of attendance of 69%. Between April 2023 and April 2024, there were:

1 Dedication	St Thomas à Becket
2 Adult Baptisms	St Matthew's
1 Wedding	St Thomas à Becket
1 Wedding	St Mathew's
1 Funeral	St Thomas à Becket

Safeguarding

Jill Oldham – Safeguarding Officer

There were no safeguarding incidents reported during 2023 in respect of St Thomas à Becket Church or St. Matthew's Church.

During the year, 23 people from St Matthews's and St Thomas a Becket congregations received a clear DBS check for their roles, for example concerning church administration, acting as churchwarden, Big Brix, Little Brix, pastoral visiting and youth church.

In October, the DBS process became much easier and quicker with applications going through the independent, Christian, non-profit organization "Thirtyone:eight", rather than through the Diocesan safeguarding department.

Our Benefice continued to use the Diocesan 'Parish Dashboard' self-audit tool throughout the year. Policies were reviewed if required and updated.

As regards safeguarding training, our Benefice's secure safeguarding training database was updated throughout the year as training was completed by those in the Parish required to do it.

Safeguarding training must be refreshed every three years, and further details of the safeguarding training categories can be found on the Diocesan website. Anyone requiring training is asked to contact the Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

Our Parish website meets national church requirements for safeguarding, including providing clear signposting arrangements and links to the Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Policy on the home page.

Deanery Synod

Carol Tottle – Deanery Representative

A Deanery is a geographical subdivision of a Diocese, grouping together parishes so that they can work together to serve God's purpose. The Diocese of Bath and Wells comprises 19 Deaneries, of which the Bath Deanery is one. The Bath Deanery comprises 21 parishes containing 40 Churches. Each Deanery has a Synod, which is an intermediary between the PCC of each parish or benefice and the Diocese Synod.

The aim of the Deanery Synod is to encourage local efforts and programmes, supporting and assisting churches to be more visible in their communities and to grow and flourish, each playing their unique and important part.

The Bath Deanery Synod is chaired by the Area Dean, the Reverend Stephen Girling.

Currently one member of the Widcombe PCC sits on the Deanery Synod, which provides the PCC with a link between the parish and the wider structure of the church.

The church of England currently faces a major financial challenge in response to which the number of stipendiary clergy within the Bath Deanery will be reduced from 22 to 17 clergy over the next 3-4 years.

Mission

Christmas Services

The Christmas services were well attended.

- Nine Lessons with Carols was very successful with 97 people present. The mince pies and mulled wine arranged by Carol Tottle for after the service were much appreciated and enjoyed by many.
- The Christmas Eve 11pm service saw a lower number of attendees than previous years, but the weather was VERY wet (42 people in 2023 cf. 72 in 2022).

- Christmas morning numbers were also a bit lower than would have been hoped (68 in total cf. 91 in 2022).

Offertory collections taken at these services was shared by our 3 chosen charities; Mercy in Action - Food Pantry, Shelter, and Tear Fund (Middle East Emergency Appeal).

Other missional support

We continued to provide financial support to our mission partners in Sri Lanka, Jerrie and Isabel, both in terms of their co-leading of the newly built church and also their running of the *Haven Home* for girls in Sandy.

We also provided some financial support to *Just Love*, a charity that equips students and support alumni to pursue justice and engage in social action initiatives including volunteering in local communities, from homeless outreaches to teaching English to refugees, from youth mentoring to collections for foodbanks.

Soul Groups

Midweek "Soul Groups" (small groups) continue to meet (usually) on Wednesdays in homes around the city for food, fellowship, Bible study and discipleship.

Tea with the Word

Liz Holden-White

'Tea with the Word' is exactly that! We meet twice a month on a Thursday afternoon at my home. We start with tea, cake and chat and then read and discuss a Bible passage. Recently we have read about some of the inspirational women in the Bible. During Lent we have considered suitable themes - self-denial, repentance, and forgiveness. This group welcomes any member of our congregation who would like to come!

Wednesday Coffee Morning

Victoria Jones

Coffee morning happens on a Wednesday morning 10.30-12.00 at St Matt's in the café area. A small number from the Church and local community, of varying ages, generally come and there is also a group of up to 20 who meet on Wednesday's to play cribbage.

At present, there are three individuals who volunteer their time to host the coffee mornings. The future of the Coffee Morning is currently uncertain.

BriX Children's Work

Jonathan Hilsden

BriX is the name of our children's work in the church. We have been through various iterations of what this looks like in the last 2 years but have now found a format which is working well and bringing in new children and families.

Little BriX

This is our "Sunday school" offering for children. This runs on 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month, when we have a morning service. It caters for children aged 0-11. Each session

has a different theme or story. The children listen to a short story introducing the session, build things with Lego related to the week's theme, then complete an activity or activity sheet appropriate for their age and learn some simple prayer. We have a small team of people from across both parish congregations, who volunteer each week to run these. They have been very much enjoyed by both children and parents and we have had many children outside of the church get involved also. The very youngest in the congregation also join in.

BIG BriX

This is our Saturday morning children's club which was run from the start of the year until May. This offers children in primary school the chance to spend the morning with our team, learning about a different theme and spending time doing various crafts, activities, games, Lego builds and most importantly a lot of fun!

The last Big BriX was held in May 2023 shortly before Reverend Tim Buckley went on sabbatical. It has not continued since then due both to Tim's sabbatical and his subsequent decision to step down from his post as well as a lack of resources and/or volunteers.

Outreach

Widcombe Junior School

The school held their Harvest, Easter, and Christmas services at St Matt's in 2023, and also a Leavers' service at the end of the summer term. They had their SIAMS inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) in May 2023 and were given an 'excellent' grade. This was well-deserved, being an improvement on the 'good' grade of their previous two SIAMS inspections. It reflects the way they have woven their vision 'Be the best you can be' into the fabric of school life and teaching. This vision is based on Acts 2:1-4, when the Holy Spirit equipped the believers to go out into the world.

Mary Udale-Smith has recently become a Foundation Governor and is looking forward to getting to know the school better over the coming months. The most recent SIAMS report is available on the school website. They are still looking for one further Foundation Governor – if you are interested, please talk to Mary.

Youth Work

Libby Piggott - Youth and Outreach worker

• Found Youth

St Matthew's Church and Life Church Bath youth have joined together (since 2021) for gatherings every Friday evening. It is a lot of fun and a powerful space for young people to seek Jesus and build (or start!) their relationship with Him. The past year has been very encouraging as we see and hear many testimonies from the youth each week both at Found and as we disciple through 1-2-1 meetings. Found Youth group has 65 names on the register and currently averages 30-35 attendees each week...and growing!

- *A2 Nights*

On the last Friday of each month, we gather youth from all around the city to join for an evening of games/fun, refreshments, worship, testimonies, a guest speaker and ministry time. This format allows the youth to see they are part of a bigger community, to grow in the knowledge of Christ and be filled and sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit. It has been amazing to see the unity amongst the churches around Bath, through youth and youth workers.

- *A2 Winterfest/Summerfest*

The aim of these events is to bless the youth of the city by simply having fun together. These are also outreach events where youth can invite their friends thereby providing a steppingstone into other A2 events in which they can hear about Jesus. Our festivals and A2 nights combined (as of February 2023) have registered a total of 200 youth, with 60-80 being the average attendance.

- *Deeper*

This is a discipleship programme for those willing to intentionally spend time exploring deeper into their faith. A group of around 12 sixth-formers meet once or twice a month to hear different guest speakers covering a range of topics including: prophecy, the Father's heart, the secret place and so many more.

- *Youth Leaders Breakfast and Banquet*

As youth leaders (from around 17 different churches/organisations) around the city we meet once a month to gather, pray and dream together... and drink coffee!!! We have also organised a youth volunteers' banquet for all those who have helped with youth work in Bath during the year. The aim is to bless and thank those who pour so much of their time into the youth work of the city.

- *Final remarks on youth*

The youth of today are incredible 'world changers'. I pray that we may never underestimate them, in who they are, what they do, what they say, and in the level of intimacy they can have with the Lord. It's powerful and so beautiful.

- *Outreach*

There are exciting things to come - keep your eye out for notices. Whilst we wait for this...be encouraged - 'The kingdom advances through servants not experts'. Let us be an invitational people, like Philip, and let us continue to say to others 'come and see'. Come and see who Jesus is, come and see what this hope and love is all about, come and see the spirit-filled community we have here, come and see. Create opportunities to share your testimonies with others and invite them into your journey and Jesus' story.

Financial Review

In 2023, the PCC's total unrestricted income was £196,360 and expenditure from normal activities was £157,986. Consequently, the PCC returned a surplus of £38,374 for the year. It should be noted that within the total unrestricted income the sum of £70,012 relates primarily to the sale of a plot of land, without which the PCC would have returned a deficit for the year.

The PCC can meet its legal liabilities when they are due; the PCC's aim is to maintain a reserve of Unrestricted Funds in the order of £30,000 which is equivalent to approximately three month's normal operating costs at current levels. At the end of 2023, the PCC's balance of unrestricted funds held was £85,348.

In 2023, the PCC had three principal sources of income: Voluntary Giving; Gift Aid; and Lettings. The PCC received £92,406 in voluntary donations, of which £81,346 was Planned Giving. The PCC received an additional £21,047 in tax recovered in the form of Gift Aid. The PCC received £8,771 in rent from lettings of St Matthew's Church and Church Hall, the principal users being: Bath Operatic and Drama Society, Beats Dance, and the Natural Theatre Company.

The expenditure from unrestricted funds fall into five categories: Administration and Office Costs; St Thomas à Becket's Operating Costs; St Matthew's Operating Costs; Charitable Donations (Mission); and Parish Share.

In 2023 the PCC paid £65,400 to the Diocese of Bath & Wells, representing 85% of the Parish Share requested (£77,139). The Parish Share largely provides for the stipends and the cost of housing for clergy. Despite the PCC receiving additional income in 2023 following the sale of a plot of land, the expected cost of essential roof repairs required at St Thomas à Becket, when considered alongside the level of current income receipts and very limited reserves, regrettably prevented the PCC from matching the full sum requested.

Approved by the PCC on 28 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



.....

Tony Coverdale (Vice Chair of Widcombe PCC)

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiners Report to the trustees/members of Widcombe PCC - Year Ended 31 December 2023

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2023 as set out on pages 18 to 20.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and;
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 accounts.


Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the PCC have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Peter Barton FCCA
ART Accountants Ltd
11 Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JQ

Date 11 April 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

WIDCOMBE PCC - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES- Year Ended 31 Dec' 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Funds 2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary receipts:				
Planned giving	81,346	3,282	84,628	88,555
Other giving & donations	11,060	12,963	24,023	18,954
Grants	-	-	-	1,500
Gift aid tax recovered	21,047	-	21,047	24,300
Legacies	-	-	-	20,000
Activities for generating funds:				
Fundraising	-	1,766	1,766	-
Lettings	8,771	-	8,771	7,604
Parochial fees	1,676	-	1,676	3,000
Investment income	2,448	-	2,448	365
Other income	70,012	-	70,012	67
Total incoming resources	<u>196,360</u>	<u>18,011</u>	<u>214,371</u>	<u>164,345</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Church activities:				
<i>St Thomas Church expenses:</i>				
Heat & light	1,011	-	1,011	622
Insurance	1,202	-	1,202	1,036
Church repairs & maintenance	3,371	8,277	11,648	-
Legal fees	2,485	-	2,485	-
<i>St Matthew's Church expenses:</i>				
Heat, light & water	15,634	-	15,634	4,551
Insurance	2,803	-	2,803	2,417
Church repairs & maintenance	16,742	-	16,742	10,867
Parish Share for year	65,400	-	65,400	65,400
Parish administration	17,002	-	17,002	20,006
Church services	5,241	-	5,241	13,149
Clergy expenses	143	-	143	887
Mission & charitable giving	25,110	10,735	35,845	25,220
Parish sundries	800	2,000	2,800	2,162
Parochial fees	857	-	857	1,252
Bank fees	185	40	225	-
Total resources expended	<u>157,986</u>	<u>21,052</u>	<u>179,039</u>	<u>147,569</u>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	38,374	(3,041)	35,332	16,776
Transfers	(1,500)	1,500	-	-
Balances brought forward	48,474	28,641	77,115	60,339
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	<u>85,348</u>	<u>27,100</u>	<u>112,448</u>	<u>77,115</u>

Balance Sheet

WIDCOMBE PCC - BALANCE SHEET – Year Ended 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Funds 2022 £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	1,622	-	1,622	1,939
Bank Current Account	89,466	10,956	100,422	59,735
Deposit Funds	454	20,823	21,278	20,620
	<u>91,543</u>	<u>31,779</u>	<u>123,321</u>	<u>82,294</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	6,195	4,679	10,874	5,179
	<u>6,195</u>	<u>4,679</u>	<u>10,874</u>	<u>5,179</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS				
	<u>85,348</u>	<u>27,100</u>	<u>112,448</u>	<u>77,115</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			85,348	48,474
Restricted funds		Note 2	27,100	28,641
TOTAL FUNDS				
			<u>112,448</u>	<u>77,115</u>

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf:



Tony Coverdale (Vice Chair of Widcombe PCC)

Date 11 Dec 2024

Notes to the Accounts

WIDCOMBE PCC - NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year Ended 31 December 2023

1 LAND AT ST MARK'S

Following a protracted and complex legal process the PCC was able to sell St Mark's Land to an interested party in 2023, thereby releasing £67,568 (net of fees). This transaction enabled the PCC to be released from the significant challenges and risks presented by continued ownership of the plot. As required by the Charity Commission, the PCC engaged independent qualified expertise to ensure that fair value was received for the land.

2 RESTRICTED FUNDS

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance carried forward
St Thomas' Restoration Fund	20,161	8,404	(8,277)	-	20,288
Organ Fund	2,350	-	-	-	2,350
St Matthew's Regeneration Fund	1,700	-	-	-	1,700
Missionary Fund	4,430	9,607	(12,775)	1,500	2,762
	<u>28,641</u>	<u>18,011</u>	<u>(21,052)</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>27,100</u>

- The St Thomas' Restoration Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas' Church building.
- The Organ Fund is restricted to expenditure on any organ repairs that may be required.
- The St Matthew's Regeneration Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the church roof and to the future re-ordering of the church building.
- The Missionary Fund covers any gifts made to the church towards specific individuals and causes.

Accounts

**Trustees' Report
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

**for the Parochial Church Council of
St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church,
Widcombe, Bath**

Contents	Pages
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Aims and Purposes

Widcombe Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Timothy Buckley, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church buildings.

Objectives and Activities

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

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

- worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish and beyond
- missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church.

Achievements and Performance

Vicar's Report (Reverend Timothy Buckley)

The past ministry year has been a challenging but good one for us here in Widcombe, with much to be thankful for. Early 2022 was about navigating the end of the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic and trying to return to some form of 'normality' in our worship gatherings and ministry. There was still understandably much uncertainty and a great need for deeper reconnection with one another as individuals and congregations. The first few months were still noticeably reduced in numbers and were tentative and slow, with an understandably cautious return to "normal" church life for many of us after such long social and relational distancing.

But with the autumn term and a growing sense of renewed confidence, we began to gradually see a growing momentum and a sense of hope in what the Lord was wanting to do in our midst in this new season with a growing dependence on God, a commitment to holiness and to boldly share and live out our faith in our community and beyond. What we have witnessed in the sphere of youth and children's ministry has been particularly exciting over the last many months.

In what has increasingly become an enormously challenging financial time for so many, Christmas gave us again as church, a wonderful opportunity post Covid to gather and celebrate together with a message of great “tidings of comfort and joy!” Despite the many pressures on us as a parish, both economically and numerically, the Lord has indeed again and again shown Himself to truly be ‘Jehovah Jireh’ – The Lord our Provider.

One growing conviction that many have shared across the churches in this season, was to increase the amount of corporate prayer opportunities across the parish from the Summer. New Zoom and gathered prayer times, along with increasing prayer within small groups and triplets have been key I believe to seeing our faith grow, in God meeting our needs and enabling a new fruitfulness and clarity in ministry. In the light of this and the days in which we live, I want to earnestly encourage us all to press more deeply into God in prayer, to seek His face, to commit to His word and to continue to give generously in all we do and have.

As ever, church life can only happen because we all play our part. We are blessed with an amazing team of volunteers and staff across the parish who work tirelessly to facilitate our many varied worship services and ministries, and generously give so much in service for us all; they’re selfless, creative, humble and full of energy and wisdom – thank you! The PCC too, along with our amazing wardens and service teams at St Matts & St Thomas à Becket, continue to be so central in making sure church life with all our varied worship times and ministries flow so seamlessly. Again, it is a genuine privilege and joy to lead alongside them and I am particularly personally grateful for their support and hard work that has allowed me to press ahead with plans for a sabbatical through June – August this year which will no doubt give me extended time for prayer and refectation as we move into a new season.

Thank you too to everyone who’s part of the family of churches here in Widcombe, both at St Thomas à Becket and at St Matts. As you read on to hear all about the last year, be encouraged as you see what a difference our shared commitment to God, our community and to one another has made!

Safeguarding Report (Jill Oldham – Safeguarding Officer)

There were no safeguarding incidents reported during 2022 in respect of St. Thomas à Becket Church or St. Matthew’s Church.

Our Benefice is registered to use, and continues successfully to use, the DBS e-bulk system when DBS checks need to be carried out, along with Diocesan safe recruitment procedures.

Our Benefice continued to use the Diocesan ‘Parish Dashboard’ self-audit tool throughout the year. Policies were reviewed if required and updated.

As regards safeguarding training, our Benefice’s secure safeguarding training database was updated throughout the year as training was completed by those in the Parish required to do it. By the end of the year, all eligible PCC members had completed the ‘Foundations’ training and new training ‘Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse’.

Safeguarding training must be refreshed every three years, and further details of the safeguarding training categories can be found on the Diocesan website. Anyone requiring training is asked to contact the Safeguarding Officer or church office in the first instance.

Our Parish website meets national church requirements for safeguarding, including providing clear signposting arrangements and links to the Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Policy on the home page.

Electoral Roll Report (Jonathan Potter – Electoral Roll Officer)

The parish currently lists 108 on the Roll.

If anyone is unsure whether they are listed, or needs to be added, please contact Jonathan at jonathanrpotter@hotmail.com, or the office, for the appropriate form.

PCC Secretary's Report (Sam Forrester – PCC Secretary)

Since our last APCM in May 2022, the full PCC have met 5 times, most of which were online with an average level of attendance of 78%.

From May 2022 – April 2023, at St Thomas, there were 8 baptisms, 4 marriages and 2 funerals. In addition, the Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continued to use St Thomas à Becket church for their services as it has done for over forty years. From May 2022 – April 2023, at St Matt's, there was 1 dedication thanksgiving service, and 1 wedding.

Midweek "Soul Groups" continue to meet weekly in homes around the city. These are made up of members from both our churches and have been a real blessing to all those involved.

As well as regular services, St Matt's was the venue for other events also. Widcombe Junior School held their Harvest and Easter service at St Matt's, with Tim's input, and it was greatly appreciated.

BriX has been running throughout the year, with 6 events on Saturday mornings. These have been well attended, with many new families coming into the church for the first time. We hope to continue to build on this for the future and hold more holiday clubs aimed to reach out into the community and grow these relationships we have started with our BriX families.

St Matt's continues to host a weekly youth group aimed at teenagers in our local area. Then monthly a city-wide youth group come together for fellowship and to hear more about the Gospel, at St Matt's. This has been a huge success, thanks to Libby Piggott and all those who regularly volunteer their time, for all their hard work in creating this and making it happen.

Christmas services within the Parish were well attended. Services included Nine Lessons and Carols, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services, and Carols by Candlelight. Money collected at these services was given to our 3 chosen charities; The Nest Project, The Trussell Trust and The Haven Home in Sri Lanka.

The Wednesday coffee morning at St Matt's continues. The Christmas Lunch was a fantastic event offering a full Christmas meal to all those who came. The cribbage club continues to join the coffee morning, and we have also been able to open the church up for our "Warm Wednesday" initiative, offering people a space to be warm and have lunch.

Prayer has also been a huge focal point this year. We have grown the number of prayer meetings in the church and now offer morning, evening and daytime prayer meetings for people to gather and pursue God in.

St Thomas à Becket Church Report (Fiona Coverdale – Churchwarden)

As I write this spring seems to have finally arrived – with the challenges of winter hopefully behind us; signs of new life all around and a sense of reinvigoration in the air. I feel this is reflected in our life at St Thomas - we have had (and continue to have) other challenges but our congregation numbers are increasing, our Sunday services are full of the sense of a community that has a real love for the Lord and for one another and we look forward to the rest of the year with confidence.

Since the last APCM we have had 8 baptisms at St Thomas and 4 weddings – joyful occasions where we hope and believe seeds have been sown for future connections with the love of God. St Thomas' twice a month 8am BCP HC services, 10.30am HC and Morning Prayer services and a monthly evening service provide a rich and varied pattern of worship for long standing and new/returning congregation members. These services complement those on offer at St Matts – and it is encouraging to see members of the Widcombe Church family frequenting both Churches, both for services and for Church family/community events. Our new St Thomas Organist, Chloe, has become a valued member of this family.

Prayer for the parish continues on a weekly basis and the twice monthly afternoon 'tea with the word' get-togethers, led by Liz and Sue, remain a welcome 'fixture' in the St Thomas calendar. Sue completed her term as Churchwarden at last year's APCM but, as with many of our previous Churchwardens, she continues to be a wonderful support to St Thomas'.

The Church building was open on Sunday afternoon's in June, July and August. Two volunteers were in attendance each week and while visitor numbers were not huge those that did visit seemed to appreciate the opportunity to see inside the building. Ad hoc visiting often occurs when I or others are at St Thomas and have the doors open – it is a privilege to welcome people to our beautiful building. Sadly, however, our Church building has suffered in recent months, firstly with water ingress in the lower vestry due to issues with slipped roof tiles and roof felt deterioration and then with somewhat more water ingress in the upper vestry due to the theft of the lead from that area of roof! Work on the lower vestry roof is now on hold until we can get all the vestry roofs sorted!

St Matthew's Church Report (Jonathan Hilsden – Chapelwarden)

This year has seen St Matts continue to get back to the foundations on which it started as a gathering of worshippers of Jesus. The sung worship has been sweet, the teaching has been solid and the fellowship has been refreshing. The change in pattern of the services (two evening and two mornings) has enabled a Sunday morning children's group to be formed serving the growing number of young families in the church. This builds on the successful Saturday morning once-a-month children's club attracting children from the community.

So much is happening at St Matts with extended coffee mornings (called warm space), women's ministry, men's ministry and weekends away, school assemblies, unique Christmas celebration services and Bath wide youth groups and many other societies using the large space we have at St Matts. The soul groups continue to provide support for smaller groups of the church family meeting weekly with programmes often decided by the groups themselves.

We have been exploring new ways of teaching, with seminar series going more in-depth and giving space for practical learning as well as family services and the usual excellent sermon series. Many different members of the family have been getting involved in lots of ways and there are always more opportunities to get involved and shape new initiatives. Most importantly we are coming back to worship where God is showing up in gentle ways. It is so important in these difficult days to stay close to God, follow His leading and offer Him our worship with our whole being.

Deanery Synod Report (Anne Lawson and Carol Tottle)

There are 19 deaneries – groups of parishes and benefices – in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The aim of deanery synod is to support and strengthen the parishes in common mission across the deanery.

As usual, the Bath Deanery Synod has met 3 times this year.

A Deanery is a geographical subdivision between a Diocese and a parish with parishes grouped together so that they can work and serve together to see God's Kingdom come. Bath Deanery comprises the city of Bath and the surrounding villages and is made up of 21 traditional parishes which comprise 39 Church buildings. It's threefold emphasis is on prayerfulness, hospitality and innovation and seeks to enable growth and provide support and structures that help to increase faith in what God is doing locally.

Deanery Synods particular concern is with local efforts and programmes, supporting and assisting churches where possible to be more visible in their communities and to grow and flourish, each playing their unique and important part.

Two members of the Widcombe PCC sit on the Deanery Synod which provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church.

The Rev'd. Tim continues to serve in his role as one of two Assistant Area Deans to support Rev'd. Stephen Girling in his position as Rural Dean for the Bath Deanery.

There have been three Deanery Synod meetings to report on:

May 2022 At St Barnabas Church, Southdown - where a draft Deanery 5 year plan including proposals to reduce clergy numbers was proposed.

November 2022 at St Michaels Without, Bath - where an amended Deanery Plan with guiding principals including an emphasis on partnership, church growth and deployment criteria was voted on and adopted.

January 2023 at Holy Trinity, Combe Down - where a presentation by Matthew Pinnock, the Head of Diocesan Finance, outlined the challenging financial situation the church of England currently faces and some ideas to help ameliorate the situation including the proposed reduction of stipendiary clergy within the Bath Deanery from 22 to 17 clergy over the next 3-4 years.

Mission support (PCC Mission sub-group)

As a PCC, we continually seek to inform, inspire and encourage the St Matts and St Thomas à Becket church family in the support of Christian mission, near and far, practically supporting ministries aimed at blessing the poor and furthering God's Kingdom. Continuing examples of this over the last year would include nurturing and furthering effective connections and support with our mission partners in Sri Lanka, Jerrie and Isabel, both in terms of their co-leading of the newly built church and also in their running of the **Haven Home** for girls in Kandy.

We have also financially supported **Just Love**, a charity that equips students and support alumni to pursue justice engage in social action initiatives. In their words, they seek to “*raise up a generation who have cultivated the character, values, theology and practices that will enable them to pursue justice faithfully with their whole lives*”, volunteering in local communities, from homeless outreaches to teaching English to refugees, from youth mentoring to collections for foodbanks.

Additionally, as is tradition, we were able to give from our collections taken at our Christmas services the sum of £850 was given to each of the three charities nominated by the PCC including **The Nest Project**, **The Trussell Trust** (Nationwide Food Banks) and **The Haven** Sri Lanka girls home.

Men's ministry (Andrew Udale-Smith)

The Widcombe Warriors are a group of men who are learning to “walk with God” whilst journeying life's ups and downs together. We are conscious that, as Christians, we are very much “a work in progress” and we need each other's help and encouragement. We've recently started a weekly gathering of men, which is designed to provide that support.

The last two Septembers, we have hosted a retreat for around 40 men from Bath (mainly from Widcombe parish) in the Malvern Hills. This is a weekend of teaching and socialising, with some excellent food and drink to enjoy. We're heading back there for another men's weekend this year, from Friday 29 September to Sunday 1 October.

Please let me know if you'd like to join us on any of our activities.

Readers report (Mary Udale-Smith - Parish Reader)

A quick review of my records for 2022 reveals that I preached 11 times in total and led services 7 times, so a major part of my parish ministry continues to be preaching and leading services. I also hosted one of the St Matt's Alpha groups early in the year and continue to host and lead a Soul Group. I helped Sarah Sanderson with our children's group BriX in the first half of the year and I am currently responsible for planning our Sunday School group, Little BriX. I am also one quarter of the team running our Saturday club Big BriX. All the BriX events are for primary school age children and are great fun!

My role also includes helping others explore their own callings, some pastoral visiting, and facilitating the parish prayer meeting at 8am, Wednesdays. If you would like to discuss your own sense of calling or would appreciate a visit at home, please do get in touch. Similarly, if you have something that you would like the prayer group to pray for, do let me know, or join us in person in The Keep at St Matt's or on Zoom.

I also help Tim and Sam with strategic planning and attend PCC meetings. At the moment, I also send out the weekly emails.

My Reader training finally finished in the summer of 2022 and I was signed off in September following an end of training interview. However, my studies are not over as I have now started an MA in Theology at Trinity College, Bristol. This is proving very enjoyable but also very challenging!

Soul Groups (Mu Wilkins)

Soul groups continue to be central to our church life. They meet weekly for food, fellowship, Bible study and discipleship. After the summer, there was a slight reshuffle to accommodate house moves and newcomers and to improve the mix of the groups, for example, in terms of age. There are currently five groups (though a new comers group ran at the vicarage for approximately 6 weeks in the autumn). Soul group leaders have access to a range of resources as well as the opportunity to meet once in a while for fellowship and to exchange ideas.

Every now and then, the groups meet together as pastorate at St Matts. The topics covered in these evenings are varied and have included meditation, decorating the church ready for Christmas, and more recently an evening with Ali Blacklee from Westminster Theological College looking at the book of Ruth.

Soul Groups could not happen without the warm hospitality of hosts who open their home and cook delicious meals, and the dedication of leaders who plan the studies and discussions. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to thank both hosts and leaders for their time, faithfulness and generosity, and to pray God's continued blessing over them and their ministry.

Tea with the Word (Liz Holden-White)

Tea with the Word is just that! The group meets at 48 Tynning End, usually twice a month at 2.30 pm on Thursdays - for tea and cake and a chat, but also a short Bible study and opportunity for prayer. Any member of St Matts or St Thomas who has some free time on a Thursday afternoon would be welcome to join us. Recently we have been studying stories that feature some of the women in the Bible. For further information please get in touch.

Wednesday Coffee Morning (Tamsin McMaster)

The last year has been really lovely in the fact that people are finally beginning to feel safe to come out and socialise!

Coffee morning, at St Matts, is going from strength to strength with the added bonus of us now sharing our space with a wonderful group of cribbage players! It has been fun getting to know them and there is a lot of friendly banter and biscuit eating going on.

Then with the cost of heating going up we decided to start extending the coffee morning hours to create Warm Wednesdays. We now stay open until 2.30pm providing a light lunch and a warm space for anyone to come share a meal, play board games, do some work and generally spend time together.

From the end of March the Local PCSO's will also be holding a Monthly Police surgery in the cafe area too, so if anyone needs any help or information from the Police they can meet with them at St Matts.

Women's Ministry (Tamsin McMaster)

It's been lovely starting to hold some Women's Breakfasts again, giving us the chance to gather together and encourage each other as we walk on our journeys of Faith.

We also had great fun with the Christmas craft evening.

Lots more things are being planned so keep an eye on the emails to see what is coming up.

Bath Spa Chaplaincy (Tamsin McMaster)

It's been really encouraging up at the Newton Park campus as the size of the Chaplaincy team has doubled which means we've been able to have more contact with individual students and start to build some good relationships. A lot of the students have found coming out of lockdown really hard and there are an awful lot of them suffering with anxiety and other mental health issues so it's been great to be able to journey alongside them.

BriX Children's Work (Samantha Forrester)

BriX is the name of our children's work in the church. We have been through various iterations of what this looks like in the last 2 years but have now found a format which is working well and bringing in new children and families.

Little BriX

This is our "Sunday school" offering for children. This runs on 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month, when we have a morning service. It caters for children aged 0-11. Each session has a different theme or story. The children watch a short video introducing the session, learn a song, build things with Lego related to the week's theme, and then complete an activity sheet appropriate for their age. We have a small team of people from the congregation, who volunteer each week, to run these. They have been very much enjoyed by both children and parents and we have had many children outside of the church get involved also. We also have recently started running a crèche for the very youngest in the congregation.

BIG BriX

This is our Saturday morning children's club which has been going from strength to strength. We have now run 4 of these sessions, with dates for the next three coming up before Easter. This offers children in primary school the chance to spend the morning with our team, learning about a different theme and spending time doing various crafts, activities, games, lego builds and most importantly a lot of fun! We even have our own theme tune written by Joel Lloyd-Carter.

We now have more than 60 children on our books, as a result of these events, and only a small handful are from our church family.

It is a really great thing to be involved in and watch the children having fun and learning about Jesus at the same time.

This term we've looked at the Gospel story over the 3 sessions. It may have been the first time some of these children have heard about Jesus and what He has done for them. Please continue to pray for them and that they're able to make a connection to the Gospel for themselves.

Plans for the future

We have had the opportunity to restart our visits into Widcombe Junior School to take assemblies. Tim, Libby and Sam went along and lead an assembly about the Good Samaritan during anti-bullying week at the school.

We have also been in to lead an assembly about “Incarnation” just before Christmas. These have given us the opportunity to be able to advertise our BriX sessions to the children directly and we look forward to taking more assemblies in the months to come and hopefully take BIG BriX to them.

Areas for prayer

- We'd love for our families to keep coming back
- Reach new families in the community
- Continue to get a good number of adults helping at each session

Youth & Outreach (Libby Piggott - Youth & Outreach worker)

Found Youth: As you may know, both St Matts and Life Church Bath youth have joined together (since 2021) for youth every Friday evening. It is a lot of fun and a powerful space to seek Jesus and build (or start!) their relationship with Him. The past year has been very encouraging as we see and hear many testimonies from the youth each week both at Found and in the 1-2-1 connecting discipleship. Found Youth group has 65 semi-regular names on the register and currently average 30-35 of each week...and growing!

A2 Nights: On the last Friday of each month, we gather youth from all around the city to join, together, in games/fun, snacks, worship, testimonies, a guest speaker and ministry time. It allows the youth to see they are part of a bigger community, to grow in the knowledge of Christ and be filled and sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit. It has been amazing to see the unity in the churches around Bath, through youth and youth workers.

A2 Winterfest/Summerfest: This is where we bless the youth of the city with a load of fun. These are big outreach events where youth can invite their mates which allows a steppingstone into our other A2 events in which they can hear about Jesus. Our festivals and A2 nights combined (as of February 2023) have registered a total of 200 youth, with 60-80 being the attending average.

Deeper: This is a discipleship programme for those willing to spend time intentionally digging into their faith. This select group of 12 sixth formers will meet once or twice a month with different guest speakers facing a variety of topics. Topics include, prophecy, the Father's heart, the secret place and so many more.

Youth Leaders Breakfast and Banquet: As youth leaders (from around 17 different churches/organisations) around the city meet once a month to gather, pray and dream together... and drink coffee!!!

We have also put on a youth volunteers banquet for all those that have helped with youth work this year in Bath which was a wonderful time to bless and thank those that spend their time to pour into the youth work of the city.

Final remarks on youth: The youth of today are incredible and total world changers. I pray that we may never underestimate them, in who they are, what they do, what they say, and in the level of intimacy they can have with the Lord. It's powerful and so beautiful.

Outreach: There are exciting things to come- keep your eye out in notices. Whilst we wait for this...be encouraged, 'The kingdom advances through servants not experts'. Let us be an invitational people, like Philip, and let us continue to say to others 'come and see'. Come and see who Jesus is, come and see what this hope and love is all about, come and see the spirit-filled community we have here, come and see. Create opportunities to share your testimonies with others and invite them into your journey and Jesus' story.

Financial Review (Mark Nish - Treasurer to Widcombe PCC)

In 2022, the PCC's total unrestricted income was £153,922 and expenditure from normal activities was £142,572. As a consequence, the PCC returned a surplus of £11,350 for the year.

The PCC can meet its legal liabilities when they are due; the PCC's aim is to maintain a reserve of Unrestricted Funds in the order of £30,000 which is equivalent to approximately three month's normal operating costs at current levels. At the end of 2022, the PCC's balance of unrestricted funds held was £48,473.

In 2022, the PCC had three principal sources of income: Voluntary Giving; Gift Aid; and Lettings. The PCC received £97,086 in voluntary donations, of which £86,278 was Planned Giving. The PCC received an additional £24,300 in tax recovered in the form of Gift Aid. The PCC received £7,604 in rent from lettings of St Matthew's Church and Church Hall, the principal users being: Bath Operatic and Drama Society, Beats Dance, The Natural Theatre Company and the Cribbage Club. The PCC received a grant of £1,500 from the Diocese of Bath & Wells towards the cost of heating the church buildings. The PCC also received a generous legacy of £20,000 from the estate of a parishioner.

The expenditure from unrestricted funds fall into five categories: Administration and Office Costs; St Thomas à Becket's Operating Costs; St Matthew's Operating Costs; Charitable Donations (Mission); and Parish Share.

In 2022, the PCC paid £65,400 to the Diocese of Bath & Wells in 2022 representing 86% of the Parish Share requested (£75,626). The Parish Share largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy. The ongoing challenges experienced with both income and reserves regrettably prevented the PCC from matching the full sum requested.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The membership of Widcombe PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), the churchwardens and chapelwardens, the reader, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the

Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

Administrative Information

St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church are sited in Church Street and Widcombe Hill respectively, within the parish of Widcombe, Bath. We are in the Bath Deanery and part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1182372).

PCC members who have served for the period from 01 January 2022 until the APCM held on 23 April 2023 are:

Ex Officio members:

Incumbent: Reverend Timothy Buckley
Churchwardens: Sue Wiggan (until APCM May 2022)
Fiona Coverdale
Chapelwardens: Haydn Wilkins
Bill James (until APCM May 2022)
Jonathan Hilsden (from APCM May 2022)
Treasurer: Mark Nish

Elected Members: Andrew Udale-Smith (PCC Chair – from APCM May 2022)
Lindsaye Dunn (until APCM May 2022)
Jonathan Potter
Wayne McMaster
Joel Lloyd-Carter
Anne Lawson (Deanery Synod representative)
Carol Tottle (Deanery Synod representative)
Reverend Judith Harries (co-opted)
Mary Udale-Smith (*Reader* - co-opted)

Approved by the PCC on 23 April 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

.....

Andrew Udale-Smith (Chair of Widcombe PCC)

Independent Examiners Report to the trustees/members of Widcombe PCC - Year Ended 31 December 2022

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2022 as set out on pages 16 to 18.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and;
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the PCC have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....
Peter Barton FCCA
ART Accountants Ltd
11 Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JQ

Date

WIDCOMBE PCC - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES– Year Ended 31 Dec' 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Funds 2021 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary receipts:				
Planned giving	86,278	2,277	88,555	80,874
Other giving & donations	10,808	8,146	18,954	51,343
Grants	1,500	-	1,500	13,700
Gift aid tax recovered	24,300	-	24,300	16,314
Legacies	20,000	-	20,000	-
Activities for generating funds:				
Lettings	7,604	-	7,604	4,210
Parochial fees				
	3,000	-	3,000	3,841
Investment income				
	365	-	365	26
Other income				
	67	-	67	13,722
Total incoming resources	153,922	10,423	164,345	184,030
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Church activities:				
<i>St Thomas Church expenses:</i>				
Heat & light	622	-	622	908
Insurance	1,036	-	1,036	985
Church repairs & maintenance	-	-	-	100
<i>St Matthew's Church expenses:</i>				
Heat, light & water	4,551	-	4,551	8,736
Insurance	2,417	-	2,417	2,296
Church repairs & maintenance	10,867	-	10,867	10,331
Roof repairs & professional fees	-	-	-	55,873
Parish Share for year	65,400	-	65,400	65,762
Parish administration	20,006	-	20,006	20,267
Church services	13,149	-	13,149	3,728
Clergy expenses	887	-	887	3,183
Mission & charitable giving	20,223	4,997	25,220	13,880
Parish sundries	2,162	-	2,162	526
Parochial fees	1,252	-	1,252	3,805
Total resources expended	142,572	4,997	147,569	190,380
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR				
	11,350	5,426	16,776	(6,350)
Transfers	(500)	500	-	-
Balances brought forward	37,624	22,715	60,339	66,689
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	48,474	28,641	77,115	60,339

WIDCOMBE PCC - BALANCE SHEET – Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Funds 2021 £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	1,336	603	1,939	528
Bank Current Account	51,872	7,862	59,735	43,696
Deposit Funds	444	20,177	20,620	20,355
	<u>53,652</u>	<u>28,642</u>	<u>82,294</u>	<u>64,579</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	5,179	-	5,179	4,240
	<u>5,179</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,179</u>	<u>4,240</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>48,473</u>	<u>28,642</u>	<u>77,115</u>	<u>60,339</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			48,474	37,624
Restricted funds		Note 2	28,641	22,715
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>77,115</u>	<u>60,399</u>

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf:

Andrew Udale-Smith
Chair of Widcombe PCC

Date.....

WIDCOMBE PCC - NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year Ended 31 December 2022

1 LAND AT ST MARK'S

Widcombe PCC owns a piece of land by St Mark's Community Centre. The PCC continues to discuss its maintenance and plans for this land in the future.

2 RESTRICTED FUNDS

The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

	Balance brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance carried forward
St Thomas' Restoration Fund	19,981	180	-	-	20,161
Organ Fund	2,350	-	-	-	2,350
St Matthew's Regeneration Fund	-	1,700	-	-	1,700
Missionary Fund	384	8,543	(4,997)	500	4,430
	<u>22,715</u>	<u>10,423</u>	<u>(4,997)</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>28,641</u>

- The St Thomas' Restoration Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas' Church building.

- The Organ Fund is restricted to expenditure on any organ repairs that may be required.

- The St Matthew's Regeneration Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the church roof and to the future re-ordering of the church building.

- The Missionary Fund covers any anonymous gifts made to the church towards specific individuals and causes.

Accounts

Trustees' Report
for
the year ended 31 December 2021
for
the Parochial Church Council of
St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church,
Widcombe, Bath

Registered Charity No:1182372

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Aims and Purposes

Widcombe Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Timothy Buckley, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church buildings.

Objectives and Activities

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

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

- worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish and beyond
- missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church.

Achievements and Performance

Vicar's Report

My mother was always full of words of wisdom and advice as I grew up - a favourite of hers, and one I clearly regularly needed to hear was, "patience is a virtue." It seems to me, as Covid finally appears to no longer loom quite so large on our horizon, that much of last year had been filled with hesitant moments of optimism, held at bay by a great deal of waiting with bated breath for the promised increased freedoms to materialise and a season of "new normal" to begin.

Despite the challenges and pains of the last two years however, there is still so much to be grateful for, not least of all being able to finally return to a physical Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) after our more recent exciting Zoom adventures. As the year has progressed, we've also gradually been able to return to something near 'normality' for weekly services, as well as exploring new and better ways to bless and reach the community and beyond with God's love.

Celebrating God's goodness and faithfulness towards us as a parish therefore in these days, continues to be of paramount importance I believe. As the Book of Hebrews urges us, we have indeed learned to '*run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*' (Hebrews 12:1b-2a). Of late, most of us are only too aware of the challenges of 'perseverance' - but having fixed our eyes on Jesus, as Romans tells us '*perseverance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.*' (Romans 5:4-5a) After so many frustrations and disappointments, it's imperative to know the firm anchor point of renewed hope that the Father offers us.

Since our last APCM back in May 2021, each one of us throughout the pandemic has then, in many ways, large and small, had to learn to adapt to an ever-changing pattern of restrictions and limitations. So now, as we emerge from the shadow of Covid, into an ongoing 'new normal', our hope is secure and our outlook expectant.

It would be so easy for us to simply go back to what was before, but the truth is that we have all changed - both individually and collectively. When we have been unable to worship in our church buildings we have adapted brilliantly to the use of new media and technology, both pre-recorded and live streamed services. Of course, many within the parish continued to be isolated in homes, yet our marvellous family of churches, very much rose to the occasion rallying to support the most vulnerable in our community and check on members and neighbours across the Parish. And whilst in common with a majority of churches across the country, we noted that numbers who regularly worship with us in person have reduced somewhat, some new members have joined us, and through the generosity of church family members and the faithfulness of God, our financial position has stayed remarkably stable.

However, we need to continue to build on the foundations laid during this season of reduced activity (which allowed more space for prayer and reflection) if we want to continue to flourish, grow and reach out further into our community and city.

This year, as I have read the reports submitted for in this document, I am again amazed and encouraged by the creative, vibrant and generous hearted people I have the privilege of journeying alongside. Despite all that has been thrown at us over these last months, we have patiently and faithfully together continued our journey of discipleship with Christ seeking to see His Kingdom come more fully amongst us.

So my thanks again to you all who have worked so tirelessly and diligently throughout the year keeping both St Matts and St Thomas à Becket such special places to worship in and belong to. My personal thanks must also go to all PCC members, Sarah our ordinand, Mary our reader, the office and staff team including Sam, Libby, Ruby and Tamsin along with Peter our hardworking Sexton, our pastoral team and other volunteers and finally my amazing colleagues Rev'd Judith Harries and Rev'd Caroline O'Neill, who are always so willing to help, serve and minister in the parish.

There is so much to be thankful for and I know exciting days lie ahead; we as a parish are uniquely positioned to offer a wealth of diversity and engaging traditions from Book of Common Prayer (BCP) spoken liturgy to through to 'lego church' and band-led contemporary worship to meet the needs and spiritual longings of so many!

Despite the very real global and local challenges we face in the times in which we live, I believe that our churches - both people and buildings - are called to be remarkable shining beacons of light, hope and joy so as Hebrews boldly exhorts us together:

***Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess,
for he who promised is faithful.***

(Hebrews 10:23)

*Rev'd Tim Buckley
Vicar of Widcombe*

Safeguarding Report

There were no safeguarding incidents reported during 2021 in respect of St. Thomas à Becket Church or St. Matthew's Church.

The PCC has fully complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Our Benefice is registered to use, and continues successfully to use, the DBS e-bulk system when DBS checks need to be carried out, along with Diocesan safe recruitment procedures.

Our Benefice continued to use the Diocesan 'Parish Dashboard' self-audit tool throughout the year and earned promotion from Level 1 to Level 3. Included in the work undertaken was the formulation of several new safeguarding documents and their addition to our Parish website.

In respect of safeguarding training, our Benefice's secure safeguarding training database was updated throughout the year as a record of the training completed by those in the Parish required to do so.

New online safeguarding training required by the Diocese this year for all PCC members was 'Foundations' training, and new safeguarding training required for all clergy and PCC members was 'Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse'.

Safeguarding training must be refreshed every three years, and further details of the safeguarding training categories can be found on the Diocesan website. Anyone requiring training is asked to contact the Safeguarding Officer or church office in the first instance.

Our Parish website meets national church requirements for safeguarding, including providing clear signposting arrangements and links to the Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Policy on the home page.

Jill Oldham
Safeguarding Officer

Electoral Roll Report

Jonathan Potter continues to hold and maintain the Electoral Roll management. The parish currently lists 107 on the Roll.

If anyone is unsure whether they are listed, or needs to be added, please contact Jonathan at jonathanpotter@hotmail.com, or the office, for the appropriate form.

Jonathan Potter
Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary Report

Since our last APCM in May 2021, the full PCC has met 5 times, most of which were online with an average level of attendance of 81%.

A Standing Committee meeting was held prior to PCC meetings to set the agenda and transact business not requiring a full PCC meeting.

At St Thomas', in the period May 2021 – May 2022, there were 5 baptisms, 1 marriage and 4 funerals. In addition, the Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continued to use St Thomas à Becket church for its monthly services as it has done for over forty years.

At St Matt's, in the period May 2021 – May 2022, there were 2 baptisms, 1 dedication thanksgiving service, and 3 weddings.

Midweek "Soul Groups" continue to meet weekly in homes around the city. These are made up of members from both our churches and have been a real blessing to all those involved. We ran the Alpha course within these groups at the beginning of 2022 which proved to be a great success.

As well as regular church services, St Matt's was also the venue for other events, including Widcombe Junior School's Easter service lead by Rev'd Tim Buckley, that was greatly appreciated. BriX held an "Easter Special" holiday club on the Saturday before Palm Sunday. This was well attended, with many new families coming in to the church for the first time. We hope to build on this for the future, and hold more holiday clubs aimed to reach out into the community.

St Matt's also now hosts a weekly youth group aimed at teenagers in our local area. In addition, each month a city-wide youth group come together for fellowship and to hear more about the Gospel, at St Matt's. This has been a huge success - thanks to Libby Piggott and all those who regularly volunteer their time for all their hard work in creating this and making it happen.

Christmas services within the Parish were very well attended. Services included Nine Lessons and Carols, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services, a "Make your own Christmas Pudding" service and 'Carols by Candlelight'.

The Wednesday coffee morning at St Matt's continues. Numbers dropped due to Covid restrictions in the early part of the year, but are now starting to grow again. The Christmas Lunch was a fantastic event offering a full Christmas meal to all those who came. A cribbage club has joined the coffee morning, which has really boosted the community feel in the church on Wednesday mornings. They were also able to join us for the Christmas lunch and we hope this fellowship will continue to thrive in the upcoming year.

With Covid restrictions easing over the year, it has been a challenging year to get the correct balance of safety, but also allow us to start meeting more “normally”. Both churches recognise that for some people, wearing a mask is still very important and we encourage people to make sensible choices when meeting together in our churches.

Our church administration has taken a leap into the 21st century and we have now gone “live” with ChurchSuite (a church back-office management system). This allows us to be GDPR compliant and has improved our organisation and administration processes throughout the parish. We are still learning as we are going and encourage anyone who would like to know more or have help in getting the most out of ChurchSuite, to contact the office anytime.

Sam Forrester
PCC Secretary

St Thomas à Becket Church Report

At St Thomas à Becket we are blessed with a stunning building, a bedrock congregation and inspiring Clergy and laity – we continue to strive to be a Christian Community reaching out to the Parish and beyond to invite people to encounter God’s grace.

Following on from challenging times, the period May 2021 to May 2022 has been a year of finding our way back to weekly in-person worship.

Restrictions have still applied but it has been wonderful to be back in our beautiful Church and able to meet as a faithful congregation week by week. Numbers attending our services have crept back up over the past months as we have settled into our new service pattern. As ever, our 8am congregation has been unswerving in its commitment.

The introduction of a regular monthly evening service has also been welcomed by many, and the mix of BCP Evening Prayer / Compline / Contemplative Celtic Prayer has provided a variety of styles with which to engage.

We continue to meet to pray for the parish on a weekly basis and we look forward to full use being made again of the prayer request book. Members of the congregation have valued this year’s Lent Course, facilitated through Zoom, as a way of connecting with each other and with characters from the Easter Story.

Thanks must go to Liz Holden-White who stepped down from her role as St Thomas’ Churchwarden at last years APCM. Liz did a superb job as Churchwarden and continues, with Sue Wiggin, to run and host the much appreciated twice-monthly afternoon ‘tea and scripture’ get-togethers.

Thanks must also go to all those who faithfully serve St Thomas' in so many ways. We truly are a family with a multitude of gifts and talents which are so willingly shared - from flower arranging and gardening to hymn choices, from leading services to sweeping out the porch - we have a place for all who wish to serve in whatever way.

*Sue Wiggin & Fiona Coverdale
Wardens at St Thomas à Becket*

St Matthew's Church Report

The Good Book says, "Without vision the people perish". Thus it is apposite that we have five foundation stones on which to keep building as we seek our future together: centering on worship, honouring the generations, growing a sense of family, recognising an apostolic call, and Holy Spirit encounter. These are unpacked on our website.

We continue to be grateful for the massive space that we steward in the form of the St Matt's building. With the SMART Team starting to meet again, we hope to find afresh the Lord's way forward for us in using this resource to the full.

As we have come back to in-person services after the lockdown, it has been immeasurably heartening to meet with people again in this way! Fellowship is so much more about being in proximity to each other. However, in a strange sense, it feels we can never go back again to how we were.

There have been good aspects to this, as people have necessarily learned new ways to socialise, fellowship, work and manage their time. It does mean adjusting what we felt the building could be used for. It is encouraging that often the city's youth meet regularly at St Matt's. Indeed, perhaps we can use the space more for the benefit of the wider family of God in Bath.

As a Team we are constantly looking for more efficiencies in the use of our time and money. However, generous gifts have meant that we can invest in a good quality sound system. More than simply a 'mod con', it means that we can display a spirit of excellence in this area. Moreover, among his many gifts, one of our Vicar's obvious ones is a refined appreciation and expertise in most things techy, so it is in good hands.

St Matt's has proved to be a 'sending church', as like Antioch (Acts 13) people go forth to other parts of the country and abroad (e.g. Burundi), and there is an aspect in this of sowing out. I (Haydn) heard Tim say that he believes we have cultivated well the soil of our hearts, to use a Biblical analogy, and are ready for the next stage of growth. There is an upward call on each one of our lives, which we need continually to discern and nurture - we can urge each other on in this. As we go forward together with our precious brothers and sisters at St Thomas, there is a huge opportunity increasingly to be a light and a source of spiritual succour for our community and beyond.

*Bill James & Haydn Wilkins
Chapelwardens at St Matthew's*

Deanery Synod Report

A Deanery is a geographical subdivision between a Diocese and a parish, with parishes grouped together so that they can work and serve together to see God's Kingdom come. Largely invisible to the public, Bath Deanery comprises the city of Bath and the surrounding villages and is made up of 21 traditional parishes encompassing 39 church buildings.

Its threefold emphasis is on prayerfulness, hospitality and innovation as it seeks to enable growth and provide support and structures that help to increase faith in what God is doing locally.

Whilst it is the forum for reflecting upon the aims and initiatives of the Diocesan Synod and, in turn feeding into them, Deanery Synods particular concern is with local efforts and programmes. This is achieved by supporting and assisting churches where possible to be more visible in their communities, to grow and flourish as God intends, to be free to do the work of the Kingdom and be encouraged to play their unique part.

Two members of the Widcombe PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church. The Rev'd Tim continues to serve in his role as one of two Assistant Area Deans to support Rev'd Stephen Girling as Rural Dean for the Bath Deanery.

There have been three Deanery Synod meetings to report on - May 2021 (online) with Rev'd Canon Patrick Whitworth talking about his writings and reflections on 'Coming out of Exile'; September 2021 - an evening related to Living In Love and Faith; and January 2022 - on Living Sustainably with guest speakers from Transition Bath and Christian Action for the Environment (CAFE B&NES) talking about their work.

2021 also saw the results of elections to Diocesan Synod both to the house of laity and clergy.

Carol Tottle & Anne Lawson
Deanery Synod Representatives

Mission support

As a PCC, we continually seek to inform, inspire and encourage the St Matt's and St Thomas à Becket church family in the support of Christian mission, near and far, practically supporting ministries aimed at blessing the poor and furthering God's Kingdom.

Continuing examples of this over the last year would include nurturing and furthering effective connections and support with our mission partners in Sri Lanka, Jerrie and Isabel, both in terms of their co-leading of the newly built church and also in their running of the Haven Home for girls in Kandy.

This year we have also continued to support the Widcombe birthed, Bath-based charity, Grow for Life, which provides therapeutic gardening opportunities for people suffering from mental and physical ill health with the aim of increasing the confidence and self-esteem of participants.

As is tradition, we were additionally able to give from our collections taken at our Christmas services the sum of £1,200 to charities nominated by the PCC.

PCC Mission sub group

Financial Review

Overview

In 2021, the PCC's total income and expenditure from normal activities was:

<i>Income</i>	£140,869
<i>Expenditure</i>	£143,900

As a consequence, the PCC incurred a deficit of (£3,031) in the year, which was funded by our reserves.

The PCC can meet its legal liabilities when they are due; the PCC's aim is to maintain a reserve of Unrestricted Funds of in the order of £30,000 to cover emergency situations, equivalent to approximately three month's normal operating costs at current levels.

Unrestricted Funds

At the end of 2021, the PCC's balance of unrestricted funds held was £37,624.

Unrestricted Income

In 2021, the PCC had three principal sources of income: Voluntary Giving; Gift Aid; and Lettings.

Voluntary Giving – the PCC received £102,756 in voluntary donations, of which £79,194 was Planned Giving.

Gift Aid – the PCC received an additional £16,314 in tax recovered in the form of Gift Aid.

Lettings – the PCC received £4,210 in rent from lettings of St Matthew’s Church and Church Hall, the principal users being: Bath Operatic and Drama Society and Beats Dance. The Covid-19 restrictions in place during 2021 continued to impact the lettings income received.

Grants – the PCC received two grants from DCMS totalling £13,722 representing the reclaim of VAT incurred on essential roof repairs and other works to the fabric of St Matthew’s Church. The PCC decided to allocate this as unrestricted income to support our cash flow given the uncertainties of 2021.

Interest on Investments - the PCC has three interest-bearing investments: the Church Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) fund, Nat West Deposit Account and Current Account interest. Together these investments delivered £26 in interest.

Payments

The major payments from Unrestricted Funds fall into five categories: Administration and Office Costs; St Thomas à Becket’s Operating Costs; St Matthew’s Operating Costs; Charitable Donations; and Parish Share. Operating Costs are made up of four sub-categories: Utilities (gas, electricity and water); Insurance; Maintenance and Repair; and Cleaning.

Administration came to £20,267 including payment to our part-time administrators and costs associated with running the Church office.

St Thomas à Becket Operating Costs – in 2021 were £1,993 – all from Unrestricted Funds.

St Matthew’s Operating Costs – in 2021 were £21,193 – all from Unrestricted Funds.

Charitable Donations – the PCC donated from Unrestricted Funds £5,426 to various charitable organizations and other causes, including: the Bath Soup Run, the Haven Home in Sri Lanka, The Children’s Society, and Open Doors.

Parish Share – the PCC paid £65,762 to the Diocese of Bath & Wells in 2021 representing 87% of the Parish Share requested (£75,626). After a period of nine consecutive years during which the PCC had been able to pay the Parish Share in full, the challenges experienced with both income and reserves regrettably prevented the PCC from matching the full sum requested.

Restricted Funds

Restricted Funds relate to those donations that are given to the PCC with a restriction imposed upon the purpose for which the funds can be used.

At the start of 2021, the PCC held six Restricted Funds:

St Thomas à Becket Restoration Fund - £19,981. This Fund started the year at £19,801. It is PCC policy, agreed in 2007, to maintain a reserve of approximately £20,000 for restoration work on St Thomas’ church in a restricted fund.

Organ Fund - £2,350. This Fund is comprised of £1,671 for the sole purpose of the maintenance and repair to the organ at St Matthew's and £679 representing the surplus after the purchase of the new organ at St Thomas' in 2017.

Widcombe United Charities – wound up. The Vicar and Churchwardens of St Thomas à Becket Church and the Chapelwardens of St Matthew's Church were trustees of a separate charity, the Widcombe United Charities Trust (charity number 239919), which was a consolidation of a number of historic endowment charities dating back to the 19th Century for the relief of poverty of the elderly of the parish. Towards the end of 2020 the trustees sought the permission of the Charity Commission to transfer the trust's assets to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Widcombe, Bath (charity number 1182372). Permission was granted with the condition that any distribution of the assets should broadly meet the objective of the Widcombe United Charities Trust; consequently, Widcombe PCC made a gift of the trust's assets to Mercy In Action, a Bath-based charity, to provide support to local families suffering financial hardship.

St Matthew's Church Regeneration Fund - £0. This Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the St Matthew's church building, including any substantive work on the church roof. At the start of the year the Fund was void of capital, but during 2021 the Fund received gifts and grants totalling £37,856. All of this was spent in 2021 making good a further section of the church roof together with associated professional fees.

Missionary Fund - £384. This Fund covers any anonymous gifts made to the PCC with instructions to make payments towards specific individuals or causes. The Fund received gifts totalling £3,825 in 2021 and payments were made of £2,500 to our mission partners in Sri Lanka and £1,325 to a local family following bereavement.

Haven Home – Sri Lanka Fund – now consolidated within Missionary Fund. This Fund is restricted to making gifts to the Haven Home in Kandy, Sri Lanka to support the work of caring for approximately 20 girls who are either orphaned or rejected by their families. At the start of the year the balance of the Fund was £787 and received gifts during the year of £1,300 from church family members. The sum of £1,703 was distributed leaving a balance of £384. To ease administration the closing balance has been consolidated within the Missionary Fund as a designated fund and is reflected in its closing balance of £384.

Plans for the Future

The measures introduced by the government to combat the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the life of the church family in 2021. We are grateful that we were able to join together remotely throughout the year, and as the situation and outlook improves we are greatly enjoying being able to meet face to face once again, welcoming back some old friends and building new friendships.

Our plans for re-ordering St Matthew's Church have rested on the 'back-burner' throughout the pandemic, but as we emerge from the crisis we have begun to prayerfully seek God's guidance and provision for what He might wish us to pursue in the coming years.

We give thanks to God for his continued blessing, encouragement and resourcing of the wider Widcombe Parish through our two remarkable buildings and through our church family.

Mark Nish
Treasurer to Widcombe PCC

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The membership of Widcombe PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), the churchwardens and chapelwardens, the reader, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

Administrative Information

St Thomas à Becket Church and St Matthew's Church are sited in Church Street and Widcombe Hill respectively, within the parish of Widcombe, Bath. We are in the Bath Deanery and part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1182372).

PCC members who have served for the period from 01 January 2021 until the APCM held on 08 May 2022 are:

Ex Officio members:

<i>Incumbent:</i>	The Reverend Timothy Buckley
<i>Curate:</i>	The Reverend Jenny Buckler (until June 2021)
<i>Churchwardens:</i>	Elizabeth Holden-White (until APCM May 2021) Sue Wiggin Fiona Coverdale (from APCM May 2021)
<i>Chapelwardens:</i>	Andrew Udale-Smith (until APCM May 2021) Bill James Haydn Wilkins (from APCM May 2021)
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Mark Nish

<u>Elected Members:</u>	Martin Geake (PCC Chairman – until APCM May 2021) Lindsaye Dunn Jonathan Potter Wayne McMaster (from APCM May 2021) Joel Lloyd-Carter (from APCM May 2021) Anne Lawson (Deanery Synod representative) Carol Tottle (Deanery Synod representative) The Reverend Judith Harries (co-opted) Mary Udale-Smith (<i>Reader</i> - co-opted)
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Approved by the PCC on 29 April 2022 and signed on their behalf by -

 Haydn Wilkins (Chapelwarden)

Independent Examiners Report to the trustees/members of Widcombe PCC - Year Ended 31 December 2021

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2021 as set out on pages 17 to 19.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and;
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the PCC 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 accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the PCC have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


.....

Peter Barton FCCA
ART Accountants Ltd
11 Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JQ

Date 29 April 2022

WIDCOMBE PCC - STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES- Year Ended 31 Dec' 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary receipts:				
Planned giving	79,194	1,680	80,874	80,348
Other giving & donations	23,562	27,781	51,343	27,540
Grants	-	13,700	13,700	13,000
Gift aid tax recovered	16,314	-	16,314	19,286
Activities for generating funds:				
Fundraising	-	-	-	15
Lettings	4,210	-	4,210	2,375
Parochial fees	3,841	-	3,841	3,109
Investment income	26	-	26	180
Other income	13,722	-	13,722	1,843
Total incoming resources	<u>140,869</u>	<u>43,161</u>	<u>184,030</u>	<u>147,696</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Church activities:				
<i>St Thomas Church expenses:</i>				
Heat & light	908	-	908	1,400
Insurance	985	-	985	1,080
Church repairs & maintenance	100	-	100	50
<i>St Matthew's Church expenses:</i>				
Heat, light & water	8,736	-	8,736	6,340
Insurance	2,296	-	2,296	2,164
Church repairs & maintenance	10,161	170	10,331	12,345
Roof repairs & professional fees	18,017	37,856	55,873	32,027
Parish Share for year	65,762	-	65,762	66,745
Parish administration	20,267	-	20,267	22,172
Church services	3,728	-	3,728	4,335
Clergy expenses	3,183	-	3,183	1,899
Mission & charitable giving	5,426	8,454	13,880	5,619
Parish sundries	526	-	526	690
Parochial fees	3,805	-	3,805	94
Total resources expended	<u>143,900</u>	<u>46,480</u>	<u>190,380</u>	<u>156,960</u>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	<u>(3,031)</u>	<u>(3,319)</u>	<u>(6,350)</u>	<u>(9,264)</u>
Balances brought forward	40,655	26,034	66,689	75,953
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	<u>37,624</u>	<u>22,715</u>	<u>60,339</u>	<u>66,689</u>

WIDCOMBE PCC - BALANCE SHEET – Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Funds 2020 £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	528	-	528	2,828
Bank Current Account	40,895	2,801	43,696	35,984
Deposit Funds	440	19,915	20,355	32,339
	<u>41,863</u>	<u>22,715</u>	<u>64,579</u>	<u>71,151</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	4,240	-	4,240	4,462
	<u>4,240</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,240</u>	<u>4,462</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>37,624</u>	<u>22,715</u>	<u>60,339</u>	<u>66,689</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			37,624	40,655
Restricted funds		Note 2	22,715	26,034
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>60,339</u>	<u>66,689</u>

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf



Haydn Wilkins
 Chapelwarden

Date 29/4/2022

WIDCOMBE PCC - NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year Ended 31 December 2021

1 LAND AT ST MARK'S

Widcombe PCC owns a piece of land by St Mark's Community Centre. The PCC continues to discuss its maintenance and plans for this land in the future.

2 The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance carried forward
St Thomas' Restoration Fund	19,801	180	-	-	19,981
Organ Fund	2,520	-	(170)	-	2,350
Widcombe United Charities	2,926	-	(2,926)	-	-
Missionary Fund	-	3,825	(3,825)	384	384
St Matthew's Regeneration Fund	-	37,856	(37,856)	-	-
Sri Lanka Haven Home Fund	787	1,300	(1,703)	(384)	-
	<u>26,034</u>	<u>43,161</u>	<u>(46,480)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,715</u>

The St Thomas' Restoration Fund is restricted to expenditure on the fabric of St Thomas' Church building.

The Organ Fund is restricted to expenditure on any organ repairs that may be required.

The Widcombe United Charities Trust (charity number 239919) was wound up in 2021. The trustees sought the permission of the Charity Commission to transfer the trust's assets to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Widcombe, Bath (charity number 1182372). Permission was granted with the condition that any distribution of the assets should broadly meet the objective of the Widcombe United Charities Trust; consequently, Widcombe PCC made a gift of the trust's assets to Mercy In Action, a Bath-based charity, to provide support to local families suffering financial hardship.

The Missionary Fund covers any anonymous gifts made to the church towards specific individuals and causes.

The Sri Lanka Haven Home Fund supports the work of the Haven Home in Sri Lanka that provides welfare to young girls who are either orphaned or from disadvantaged backgrounds. This Fund has now been consolidated within the Missionary Fund, but any gifts received for the Haven Home remain designated for this purpose.

The St Matthew's Regeneration Fund is restricted to expenditure for the regeneration of the church roof and to the future re-ordering of the church building.