



St Nicholas' Church

Burton-in-Wirral

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL'S

ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Trustees' Report & Financial Statements



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Foreword – Rev John Coyne

Apart from the regular and continuing activities of the church, as in every church, there is a need for forward momentum and a clear sense of direction of travel. This is essential for the future of St Nicholas' Church and the Parish.

Our three priorities are to:

- Enrich our Worship (UP)
- Grow members in their discipleship or following of Jesus Christ (IN)
- Engage with and reach out to our local community through personal contact and church-led activities (OUT).



Philip Hillman who, during this last year has been training for lay ministry, is now leading a review process and will be reporting his findings to the PCC shortly. Once a pathway is agreed by the PCC forward momentum will then require the mobilisation of our congregations to live out the direction of travel.

Our worship services are, as reported by the churchwardens, diverse in style. The regular services which need more support are the monthly early morning BC Holy Communion service, Evensong and the monthly All Age service on the first Sunday of the month. The All Age Service needs support in two ways in order to be viable. It needs busy young families to endeavour to make the first Sunday of the month part of their planned family activities and for older members not to avoid this service because it doesn't suit their preferences. Only then can this service be truly and fully inter-generational.

Our church's fortnightly 'FOLLOW' home group designed to help people grow as disciples, continues to have good support. However, one group is hardly a breakthrough and it would be wonderful to have others wishing to join a second regular group. Other ways of growing as followers of Christ may be through an occasional quiet day. Looking ahead it will be important to see what Philip Hillman's report has to say on this area of church life and on how we might develop greater community engagement.

As vicar, I continue to visit people extensively, both in the parish and beyond, as well as building local relationships. We are also indebted to those members of the congregation who voluntarily visit people who are no longer well enough to get out. Thank you to all those who are proactive and prayerful in supporting the life of our church here in Burton - your ministry is vital to us all.

Rev JE Coyne

Reference and Administration Details



| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Charity Name | The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Nicholas' Church, Burton-in-Wirral |
| Charity Registered No | 1184831 |
| Principal Address | St Nicholas' Church, The Village, Burton Neston, Cheshire CH64 5TH |
| Name | Office Held (if any) & Elected Member |
| John Coyne | Vicar, Chair of PCC & Trustee |
| Jane Davies | Churchwarden & Trustee |
| Ivor Thomas | Churchwarden & Trustee |

Elected Members

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Bryan Blakeman | Hon Treasurer & Trustee |
| John Church | Hon Secretary & Trustee (Co-opted Member 05/08/2024) |
| Anthony Carter | Deputy Churchwarden & Trustee |
| John Morris-Best | Lay Reader & Trustee |
| Amanda Ankers | Trustee |
| Jenny Carlyle | Trustee |
| Ron Curnow | Trustee |
| Nicky Dennison | Trustee |
| Nigel Griffiths | Trustee (Resigned July 2024) |
| Philip Hillman | Trustee |
| Claire Smith | Trustee |
| John Vinson | Trustee (Resigned as Hon Secretary 28/05/2024) |

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) Structure & Governance

The PCC is constituted and governed by the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and the Church Representation Rules 2006.

The method of appointing members of the PCC is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Regular Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll.



The PCC ensures compliance with the laws and regulations by acting on advice received from Chester Diocesan Board of Finance, information and updates received from the Charities Commission, advice and guidance received from professional advisers e.g. Independent Examiner, attendance by members at courses and seminars and by acting on information and directives issued to clergy.

Standing Committee

This is the only statutory committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings subject to the directions of the PCC.

During the year, the Standing Committee comprised:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1) Rev John Coyne | 4) Anthony Carter, Deputy Churchwarden |
| 2) Jane Davies, Churchwarden | 5) Bryan Blakeman, Hon. Treasurer |
| 3) Ivor Thomas, Churchwarden | 6) John Church, Hon. Secretary |

Objectives & Activities

The principal objective of the PCC is to support the incumbent, to ensure the church's ministry is funded and to actively engage with and promote the wider mission of the church.

The PCC ensures that the church is open during daylight hours for times of private prayer and quiet reflection. The standard pattern of church services has been for a service to take place every Sunday at 10:00am and each Wednesday at 10:15am. In addition, Holy Communion services are held at 8:45am once a month and an Evensong service held monthly. The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives.

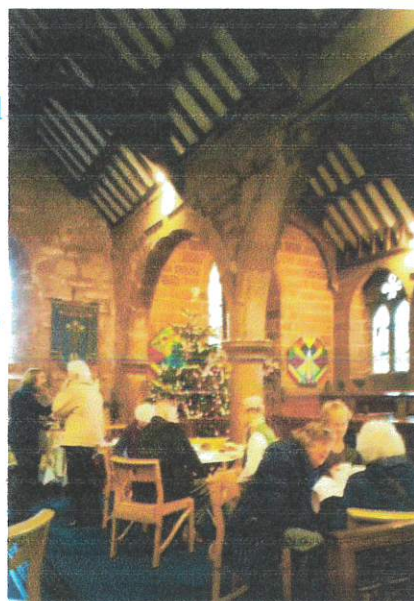
Reserves

The trustees aim to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to not less than three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure.

Churchwarden's Reflections on Church Life

Throughout 2024 the PCC has been looking both inwards at the church community, and outwards to find ways of serving and working with the wider village communities.

Within the church, there is a commitment to support existing services. The churchwardens and the PCC have worked closely with our vicar Rev John Coyne and the ministry team to ensure we offer different worship styles. Throughout 2024 we maintained a range of services including All Age Worship, Holy Communion and Evensong which included various BCP services.



The PCC has also sought to offer alternative forms of worship to better cater to the needs of modern family life. To this end we were pleased to appoint a new Children and Families worker in August, whose work will complement that of the Messy Church team. In 2025 the PCC will continue to work on its vision for a healthy church – outreach, inclusiveness, Christ-centred and accessible - and they will explore further routes to achieve this vision.

Outwardly, the church has arranged a number of successful and vibrant community coffee mornings and has engaged in successful fundraising activities such as the 'Sea Shanty Fish & Chip Supper' that enabled a donation of £1,500 to be made to the supported cause. The events team has been actively arranging events for 2025 which will include a Gardeners' Question Time and a concert by Rhos Male Voice Choir.

In the past year, the church has enjoyed the community fellowship afforded by shared services with St Michael's Church, Shotwick, while retaining its own identity in Burton. The church continues to maintain strong links with other church organisations including its participation with the 'Neston and District Churches Together' and the 'Open the Book' team that acts out Bible stories at local schools. Our church has maintained its strong commitment to Bishop Wilson (Church of England Aided) School in Burton with involvement in school activities, children's assemblies, school governors and the Bishop Wilson's School Charitable Trust.

The PCC recognise, and is very grateful for, the contribution, large and small, of all church members who give their time, talents and resources in their commitment to faith and to church life. The PCC also thanks visiting clergy who have taken services during the year and for the periodic support they provide to our church.

Buildings and Maintenance

The PCC is committed to maintaining the fabric of the church building to a high standard and updating its facilities as well as maintaining its ancient churchyard.

During the year the video system for recording and streaming church services was completed by Richard King Systems. Plans for the refurbishment of the church toilet facility have also been progressed during the year. An updated scheme has been developed by the church architect that will be easier to maintain, creating a more user-friendly space including baby changing facilities and better heating. Quotations for the work are being sought to enable the PCC to approve the necessary works to be completed by Autumn of 2025.

A series of new signs placed throughout the churchyard and along the main road have been installed to promote the location of the church and the disabled parking provisions to new visitors. The main timber noticeboard has been fully refurbished and provided with up-to-date information.

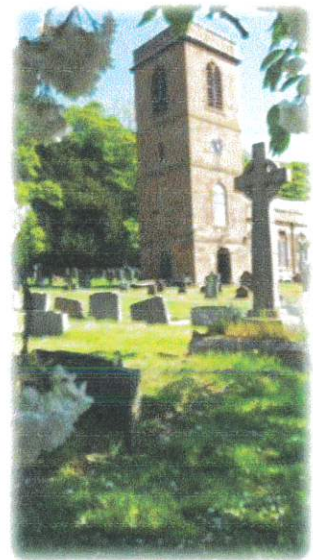
The church gutters, gullies and downpipes have been professionally maintained and cleared throughout the year to prevent any issues with leaks inside the building.

As part of the church's ongoing safety policy a survey of gravestones throughout the churchyard was undertaken and a detailed report was provided to the PCC outlining those few graves that may require attention.

The outside floodlights were renewed and more efficient timer-controlled models have been installed to provide greater flexibility in their use. A revised lighting system to the tower steps was also installed to make access safer whilst inside the tower.

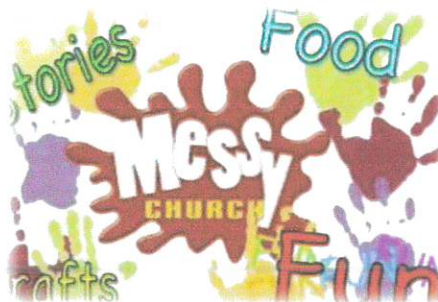
The churchyard grounds have been maintained to a very high standard over the year, and the area to the east of the church is establishing itself as a natural habitat area. As part of a project to improve biodiversity the area was sown with wildflower seeds during the Autumn/Winter and the wildflowers will help to attract further wildlife to the churchyard in the coming years.

The church is grateful to church members, the Friends of St Nicholas' Church and to others who contribute financially to support the maintenance of the church building, its churchyard and Church Wood.



Children & Families Outreach

The PCC is very thankful for the ongoing generosity of members of the congregation and several local trusts who have contributed towards the salary and ongoing costs of our part time Families and Children's Worker (F&CW) who was appointed in August. We are delighted to have Sheila Dennison, who is an experienced children's worker, undertaking the role and to have both her and her husband as part of the congregation.



A pre-school group for children, parents and carers called 'St Nic's Nippers' was inaugurated in the Autumn which began as a fortnightly event but which now meets weekly every Monday morning.

In addition, the F&CW shared in Messy Church activities, initially as an observer, but has now stepped up to lead activities alongside the rest of the team.

At Sunday morning services the F&CW provides activities for younger children at the back of Church and this has proved to be popular. If in future the children's group becomes larger, additional organised activities would be arranged in the vestry.

Throughout her initial period the F&CW has attended a Chester Diocesan led training course for workers enabling her to share ideas and best practice.

Looking ahead, we expect to begin a weekly mid-week activity and teaching group at the end of a school day for junior school children who attend Bishop Wilson School.

For this to be a viable proposition the Families and Children's Worker will need to be supported by a small team drawn from among the congregation who would be willing to become involved.

This initiative will be developed further during 2025 in conjunction with the PCC Diocesan Advisors and others.

During the year the PCC also provided work experience for a young person participating in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. This proved to be highly successful. The young person undertook verger duties each Sunday morning over a three month period and, at her own instigation, she also provided support to Messy Church activities and has undertaken Bible readings and other speaking roles at services and following completion of her assignment she continues to do so.

Pastoral Care & Community Support

During the past year the PCC implemented the planned initiative of appointing a pastoral care coordinator to support the work of the vicar. The primary function of the coordinator is to provide a conduit through which the needs of anyone within the parish can arrange to receive a visit from the vicar or a licensed lay reader. It has always been recognised that local people and church members already carry out a vital community role of visiting those whom they know in order to offer vital support.



The implementation of the pastoral care coordinator's role has been very slow to gain momentum. Nevertheless, the PCC continues to believe that, given the part time nature of the vicar's role, a pastoral care coordinator should be available within the parish to ensure that visiting and support is available to anyone who is in need.

It is important to remember that all of us have a part to play in pastoral support in welcoming worshippers at our Sunday and Wednesday services and in noticing when someone may need extra care. St Nicholas' Church is grateful to all those who inhabit these caring and supporting roles with discretion and love.

Preparation for those seeking to be baptised is an important part of church life. During the year Ruth Abbott, who has been in training for ordination undertook responsibility for this work. Looking ahead, the Families and Children's Worker will also undertake baptism preparation for young families at Burton. We are very thankful for all that Ruth has undertaken whilst undergoing her training for ministry. Everyone at St Nicholas' Church wishes her every blessing as she prepares to move to the parish of West Kirby and Caldy after her ordination in late June 2025.

St Nicholas' Church undertook a great number of funerals during 2024 for church members and people living in the parish. The vicar takes great care over visiting the bereaved and conducting meaningful services to allow them to honour their loved ones. As a result of losing several church members our church congregation and our local community is much the poorer for the loss of some wonderful individuals.

St Nicholas' Church functions not only because of the dedication and enthusiasm of its incumbent, its lay readers, appointed officials and elected members, but also because of the activities, talents and commitment of all those who provide critical administrative and technical support as well as those who carry out other duties every week of the year.

Parish Safeguarding

Throughout the year the PCC has continued to fulfil its obligations towards Parish Safeguarding and, through the appointment of a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), has adopted a proactive approach towards this aspect of church life.



Safeguarding policies and procedures were maintained throughout 2024, with the PCC continuing to conform to the safeguarding guidance within the Church of England's House of Bishops' Safeguarding policy. A hard copy of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook is available in the church porch along with the information poster, 'Promoting a Safer Church' and a Statement on the commitment by the Parish to the Five National Safeguarding Standards.

The Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement covering children, young people and vulnerable adults was reviewed by the PCC during the year. The policy was formally approved by the PCC for publication and endorsed by the vicar and two churchwardens, with a copy displayed in the church porch. This policy is reviewed annually.

Policies covering Safer Recruiting and the Recruitment of Ex-offenders have been maintained along with a safeguarding checklist that is used at PCC meetings to review the church's Safeguarding arrangements.

All new members of the PCC were briefed on their safeguarding role and responsibilities, and all PCC members, lay readers, churchwardens and church group leaders have completed an appropriate level of safeguarding training.

During 2024 the PSO has utilised the new Church of England Safeguarding Dashboard to ensure compliance with Statutory Safeguarding requirements.

Formal Approval of the Financial Statements and Trustees' Annual Report of St Nicholas' Church, Burton

Approved on behalf of the PCC on 25 March 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'John E Coyne', is written over a horizontal line.

Signed by Rev John E Coyne, Incumbent

Date 25 March 2025

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH,
BURTON - YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas' Church Burton for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 12 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

P. N. Bates

Phillip Bates FCA

Phillip Bates & Co Limited

1/3 Chester Road, Neston, CH64 9PA

Date *28th March 2025*

B
Phillip Bates & Co Ltd
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANTS

BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
ADVISERS

1/3 Chester Road
NESTON
Burton, Cheshire
CH64 9PA

Tel: 0191 353 0002
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ICAEW
CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANTS

| | Unrestricted General Funds | Unrestricted Contingency Funds | Restricted Churchyard Fund | Restricted Fabric Fund | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Receipts | | | | | | |
| Voluntary Income | | | | | | |
| Cash Collections Bank | £ 734.88 | | | | £ 734.88 | £ 7,422.90 |
| Electronic Giving | £ 1,917.37 | | | | £ 1,917.37 | £ 1,386.50 |
| Cash Gift Aided | £ 2,576.00 | | | | £ 2,576.00 | £ 4,260.00 |
| Planned Giving | £ 41,545.00 | | | | £ 41,545.00 | £ 59,882.41 |
| Friends of St Nicholas' | £ 2,670.00 | | | | £ 2,670.00 | £ 2,880.00 |
| Bishop Wilson School Trust Prof. Fees | £ 8,703.60 | | | | £ 8,703.60 | £ - |
| Interest | | £ 131.67 | £ 93.88 | £ 1,027.18 | £ 1,252.73 | £ 732.93 |
| Dividends | | | £ 962.98 | | £ 962.98 | £ 922.03 |
| Events | £ 3,043.00 | | | | £ 3,043.00 | £ 2,464.50 |
| Children & Families Worker | £ 7,100.00 | | | | £ 7,100.00 | £ 11,160.00 |
| Bld Soc Interest | £ 2,406.35 | | | | £ 2,406.35 | £ 970.94 |
| Tax Refund | £ 12,189.18 | | | | £ 12,189.18 | £ 11,408.72 |
| St Michael's Insurance | £ 1,786.47 | | | | £ 1,786.47 | £ 933.00 |
| St Michaels Contribution | £ 1,320.00 | | | | £ 1,320.00 | £ 620.00 |
| Weddings, Funerals & Memorials | £ 15,422.00 | | | | £ 15,422.00 | £ 9,750.00 |
| Magazine Income | £ 320.00 | | | | £ 320.00 | £ - |
| Sundry Income | £ 367.00 | | | | £ 367.00 | £ 296.00 |
| Total Receipts | £ 102,100.85 | £ 131.67 | £ 1,056.86 | £ 1,027.18 | £ 104,316.56 | £ 115,089.93 |

| | Unrestricted General Funds | Unrestricted Contingency Funds | Restricted Churchyard Fund | Restricted Fabric Fund | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Payments | | | | | | |
| Diocesan Expenses | | | | | | |
| Parish Share | £ 44,220.00 | | | | £ 44,220.00 | £ 42,114.24 |
| Chester DBF | £ - | | | | £ - | £ 800.00 |
| Vicarage Council Tax | £ 7,608.34 | | | | £ 7,608.34 | £ - |
| Vicars Expenses Reimbursement | £ 1,481.45 | | | | £ 1,481.45 | £ 1,231.79 |
| Vicarage Expenditure | £ - | | | | £ - | £ 1,800.00 |
| Other Expenses | | | | | | |
| Resources | | | | | £ - | £ 311.38 |
| Locum Vicar Costs | £ 1,266.56 | | | | £ 1,266.56 | £ 1,041.40 |
| Church Building | | | | | | |
| Water Rates | £ 295.82 | | | | £ 295.82 | £ 289.29 |
| Oil | £ 1,247.75 | | | | £ 1,247.75 | £ 1,489.95 |
| Electricity | £ 2,838.33 | | | | £ 2,838.33 | £ 1,567.92 |
| Insurance St Nicholas' | £ 1,765.17 | | | | £ 1,765.17 | £ 2,259.43 |
| Insurance St Michael's | £ 1,786.47 | | | | £ 1,786.47 | £ 933.00 |
| Maintenance & Repairs | £ 6,430.01 | | | | £ 6,430.01 | £ 306.00 |
| Churchyard | £ 3,467.95 | | | | £ 3,467.95 | £ 3,928.00 |
| Sundry | £ 16.45 | | | | £ 16.45 | £ 99.00 |
| Church Wood | £ 64.58 | | | | £ 64.58 | £ 4,000.00 |
| Equipment | £ 2,843.84 | | | | £ 2,843.84 | £ 1,924.74 |
| Church Admin | | | | | | |
| Verge | £ 538.00 | | | | £ 538.00 | £ 500.25 |
| Professional Fees | £ 1,638.00 | | | | £ 1,638.00 | £ 1,610.00 |
| Honoraria (Book Keeping) | £ 1,480.00 | | | | £ 1,480.00 | £ - |
| B Wilson School Trust Prof. Fees | £ 10,848.60 | | | | £ 10,848.60 | £ - |
| Upkeep/Cleaning | £ 1,470.00 | | | | £ 1,470.00 | £ 1,200.00 |
| Stationery & Copying | £ 614.83 | | | | £ 614.83 | £ 498.77 |
| Books & Materials | £ 798.13 | | | | £ 798.13 | £ 769.52 |
| Bell Ringers | £ 480.00 | | | | £ 480.00 | £ 630.00 |
| Licences/Subscriptions | £ 274.99 | | | | £ 274.99 | £ 287.00 |
| Website & IT | £ 233.00 | | | | £ 233.00 | £ 695.00 |
| Organist Fees | £ 1,622.65 | | | | £ 1,622.65 | £ 964.50 |
| Telecoms | £ 420.45 | | | | £ 420.45 | £ 386.66 |
| Events | £ 1,329.53 | | | | £ 1,329.53 | £ 585.58 |
| Refund to St Michael's Church | £ - | | | | £ - | £ 422.00 |
| Charitable Giving | £ 12,500.00 | | | | £ 12,500.00 | £ 14,199.85 |
| Children & Families Worker | £ 3,569.66 | | | | £ 3,569.66 | £ 3,500.00 |
| | * £ 113,150.56 | £ - | £ - | £ - | £ 113,150.56 | £ 90,345.27 |
| Dividends Re-invested | | | £ 962.98 | | £ 962.98 | £ 922.03 |
| | * £ 113,150.56 | £ - | £ 962.98 | £ - | £ 114,113.54 | £ 91,267.30 |

Balance Sheet

| | Unrestricted General Funds | Unrestricted Contingency Funds | Restricted Churchyard Fund | Restricted Fabric Fund | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Receipts | £ 102,100.85 | £ 131.67 | £ 1,056.86 | £ 1,027.18 | £ 104,316.56 | £ 115,089.93 |
| Payments | -£ 113,150.56 | | -£ 962.98 | | -£ 114,113.54 | -£ 91,267.30 |
| Net | -£ 11,049.71 | £ 131.67 | £ 93.88 | £ 1,027.18 | -£ 9,796.98 | £ 23,822.63 |
| Bank & Cash 01-01-24 | £ 128,943.74 | £ 2,480.68 | £ 1,768.87 | £ 19,352.23 | £ 152,545.52 | £ 128,722.89 |
| Bank & Cash 31-12-24 | £ 117,894.03 | £ 2,612.35 | £ 1,862.75 | £ 20,379.41 | £ 142,748.54 | £ 152,545.52 |

| | Unrestricted General Funds | Unrestricted Contingency Funds | Restricted Churchyard Fund | Restricted Fabric Fund | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Statement of Assets & Liabilities | | | | | | |
| Barclays Account No. 1 | £ 27,787.95 | | | | £ 27,787.95 | £ 43,318.23 |
| Barclays Account No. 2 | £ 16,590.34 | | | | £ 16,590.34 | £ 13,060.00 |
| Skipton Building Society No. 1 | £ 58,238.21 | | | | £ 58,238.21 | £ 56,338.45 |
| Skipton Building Society No. 2 | £ 15,243.65 | | | | £ 15,243.65 | £ 14,737.06 |
| Cash on Hand | £ 33.88 | | | | £ 33.88 | £ 1,490.00 |
| CCLA Fabric Fund | | | | £ 20,379.41 | £ 20,379.41 | £ 19,352.23 |
| CCLA Contingency | | £ 2,612.35 | | | £ 2,612.35 | £ 2,480.68 |
| CCLA Church Yard Fund | | | £ 1,862.75 | | £ 1,862.75 | £ 1,768.87 |
| | £ 117,894.03 | £ 2,612.35 | £ 1,862.75 | £ 20,379.41 | £ 142,748.54 | £ 152,545.52 |
| | | | | | | -£ 9,796.98 |
| | | | | | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |

Investment Assets at Valuation

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|-------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| CBF CofE Inv Fund Income Shares | | | | | | |
| Contingency Fund | | | | | | |
| Church Yard Repair Fund | | | £ 36,083.74 | | £ 36,083.74 | £ 34,337.68 |

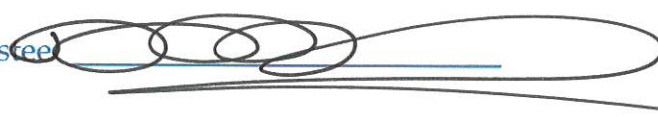
Approved on behalf of the PCC on 25 March 2025

Signed by

Rev John E Coyne, Incumbent



Ivor Thomas, Churchwarden & Trustee



Notes to the Accounts

Basis of preparation of accounts

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

1 Receipts

Voluntary income for 2024 was £49,443 compared with £75,831 in 2023 a decrease of 34%. After allowing for the fact that income in 2023 was overstated by £10,000 due to a donation due in 2022 being received in 2023, on a like-for-like basis voluntary income reduced by 24.9%.

The PCC has been made aware of the risks associated with a diminishing income stream and the factors and consequences affected by allowing this decline to continue. These include:

- Inability to fund ministry in future
- Reduced capacity to fund outward giving
- Unable to meet running costs

These risk factors are also exacerbated by:

- An ageing congregation who may be less financially secure
- Significant reliance on a small group of generous but declining donors
- Other church members unable or unwilling to bridge the financial gap
- Obligation to support Bishop Wilson (Church of England Aided) School
- Potential for the school's charitable trust unable to maintain current funding
- Reduction in tax refund due to declining donations

In 2024 the PCC received a tax refund of £12,189 through Gift Aid compared with £11,408 in 2023. The amount received from HMRC represents 16% of total income for the year, emphasising the importance to PCC finances of regular planned giving by church members using Gift Aid where and whenever it is possible to do so.

The PCC has expressed its commitment to addressing the issue.

Donations received through the Friends of St Nicholas' Church amounted to £2,670 as a result of regular donations received via bank payments.

As part of its role within the local community St Nicholas' Church continues to provide a place for families to come together at times of bereavement and to celebrate weddings. Fees received in 2024 from weddings and funerals amounted to £15,422 compared with £9,750 in 2023.

3 Investments

Funds to support day to day expenditure are held on deposit with Barclays Bank and with Skipton Building Society.

Other longer-term funds are managed by CCLA Investment Management Ltd.

4 Payments and Expense Costs

No unforeseen items of expenditure were incurred during the year.

A proportion of the fees collected by the PCC for weddings and funerals are payable to Chester Diocese (DBF). As at 31 December 2024, £5,714 of fees were due to the DBF (paid in January 2025).

During 2024, there was an arrangement with Bishop Wilson's School Charitable Trust for the PCC to facilitate the payment of legal costs incurred by the trust which would subsequently be reimbursed. As at 31 December 2024, £2,145 of funds due to be reimbursed remained outstanding (received in February 2025).

5 Outward Giving

In addition to various fund-raising events in aid of St Nicholas' Church and other causes, it is the policy of the PCC to support a number of charities annually. In 2024 the PCC was able to make the following donations to charitable causes:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|--------|
| Tear Fund | £1,000 | Wirral Ark Project | £1,000 |
| Church Pastoral Aid Society | £1,000 | Save the Family | £1,000 |
| The Mango Tree | £1,000 | Church Mission Soc. | £1,000 |
| Charles Thompson's Mission | £1,000 | Chester Clergy Trust | £1,000 |
| World Vision | £1,000 | The Bible Society | £1,000 |
| Melanesian Bros | £1,000 | Other (fund raising event) | £1,500 |

6 Parish Share

All ministry expenses (vicar and related on-costs) are shared with St Michael's Church, Shotwick. St Nicholas' Church PCC pays 77.25% of the cost and St Michael's Church PCC covers 22.75% of expenditure.

The amount paid by the parish to Chester Diocese to cover the costs associated with the employment of an incumbent was £44,220 in 2024 compared with £42,114 in 2023 (+5%).

7 Vicarage Accommodation

Certain costs associated with the provision of accommodation for the vicar and his family, including the council tax, are borne by the parishes of Burton and Shotwick.

8 Related Party Transactions

During the year an honorarium of £1,480 for accounting support services was paid to Helen Thomas, who is related to churchwarden and trustee Ivor Thomas.

9 Trustees Remuneration & Employees

The PCC had one employee in 2024, the Families and Children's Worker.

No expenses were either claimed by or paid to trustees in performance of their duties as trustees.