

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

Registered Charity no. 1084369

Annual Report For the year ended 31st December 2024

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Website: www.waldronchurches.org.uk
Incumbent: The Revd Simon Hobbs

Independent
examiner: Mr Nick Rayment

Bankers: Lloyds Bank and NatWest Bank

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

Trustees Annual Report for 2024

Reference and administrative information

i) Administration address:-

c/o Brambles, Dern Lane
Waldron, Heathfield, East Sussex
TN21 0PN

ii) Charitable Status of the parish

The parish is a charity, registered with the Charity Commission and our number is 1184369

iii) Name and address of Independent Examiner

Nicholas Rayment
61 Oaklands
Westham, Pevensey
East Sussex
BN24 5AW (01323 763385)

iv) Name & Address of Primary Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
82 Mount Pleasant Road
Tunbridge Wells, Kent
TN1 1RP

Our aims and purposes as a charity

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Simon Hobbs, in:

- The promotion of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England;
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and, ecumenical.
- To know Jesus better and make Him better known;
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or, ability to pay;
- Providing support to those in need and, to other organisations with similar objectives.

What we planned to do to achieve our charitable objectives

It should be noted that until December 2024, the parish was in interregnum and there was, therefore, no incumbent, the PCC and churchwardens taking responsibility for the management of the parish.

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

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

For this year we discussed and planned the following objectives and activities to fulfil our aims:

- Enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church
- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers
- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations
- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish
- Reaching out to the unchurched through provision of the various events which were organised throughout the year
- Continuing to maintain close contacts with our Church of England school
- Maintaining the fabric of the church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the village.

What we achieved and how we affected beneficiaries' lives

Achievements and performance

i) Church attendance and electoral roll totals

There were 121 entries on the Church Electoral Roll at the end of the year of which 46 relate to people not currently residing within the parish (116 in 2023).

The average Sunday attendance was 64 (66 in 2023)

n.b. calculated by adding all of the Sunday only worshippers EXCEPT Easter Sunday and dividing by 51

260 came to Church over the Christmas Period, including 40 children. (225 on 2023)

190 attended the Easter Sunday Services

ii) PCC Meetings

The PCC met on 5 occasions in 2024 –, 19th January, 15th March, 24th May, 20th September, and 22nd November. Attendance as recorded in the minutes.

iii) Review of Activities

During the course of the year, the PCC :-

Further developed the successful integration of the congregations of the two churches, using both venues for various “special” service .Newer members readily accept the use of both churches as a regular occurrence, which is evidence of good progress in this area. For those unable to attend church services, strenuous efforts are made to maintain contact via telephone calling and other technical options. Home communion was not an easy option during the year due to the interregnum.

We had just two weddings in our churches during the year along with 3 Baptisms. Additionally, 10 Funerals took place.

Once again, we were delighted to host the very successful school leavers service at St Bartholomew's Church. We also welcomed local school children to their now familiar Easter event in St Bartholomew's church.

Our Alleluia Room is now being used by several groups, with two weekly day centres for the elderly now part of the programme. A weekly "open" coffee morning is held each Wednesday. We continue to encourage use of the facility by the local community and have been pleased to welcome a number of other groups for their activities, something we continue to build on. We were delighted to offer the facility to our Church of England school along with Churches Together in Heathfield. We were also pleased once again, to welcome the Haymakers Nursery to All Saints when they presented their nativity play.

Both churches are now used fairly regularly for concerts and other activities, some arranged by the PCC and some organised by Friends of Waldron Churches who are very active in supporting our efforts and assisting in maintaining the fabric of both churches.

The garden area near the Alleluia Room is enjoyed by passers by and especially those who visited the graves in the adjacent churchyard. We are grateful to volunteers for maintaining the garden areas and to those who have worked tirelessly at clearing the churchyard at All Saints, making it so much more accessible to those visiting graves.

We continue to maintain and develop an active working relationship with the local Cof E school where we have representation on the Board of Governors and , despite being without a priest, we made regular visits to join in the weekly collective worship. Safeguarding issues are covered at each PCC meeting and we are pleased to report that there have been no instances that required reporting.

iv) Church Groups – see separate reports in the appendix

Cross in Hand Church of England Primary School – *appendix 1*

Dallington Deanery Synod – *appendix 2*

Churches Together in Heathfield & District – *appendix 3*

The Choir - see *Music report appendix 4*

Parish Prayer Group – *appendix 5*

Pastoral & Fellowship – *appendix 6*

Friends of Waldron Churches – *appendix 7*

Freewill Offering - *appendix 8*

Family Support Work – *appendix 9*

Bell Ringers – *appendix 10*

Parish Pealers – *appendix 11*

"Lost & Found" – *appendix 12*

Connected Charity see appendix 13 for a report on Waldron 800 Trust

Rector's Review

As our new Rector only joined us in December 2024 it is not appropriate to ask for his comments on the whole year, suffice it to say that he has taken up his new role with vigour and enthusiasm.

Churchwardens' Report – 2024

2024 was a year of challenges for our parish, given that we entered it without a Parish Priest. As is usual, in these situations, the responsibility for the management of the parish falls on the churchwardens, ably supported by a strong PCC. It proved to be a time when everyone came together to continue to maintain the life and work of the parish and we were ably supported by a number of visiting priests, such that, throughout the year, we were always able to provide an 0800 communion and a 1000 Eucharist or Morning Praise. We are extremely grateful to all who joined us and were gratified to know that they also enjoyed their times with us.

During this period, it was good to see that attendances remained constant and we continue to see a few new members of the congregation.

The process of advertising the vacancy and of the due processes was something of an education for us all, but we were delighted when Father Simon Hobbs could be confirmed as our new Rector, being formally installed in December 2024, despite being somewhat incapacitated by a bout of sciatica! Simon had been supporting us on and off during the interregnum.

With the assistance of a retired priest, we were also able to continue a monthly communion service at the local Holy Cross care home

Once again, we were able to arrange monthly coffee mornings in various homes to raise funds and generally support our reaching out to the wider community. Our thanks to all who made us all so welcome. Some of these events also took place in our churches with musical entertainment, again, bringing in more than simply regular churchgoers.

The regular mid week coffee mornings for anyone who cares to drop in continue to grow in popularity. Again, non church-goers attend are very welcome.

The Alleluia Room provides much needed 21st century facilities and, importantly, a social area for both the congregation and other community groups. Usage continued to increase throughout the year as we reached out to the wider community and our school. Our plans to instal toilet facilities at All Saints started to come together with the appointment of an architect and despite the rather protracted planning and approval process we enter 2025 with the expectation that this project will become a reality.

Our churches could not function without the support of many volunteers and we extend our thanks to everyone who contributes in so many different ways. It is impossible to name them all, but we are extremely grateful to Rev. Desmond Burton, Rev. Mark Hill, Rev. Malcolm Elwis and Rev. Simon Hobbs and Rev. Lucy Murdoch for their ongoing support.

Peter Lawrence decided that the time was right to step down from his leadership of the choir and from playing the organ and we have been pleased to further embrace David Oakenfold who has stepped up and filled the not insignificant gap left by Peter. Fortunately, Peter continues to support us on the clerical administration aspects of the choir. We should also mention the considerable contribution to our church life from Brian Tompsett, the Tower Captain, who leads our growing band of bell ringers at All Saints and supports us in very many ways, usually not seen by most of us.

We look forward with optimism as we enter a new chapter in the life of the parish with a new Rector, confident in the great support we have received in 2024 and which will, no doubt, continue into 2025,

Sarah Mackenzie and Ian Dixon

Financial review and future plans

2024 proved to be somewhat unusual for us as we did not have any specific projects to finance. However, the need for holding a good level of reserves was emphasised as, not only did we have unexpected expense due to the renovation and repair of the bell tower at St Bartholomew's, but we also started the process of getting an internal toilet at All Saints and this caused us to incur a fair amount of professional fees as we moved towards a Faculty application. The year started with accessible reserves of £57,000, whilst Friends of Waldron Churches retained cash of some £47,000.

We are extremely grateful to all those who make regular contributions to our funds through the Parish Giving scheme. Annual income from this source, coupled with the Gift Aid recovery, supports the annual contribution which we make to the Diocese. Once again, we offered to increase that contribution over and above what was requested in order to support those parishes who would be struggling.

Other income comes from a variety of sources including occasional donations, coffee mornings, fees and, on a reducing basis, cash collections. With the increased usage of the Alleluia Room, the donations have tended to increase.

Receiving the distributable income from the Waldron 800 Trust is also a major contributor. Ongoing higher interest rate also boosted interest earned on our deposit account. A significant contribution from Friends of Waldron Churches helped cover part of the cost of the essential repair work at St Bartholomew's..

Generally speaking, our estimates of expenditure were broadly correct, but the budget for maintenance at St Bartholomew's was significantly exceeded due to the repairs.. Increasing cost of oil and greater use of the Alleluia Room contributed to higher energy costs than we might have anticipated, and this will continue to be a challenge. We have now entered into a further three year fixed cost for gas and electricity to run from May 2024 and this, of course, is at considerably higher unit costs than the previous tariff. We manage the usage carefully and actually managed to come in below budget for the year. We now need to pay an honorarium to visiting organists where we have previously benefitted from a voluntary player.

The year end situation showed quite a shortfall due in the main to the essential repairs at St Bartholomew's. Without these, we would have actually shown a modest surplus even accounting for expense on professional fees for new toilet facilities at All Saints. Fund raising events in 2024 have been aimed at supporting the toilet project and, early in 2025, the pantomime is expected to boost the FOWC funds as well. As it happens, even after donations of £15,000 from FOWC during the year, their funds stood at some £53k at year end.

Overall assets were valued at £136,000 which includes the Friends of Waldron Churches balances and, also items that we can not access for various reasons. Our readily available assets were around £42,000.

We remain mindful of the fact that virtually all of the work of our parish is done voluntarily; and give thanks for the many contributions of time and effort.

Ian Dixon – Hon. Treasurer

Structure, governance and management of the charity

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission as required by the Charities Act 2011. Its governing document is the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio members

Incumbent:	The Revd Simon Hobbs	Chairman
Readers:	Mr Tim Hough and Mr Andy Delves	
Wardens:	Mrs Sarah Mackenzie	Vice Chairman
	Mr Ian Dixon	Treasurer

Elected Members

	Miss Frederica Everett	(Deputy Treasurer)
Mrs Carolyn Stanbridge	Mrs Mary Everett	
Mr David Mattinson	Mr Tim Williams	
Dr Peter Venn	Mr Roger Clark -	Safeguarding
Mr Martin Tunstall	Mrs Penelope Mayfield	Secretary
<i>Deanery Synod</i>	Mr Tim Williams & Mrs Mary Everett	

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (the incumbent/priest-in-charge, curate, lay readers licensed to officiate in the church), the churchwardens and members of the Deanery, Diocesan or General Synods and xx members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). Members are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

Committees of the PCC

The PCC's Standing Committee, which is the only committee required by law, has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings subject to any directions given by the Council. This consists of the Priest-in-charge, the Churchwardens, the Secretary, the Treasurer and one member from the PCC. A finance sub-committee monitors the income and expenditure of the PCC. The PCC also oversees the stewardship of the church buildings and fabric. Other groups who operate under the authority and directions of the PCC have their activities summarised in the appendices to this document.

Induction and training of PCC Members

All members of the PCC have their duties and responsibilities explained to them including their duty of care and the implications of the Charities Act 2006 and SORP 2005. This also includes Safeguarding issues. They are regularly updated on changes to rules, regulations and law.

There were no safeguarding issues to report during the year relating to our parish.

This Trustees' Annual Report was **approved** by the PCC and signed on their behalf by The Revd. Simon Hobbs, PCC Chairman

.....

Date.....

Annual Financial Report

of

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Waldron

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

Registered Charity no. 1184369

For the year ended 31st December 2024

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All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 11843691

Summary of Financial Receipts and Payments

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

	<i>Unrestricted</i>		<i>Restricted Fund/s</i>	<i>Endowed Fund/s</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	<i>General Fund</i>	<i>Designated Funds</i>			<i>All Funds 2024</i>	<i>All Funds 2023</i>	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	68,659	-		-	68,659	57331	1
Fees	2557	-	-	-	2,557	3731	
Other trading activities		-	-	-			
Investments	2,553			-	2,553	1236	
Other receipts/ FOWC	5000	-	6,424	-	11,424	12320	
Total received	78,769	0		-	85,193	74618	
Expenditure on:					-		
Cost of raising funds		-	-	-			
Charitable costs	81,051	4,232	-	-	85,283	57925	1 & 2
Trading costs		-	-	-			
Other payments	12,650	-	-	-	12,650	7050	
Total paid	93,701	4,232	-	-	97,933	64975	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>							
Net income or (net expenditure)	(14,932)	(4,232)	6,424	-	(12,740)	9643	
Transfers between funds/ change in investments	435		-	69	504	(676)-	
Net movement in funds	(14,497)	(4,232)	6,424	69	(12,236)	8967	
Bank accounts at 1 January	57,167	5,482	59,384	27,039	149,072	140105	3
Bank accounts at 31 December	42,670	1,250	65,808	27,108	136,836	149072	A&L

Note 1; £10,000 contributed by FOWC towards cost of repairs to St Bartholomew's bell tower

Note 2; £4,232 was clearing of heating fund and a reduction of £1,500 in the organ fund

Note 3; Endowed funds relate to silver at Chichester and the Clock Benefaction Fund managed at Chichester

All Saints. Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 1184369

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Our financial position at the year-end was

	<i>Unrestricted</i>		<i>Restricted</i>	<i>Endowed</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	<i>General</i>	<i>Designated</i>			<i>All Funds</i>	<i>All Funds</i>	
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Assets:							
Bank current account(Lloyds)	7,548				7,548	12480	
Bank account – Organ Fund-Natwest		1,250			1,250	2750	
Bank account- Heating - Natwest		0				2732	
CBF Deposit Fund	29,860				29,860	39860	
PCC-owned bank balance					38,658	57822	
Friends of Waldron Churches			53,808		53,808	47384	
Total bank and deposit accounts	37,408	1,250			92,466	105206	
M&G Charifund	5,262				5,262	4827	
Investment assets at market value	5,262				5,262	4827	
Parish silver at Chichester				24,000	24,000	24000	
Stained glass window			12,000		12,000	12000	
Clock Benefaction Fund				3108	3,108	3039	
Investments assets at cost					39,108	39039	
Total assets	42,670	1,250	65,808	27,108	136,836	149072	
Liabilities:							
Utility bills outstanding					198	(69)-	
Loo hire)					100	110	
Total liabilities					298	41	

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2024, including the notes following, was approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by The Revd. Simon Hobbs, PCC Chairman:

.....

Date

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 1184369

Notes to the Financial Report

Analysis of total received

	Unrestricted		Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total All Funds 2024	Total All Funds 2023	Notes
	General Fund	Designated Funds					
						£	
Planned giving (excl. tax refunds)	27,101				27.101	24801	
Planned giving (no tax refunds)	1,200				1.200	1200	
Loose cash collections	4,634				4.634	6343	
GP Retirement fund						1865	
Gift Aid recovered	8,058				8.058	7370	
Donations/ Legacy	10,057				10.057	6816	
Events income	2,987				2.987	1484	
FoWC	10.000				10000	1440	
FoWC uplift in funds held			6.424		6.424	10880	
Grants	4,622				4.622	4418	1
Donations and legacies	68.659		6.424		75.083	66617	
Fees for weddings & funerals	2,557				2.557	3731	
Charitable activities	2.557				2.557	3731	
Other trading activities						0	
Bank & CBF deposit interest	2,469				2,469	1533	
Clock Benefaction Fund	84				84	1237	
Investments	2,553				2,553	2770	
Donation to AS building fund					5,000	1500	2
Total received on all funds	78.769		6.414		85,193	74618	

Note 1; Received from Waldron 800 Trust

Note 2; Donation towards the "toilet" project at All Saints

All Saints, Waldron & St. Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 1184369

Notes to the Financial Report

Analysis of total paid

	Unrestricted		Restricted	Endowed	Total All Funds 2024	Total All Funds 2023	Notes
	General Fund	Designated Funds					
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Summer fete expenses							
Concert posters & musicians expenses							
Other appeals expenses							
Cost of raising funds							
Charitable grants and donations							
Parish share to Chichester Diocese	31,000				31,000	31000	
Mission/ ministry costs	2,296				2,296	1672	
Clergy and other people's expenses	299				299	2418	
Music	5,031				5,031	1988	
GP Retirement Fund	682				682	1183	1
Insurance	4,086				4,085	4058	
Water, Gas, Electricity, and Oil	4,220	2,732			6,952	8239	2
Printing & photocopying	633				633	493	
Other regular church running costs	1,533				1,533	1489	
Organ	2,281				2,281	1398	
Church maintenance & redecoration	20,490	10,000			30,490	3987	3
New building work	12,650				12,650	7050	
Charitable costs	85201	12,732			97,933	64975	
Other trading costs							
Trading costs							
Other payments							
Total paid on all funds					97.933	64975	

Note 1; Residual amount paid over to clear this

Note 2; Using heating fund resources; reduced to zero

Note 3; £10,000 donated by FOWC and used specifically for repairs to St Bartholomew's bell tower

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 1184369

Notes to the Financial Report

11 Payments to PCC employees:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages, salaries and honoraria	0	0
Employer National Insurance	0	0
Employer pension contributions	0	-
	0	0

All Saints, Waldron & St Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand

registered charity number 1184369

Notes to the Financial Report

Statement of Funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Clock Benefaction Fund	3038			70	3108
Parish Silver at Chichester	24000				24000
Total of all endowed funds	27038			70	27108
All Saints Heating Fund	2732		2732		0
Friends of Waldron Churches	47385	6423			53808
Stained Glass Window	12000				12000
Total of all restricted funds	62117	6423	2732		65809
General fund	57007	78769	93701		42075
Change in investments	160			435	595
Designated organ fund	2750		1500		1250
Total of all unrestricted funds	59917	78769	95201	435	43970
Total funds	149072	85192	97933	505	136836

Independent examiner's report

To the PCC of the Parish of All Saints, Waldron

(All Saints Church Waldron, St Bartholomew's Church, Cross in Hand)

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (PCC) of All Saints Church, Waldron and St Bartholomew's Church, Cross in Hand on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The PCC members consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

1. examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
2. to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
3. 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 charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

Examiner's signature *N.R. Rayment*

Examiner's name *N R Rayment*

Date 17th March 2025

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

Examiner's address 61 Oaklands, Westham, Pevensey, East Sussex. BN24 5AW

1. Church of England School – School Governors’ Report

During 2024 the Governing Board met termly to both support and monitor all aspects of school life. In addition there were full governing board visits across the whole school and individual visits all of which focused on either aspects of the School Improvement Plan or individual governor responsibilities

During the year pupils participated in many and various activities including immersion days (Greek, Roman, Victorian and Egyptian), World Book Day, The Big Dance, an Easter Bonnet Parade and the District Swimming Gala. Each pupil had the opportunity to participate in performances for families, many were appointed as prefects, play leaders, peer mediators, digital leaders, librarians and school councillors whilst many others represented the school in sports. In addition a Sensory Room was set up and new sheds were erected in the playground for outside equipment.

Visitors to school have further enhanced the children’s learning, HCC teachers, drama groups and parents and helpers to hear and encourage reading. In addition, off site visits were made where they can expand pupil knowledge and understanding of their lessons. These included visits to St Bartholomew’s.

In July we welcomed pupils of year 6 and their families to St Barts for their school leavers service prior to their transition to secondary education. This was followed by refreshments in the Allelulia Room.

Carollyn Stanbridge
Foundation Governor

2. Dallington Deanery Synod

On behalf of the PCC, on Monday 18 November 2024 Tim Williams attended the Dallington Deanery Synod in Hellingly at which there was a presentation promoting Penhurst Retreat Centre (at the Manor House, Penhurst Lane, Penhurst, BATTLE, East Sussex TN33 3QP; www.penhurst.org.uk), for those seeking a rural escape from the hurly-burly.

The Revd Marc Lloyd reported the death of Revd Annette Hawkins (vicar of Robertsbridge, Salehurst and Hurst Green). Marc also asked parishes to contribute £50 towards his expenses as rural dean. Tim sought clarification which was subsequently emailed to him by Marc who said: “I will email the treasurers, but the deanery doesn’t get any other funding. Synod voted some years ago to ask for £50 per benefice towards deanery funds each year or as needed. This is mainly used for officer’s expenses and deanery synod speakers (if they are not coming from the diocese) but could be used as the synod agreed. We are down to just over £200 in the deanery bank account so it is prudent to make sure funds are kept topped up, I think.”

Once again the Parish contributions are agreed at the Deanery Synod meetings with due note also being taken of those parishes that remain without a priest.

2.Churches Together in Heathfield

We have maintained our support for CTH which does enable us to keep contact with other churches in the area and to come together for various functions/ events. Inevitably, there is some overlap, but we are always represented at Forum meetings and endeavour to provide support where we can. We have two members of the Street Pastors team in Martin Jenner and Martin West. We supported the annual Christmas Tree event in Union church and have made our Alleluia Room available for a number of meetings including the AGM.

Ian Dixon

4. The choir and music

We continue to enjoy strong support for our worship at ten o'clock services and on other occasions. David Oakenfold has become a regular organist for us and also now leads choir practices. We are supported by a number of "guest" organists from time to time as well. We were pleased to welcome David's son, George to play the bugle on Remembrance Sunday and to contribute to the choral involvement in our Christmas services. All of this is much appreciated and provides a happy and social environment which we are keen to see continue. We offer a friendly welcome to anyone who would like to join the choir and, of course, it would be good to have a massed rank of tenors and basses!

We remain indebted to a choir committee who create the draft of a hymn schedule appropriate to the seasons and the readings for forthcoming services. We continue to include a range of newer hymns to keep us on our toes, whilst always including much loved favourites.

Grateful thanks are due to other visiting organists without whom it would be difficult to maintain the music for services. Their contributions are much appreciated and it is pleasing to have their feedback on how they enjoy coming to us.

A special thank you to Peter Lawrence for his loyal and valued support in all that we seek to do with our church music. Peter stepped down from playing during 2024, but continues to actively support our music in an administrative manner.

During the year, David has made use of his musical contacts to arrange concerts for us and this is set to continue into 2025.

5. Parish Prayer Group

We are a small group who meet each Wednesday in the Alleluia room at St.Bartholomew's, Cross in Hand (except during Advent and Lent when we take a short break).

Our meetings are quite informal and usually last around an hour. We take it in turns to lead and an opening prayer is followed by a short bible reading, a period of silent prayer and closing with The Lord's Prayer and The Grace.

Everything discussed is kept strictly confidential within the group – we update each other about people we have been praying for and, where new needs have been identified add names to the Prayer Book. Primarily we offer prayers on behalf of everyone mentioned in our Parish Book of Prayer; for others known to individual members of the group and generally for anyone in need whatever the reason. As well as praying for individuals we also include wider topics of concern such as natural disasters or areas of conflict.

During Holy Week the Prayer Group led three Compline services of prayerful reflection at St Bart's and were delighted to be joined by members of the congregation.

Members of the group agree that our hour together is special. As well as sharing our thoughts and focussing on prayers for others it allows us to be quiet and still for a brief period in an otherwise busy life.

Dates and times of our meetings can be found in the Parish Diary.

Dorothy Withers
(01435 866737)

6. Pastoral and Fellowship 2025

We started the year without a Parish priest, and as a well established church family we drew on our strengths and continued to care and watch out for our community, fellow congregants and neighbours alike.

We had fewer weddings last year but several baptisms and on a sadder note we also said a final farewell and celebrated the lives of some of our congregation and members of our community too.

When times were difficult and not so happy, our small and dedicated team of lay people have continued to care. We have supported individuals and families alike, at the time of their crisis with visits and follow up telephone calls. We continue to be supportive and are available for as long as we are needed once their lives begin to return to 'normal.'

The Alleluia Room is used most days of the week and it has become home to the 'Help We Care' community group on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have a morning coffee group on a Wednesday and our knitting group meets monthly on a Monday afternoon. It has also been used by Churches Together, the Street Pastors, Rotary for meetings, First Aid training sessions and also by other groups needing a warm and welcoming space.

During the summer months we re-instated our Saturday Morning coffee mornings. These were kindly hosted in different homes in the parish and not only provided a social opportunity but raised a useful amount of money too.

We are thrilled that we now have our own parish priest, Father Simon Hobbs. Since his arrival he has been able to re instate home visits and house communions. He is a regular visitor to the groups using the Alleluia Room and the Pastoral and Fellowship Team are delighted to have him at our head

With thanks to everyone in our congregations who are our eyes and ears. Between us all we have managed to reach out and support when and where it has been needed.

Sarah Mackenzie

7. Friends of Waldron Churches

2024 was another good year for the Friends of Waldron Churches. The events arranged or facilitated by them now follow a well-established pattern and the community continues to punch above its weight, bolstered by the likes of the **pantomime**, the annual **Rotary Classic Car Show**, and the increasingly popular annual Cracking **Christmas Craft Fair**

The occasional **pub quiz in the** Star Inn also adds to our funds.

The **Summer Open Gardens** in central Waldron raised some £1,500. For this event we valued the support and organisation provided by the Fanshawes, Corfields, Jay Graham and the Bazens.

On Sunday 11 August 2024 the **Rotary Classic Car Family Fun Day** raised over £8000 for charity, the Friends receiving £1500. Members of the Friends Committee were involved in assisting on the day but we very much appreciate the contribution from Rotary to our funds.

The now annual **Christmas Cracking Craft Show** (aka our **Christmas Cracker**) was well organised by Mobbs Pitcher, Helen Porter and Ian Dixon. Held in All Saints' Church with a magician/entertainer and . Father Christmas popping up and, moving to his ice-encrusted Grotto, dispensing presents in the belfry. Various craft activities were on offer, as were mulled wine, mince pies, light refreshments and a spin on the Tombola and Raffle, all of which raised some £458 for the Friends thanks to generous donations.

The Friends are committed to maintaining the fabric of the two local churches and have in recent years funded flooring, cupboards and lighting at All Saints, and they supported the development of the Alleluia Room and essential work renovating the Bell Tower at St Barts'. At both churches, socialising over coffee after Sunday morning services is now a regular feature thanks to the provision of kitchen facilities, and the Alleluia Room is in frequent use for numerous community activities.

Our efforts have been very much in support of the Flush Fund which makes upgraded facilities at All Saints' Church a real possibility. Thanks go to Neil and Evelyn Taylor for their proposal of and substantial financial support for the Flush Fund.

We are grateful to the local community for their membership of the Friends and for their support and that of Rotary for Friends' events. Your help in keeping us going makes it all worthwhile and is appreciated.

Tim Williams

8. Freewill Offering

The vast majority of our regular worshippers are now members of the Parish Giving Scheme which is a significant benefit to our Parish.. This excellent free service means that we are credited monthly with the total of contributions and that the Gift Aid associated with these contributions is also credited to us monthly. This makes a major difference to our cash flow and simplifies the administrative process.

We continue to have a few folk who prefer to use the "Pink envelope" scheme and this, we understand and, indeed, thank them for their continued support. Indeed, it is helpful that "occasional" visitors to our church at weddings and funerals for example, also use these envelopes since we are able to obtain Gift Aid in many situations.

If anyone else wishes to join this scheme please have a word with the Treasurer for more information and application forms.

In 2024, we received over £28,000 through Free Will Offering and trust that this will continue to increase as we move forward with ever increasing costs.

Ian Dixon – Treasurer

9. Family Support Work (FSW)

The committee has had a very busy year fundraising to continue supporting our Deanery practitioner, Rebecca Hale. She has a full caseload of families with whom she is working, including with some of those at our Church school. The support provided is tailored to each family's needs and covers supporting with such issues as mental health, parenting, parents with SEN (Special Educational Needs) children as well as those in need of help with budgeting. All your contributions have helped to make this financially possible so thank you from all her families. In the financial year 2023/4 the Deanery raised over £5,000.

With the economic situation we all continue to find ourselves in, the work of FSW continues to be in demand and most of the county's practitioners have a waiting list of those in need of their support. As always here in Waldron our supporters rose to the occasion and have continued to support with regular donations of food and household supplies, items for the shop, Easter eggs, summer games and equipment, harvest time and Christmas presents and of course cakes to support our refreshment activities. Many contributed by making their payment direct to FSW via the banking system (please check out the FSW website if this is something you wish to do and please state that your contribution is for the work of the Dallington Deanery if that is where you would prefer your contribution to be spent).

There is a labelled container in each church for you to leave donations of food, toiletries, cleaners etc. (Unsure what to donate? If you use it so will the FSW families – just please ensure all contributions still have a shelf life.)

In addition please continue to leave your used ink cartridges in the FSW box for recycling, from whence they will be taken and posted collectively. Please note that any preprinted envelopes you may have are no longer accepted.

A huge thank you for your continued and generous support.

Carolyn Stanbridge
Secretary Dallington Deanery FSW Committee

10. Tower Report

I currently have 15 people able to ring our eight bells. For most Sunday services we now have more than enough ringers to ring a full peal.

In March 2024, Brian Hamper passed away. He was one of the first people that I taught to ring for the Millennium and he proved to be a great asset to the tower. He made the photo display board in the ringing room which he kept up to date from 2000 and included the names of the ringers. This is a wonderful record for future years.

On one occasion he came to the rescue at a wedding when the organist failed to appear. He tied up his rope and saved the day by playing the keyboard for the service!

As I write this, we have news that Pamela Francis recently passed away. I also taught her for the Millenium and she also sang in the choir. Her husband John was then the choirmaster and, sadly, he too passed away a few days after Pamela.

On the Monday of Holy Week we shall have our annual spring clean in the tower. Currently, there are no issues with the bells (just the bellringers!). During the year we had five visiting bands of bellringers which is still down on pre-covid levels.

Our many thanks to Simon, Ian and Sarah and the PCC for their support. I am very blessed to have a wonderful group of people able to keep the ancient art of bellringing alive in Waldron. I would always be pleased to teach any younger recruits.

Brian Tompsett – Tower Captain (01435 – 866054)

Addendum

The entire parish gives thanks for the incredible amount of work that Brian puts in to lead his team and maintain our bells. Thes ringing on a Sunday morning greatly enhances our services.

11. The Parish Pealers

Our first performance of the year was at Holy Cross Nursing Home where we celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a selection of Irish folk songs. In December we played Carols at Holy Cross and Oaklands Nursing Homes and at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St. Bart's. In the summer the bells were taken to The Bells of Whitechapel Ltd at Bromley for inspection . Two bells required some repairs at a cost of £163. Fortunately we had enough funds (from members subscriptions and donations) to pay for this and also to give donations of £100 each to Motor Neurone Disease and St. Wilfrid's Hospice.

Sadly two former ringers, Pamela and John Francis, died in January 2025. Pamela with John's encouragement formed the group after being shown a set of 10 Handbells (dating from 1889) which had been found in an old box in the Bell Tower at All Saints'. The bells required quite a bit of refurbishment and after numerous fund raising events the Group played their first concert at a Flower Service Concert in June 2002.

We were asked to play at Pamela's funeral and we chose St. Clement which is the tune to The day Thou Gavest Lord Has Ended.

New members are always welcome. If you are interested please contact me on 01435 862666 or by email at maureenkeith931@btinternet.com.

Maureen Keith

12. Lost & Found Social Bereavement Group

This last year saw a few new members to Lost & Found.

By popular demand, we shared a couple of lovely lunches at Deanland Park, near Ripe, in mid-March and again in November.

We saw some of you for a cuppa and a slice of cake (or Pimms !) at the end of June at The Old Glebe. Laura Tenison very kindly opened up her gardens as well as her kitchen for this church fund-raiser. In July, a few of us met at a pub lunch at Framfield's Hare & Hounds.

During August, we had a delicious lunch on a long table for fifteen of us at Holy Cross Priory. We then visited the Blacksmith Arms at Halland for a lunch in September.

Harvest Festival in early October saw us enjoy a bring-a-dish or a bottle lunch , courtesy of Tim and Gail Williams's home in Waldron. An opportune moment to welcome the Parish's new Rector, Father Simon Hobbs.

Nearly twenty of us rounded the year off with an amazing Afternoon Tea at the Boughton Lounge in Holy Cross Priory .

Mobbs Pitcher

13. WALDRON 800 TRUST

The accounts for the year ending 31st December 2024 show the total assets at the end of the year stood at £196,270, which is an overall increase of £11,032(6%), which is an encouraging result.

As usual all the income accruing in the Trust has been paid to the Waldron Parochial Church Council (PCC) after the investment management fees have been deducted, in accordance with the scale of fees agreed between the Trustees and the investment managers.

There is a timing difference, as the income in the portfolio is at the end of March, June, September and December, whereas the income is paid to the PCC early in January, April, July and October. Consequently, the final income figure for December 2024 of £1,124.96, will be paid in January 2025.

This means the December/January income payment is paid in two different accounting years, which has been the process for some time.

The increase in the value of the portfolio is due to the favourable stock market, which rose 5.69% (FTSE 100 index). Thus our investment managers slightly beat the FTSE growth percentage, which is commendable.

Raymond Cade & Tim Hough