

2023 Report and Accounts **for the Parochial Church Council of St Helen's Church, Escrick**

Aims and Objectives

St. Helen's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the Priest-in-Charge, Reverend Jackie Doyle-Brett and Assistant Minister Rev Maxine Waller (*Resigned wef from 19th May 2024*), 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. Helen's Church, Escrick and its finances.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to providing a welcoming environment for all, whether they are regular worshippers or not. We strive to be open and accessible in every respect, and to make St. Helen's the heart of our village community. In order to achieve this, the PCC recognises the need to be financially sustainable and encourages generous giving. We are also committed to strengthening and further developing our relationship with the village Church of England Primary School.

When planning our activities for the year, we considered our main objectives and tried to put in place services, opportunities for worship and community engagement that would enable us to achieve these. In particular, we tried to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of services that specifically meet the needs of members of the community who would not ordinarily attend church, particularly families.
- A varied programme of 'Heritage Activities' which engage a wide demographic.
- Regular opportunities to engage with music within the church from bell ringing to singing in our choir.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. Helen's.

Achievements and Performance

Throughout the year we hold special services, including Easter, Harvest Festival, Remembrance and Christmas and these have registered an increase in attendance which is very encouraging. Family Fun @4 continues to run successfully once a month where we talk about and read bible stories to the children, followed by craft making, singing and prayers, followed by food.

A strong relationship is maintained with Escrick Primary School and the Church/School Liaison group meet each half term to seek ways of helping to teach Christian values and enhance relations to our mutual benefit. Once a month a group of volunteers present Open the Book and members of the clergy visit the school and take collective worship. In December a Christingle service was held in school and Christingle oranges were distributed to the children, kindly prepared by a group of volunteers. In July St Helen's hosted the Leavers' service during which hand crosses were presented to the leavers. Children are also encouraged to participate in our special services and throughout the year they provide examples of work for our display board. We thank our two Foundation

Governors, Louise Bartle and Christine Mason, who currently represent the Church on the School's Board of Governors.

It is much appreciated that we are able to keep our church doors open every day. Our grateful thanks and appreciation go to Nancy Mackenzie for undertaking the task of opening and closing church each day. St Helen's is home to a range of activities, such as the monthly Heritage evenings, prayer lunches, Heritage Hub, Little Hoots toddler group and Hoot's Cafe among others. There are also special events throughout the year, including poetry evenings and concerts. St Helen's is also used by several local organisations for their regular meetings.

Through our charity of the quarter, we continue to support various local charities and organisations. These include Bundles of Joy, Derwent Lions for spectacles, Selby Food Bank, Besom, Caresent, and currently Children's Literature Trust. We would like to thank all members of the community who have generously contributed to these important organisations.

Here at St Helen's we are fortunate enough to count on a small army of volunteers who in one way or another contribute to keeping the wheels turning, be it preparing for special services and events or regular activities such as cleaning, flower arranging, churchyard maintenance, distributing magazines and many other tasks. To express our gratitude and appreciation for all the help and support we receive, PCC recently held a social evening in church to thank everyone.

Fundraising is always high on the PCC's agenda, as we are gently reminded by our Treasurer! Over the last twelve months we have held several successful fundraising events, including a Christmas concert, festive bacon butty and wreath-making morning, and recently a Big Breakfast held in the village hall. We thank Carolyn Skilbeck for administering The 100 Club which continues to raise valuable funds.

Looking forward, PCC has a busy year ahead developing some of the initiatives already in progress such as the Memorial Garden, feasibility of installing solar panels, and completion of requirements to become an Eco-Church and an 'Inclusive Church'. Efforts will also be directed towards fundraising, recruiting new volunteers for the numerous tasks involved in keeping our church active and welcoming, and serving our community as best we can.

Financial Review

Total income in 2023 was £64,874 whilst total expenditure was £56,579 meaning there was a surplus in 2023 of £8,295.

This £8,295 surplus is clearly a good and welcome result and key contributory factors included £3,700 of unexpected, additional income related to housing two containers in the church car park, more funerals than usual with some significant collections and one particular funeral resulted in over £2,000 being generously given to St Helens. Similar to 2022 there were twelve weddings which, in part, is 'catch-up after Covid' so that again helped the financial position.

Without the Christmas Tree Festival fundraising income was reduced but the likes of the Breakfast Butties, the Celebration Concert and the Weighton Waytes all made important contributions. It is also noteworthy and praiseworthy that there is a wide range of other activity at St Helens which combine to make a real difference to the church's financial standing and, to illustrate, in 2023 the income from refreshments, book sales, the church donation box, heritage, votive and Hoots was over £3,750.

In 2023 St Helen's also received an extremely generous grant of £5,922 from The Friends of St Helens (FOSH) in respect of work to the gates into the church grounds, but, in practice, this simply offset the expenditure incurred by the church.

Other than as described above, St Helen's did not receive any large bequests, donations, or any other similarly favourable one-off events during the year.

Expenditure was generally routine, other than the work on the gates, with no major unexpected costs, but it is noted that St Helen's again increased its freewill offer up to £13,000 an uplift of 8.33%. In addition, St Helen's contributed £1,625 to the running of the Rivers Partnership.

St Helens had £27,299 in its Barclays current account at the end of December, but with two outstanding cheques totalling £1,590 the net account balance was £25,709 compared with £17,746 at December 2022.

After a disappointing 2022 it was pleasing to see the value of St Helen's investment account with CCLA recover strongly and the December 2023 value of £28,595 compares favourably against £25,137 at December 2022.

With a net amount of £25,709 in the current account and the investment account valued at £28,595 that meant St Helen's had a total of £54,304 in funds at the end of December 2023. The comparable December 2022 figure was £42,883.

As already noted above, the 2023 surplus is welcome news and St Helen's is in a solid but appropriate financial position. In 2024 we anticipate that the income from the containers in the car park will be much reduced and the Quinquennial Inspection is expected during 2024 so, as St Helen's is over 160 years old, that has potential to generate some significant expenditure over the next couple of years.

THE 2024 BUDGET

The 2024 budget is predicated on income of £44,200 and expenditure of £45,925 which delivers an anticipated deficit of £1,725.

At the end of 2024 it is anticipated St Helen's will have £54,074 in funds of which £21,574 will be in the current account whilst the CCLA investment account will be valued at £32,500.

The key assumptions behind this budget are detailed below:

- There will be substantially less weddings and funerals, for example, there are just seven weddings booked for 2024 whilst 2022 and 2023 each had twelve weddings.
- The lower number of weddings and funerals obviously reduce wedding and funeral income, but they also impact various other matters including: Collections will be reduced along with subsequent payments to charities.
- Various expenses are reduced including statutory fees, organists, vergers, and bellringers.
- The income from the containers in the car park will end in the first quarter of 2024.
- There will be £1,000 of quinquennial inspection costs but any subsequent works will take place in 2025.
- £3,000 will be transferred from St Helen's current account and be invested in CCLA funds and that these CCLA funds will increase in value by about 3% during the year.

Structure, Governance and Management:

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St. Helen's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens 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. The full PCC met six times during the year.

Church Council Members on 23 April 2023

Ex-Officio

Rev Jackie Doyle-Brett
Rev Maxine Waller
Caroline Wandless (Churchwarden)
Caroline Wandless (Deanery Synod Representative)

3 years to serve

Hilary Castle
Carolyn Skilbeck

2 years to serve

Margaret Gowthorpe
Judith Luscombe
Nigel Wood

1 year to serve

Christine Mason (Secretary)
Fiona Walters
John Wilson (Treasurer)

1 Vacancy available



St Helen's Church, Escrick

Accounts to 31 December 2023

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St Helen's Church: Overview of the 2023 Accounts

Total income in 2023 was £64,874 whilst total expenditure was £56,579 meaning there was a surplus in 2023 of £8,295.

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St Helen's Church: Income

INCOME	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£
Planned regular giving	8,544	8,457	8,297
Collections	16,092	8,653	6,653
HMRC gift aid	3,722	3,293	3,815
TOTAL GIVING	28,358	20,403	18,765
Weddings	12,412	10,981	4,039
Funerals	7,164	4,939	6,330
TOTAL STATUTORY FEES	19,576	15,920	10,369
Monies from the Benefice	0	570	232
Legacies and Donation	0	618	13,003
Listed Places of Worship VAT claim	260	0	0
Fundraising and Events	5,252	6,681	3,426
100 Club Income	1,174	1,058	1,139
Allotments and Garages	365	460	377
Housing containers in the car park	3,700	0	0
Other Grants	5,922	5,953	0
From investment accounts	0	0	30
Miscellaneous Income	267	680	480
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	16,940	16,020	18,687
TOTAL INCOME	64,874	52,343	47,821

Notes:

Collections increased primarily due to the increased number of funerals and, in particular, two of these had very significant collections.

One grant was received during 2023 and that was a £5,922 payment from FOSH in respect of work to the gates into the church grounds. In 2022 St Helens received £3,453 from FOSH in respect of external lighting and it also received a Diocesan grant of £2,500 to assist with heat and light costs.

The £3,700 related to housing containers in the car park was an unexpected but very welcome bonus.

2023 fundraising income included the following amounts:

- Breakfast £358
- Weighton Waytes £437
- Celebration Concert £752
- Church Donation Box £1,002
- Votive £230
- Books £481
- Refreshments £518
- Heritage £721
- Little Hoots £718

St Helen's Church: Expenditure

EXPENDITURE	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£
Freewill to Diocese	13,000	12,000	10,000
Statutory Fees	2,642	2,274	1,475
TOTAL TO DIOCESE	15,642	14,274	11,475
PAYMENTS TO CHARITIES*	3,493	1,783	1,389
Organists	2,878	3,128	2,322
Vergers	1,583	1,121	533
Bellringers	2,410	1,885	658
Visiting clergy	1,540	1,805	580
Payment to Benefice Account	0	206	750
TOTAL FEES	8,411	8,145	4,843
Insurance	5,614	5,188	4,993
Oil	3,285	4,043	1,878
Electricity	3,460	1,712	1,545
Water	162	149	135
Internet	447	333	337
TOTAL UTILITIES	12,968	11,411	8,888
Repair and maintenance	8,968	5,525	4,241
Roof Alarm costs	1,431	794	393
Churchyard	1,200	1,087	948
100 Club Prizes	600	630	470
Miscellaneous (inc fundraising expenses)	1,723	2,675	3,096
Heritage related	518	575	50
Riverside Partnership Funding	1,625	0	0
TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE	16,065	11,286	9,198
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	56,579	46,913	35,793
Transfer to CCLA	0	0	25,000
GROSS ADJUSTED EXPENDITURE	56,579	46,913	60,793

Notes:

*These payments to charities are essentially collections at funerals with subsequent payment to a charity, for example Cancer Research, and services where the collection is for a specific charity, for example Remembrance Sunday and the Royal British Legion. With more funerals than usual in 2023 this resulted in an increase in such payments.

£5,922 of the repair and maintenance expenditure related to the expenditure on the gates into the church grounds (and which was ultimately, and very kindly, reimbursed by The Friends of St Helens). In addition, £1,560 was spent on some remedial works to the church's guttering.

St Helen's Church: Summary of Income and Expenditure

	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£
Total Income	64,874	52,343	47,821
Total Expenditure	56,579	46,913	35,793
Surplus or (deficit) of income over expenditure	8,295	5,430	12,028

Notes:

In terms of previous years it is noted that the 2021 surplus was very much due to a most generous bequest of £10,000.

St Helen's Church: Current Account

	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£
Opening bank balance on 01 January	19,004	12,316	25,288
Income	64,874	52,343	47,821
Sub-total of opening balance and income	83,878	64,659	73,109
Expenditure including transfers to CCLA	56,579	46,913	60,793
Bank balance on 31 December	27,299	19,004	12,316
Unpresented cheques	1,590	1,258	0
Net closing bank balance on 31 December	25,709	17,746	12,316

Notes:

The two unpresented cheques at 31.12.23 were:

- Cheque number 103255: £910
- Cheque number 103260: £680

St Helen's Church: Investment Account

Investment Accounts	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£
TOTAL	28,595	25,137	27,929

St Helen's investment funds are made up of 478.87 units of accumulation shares held in the Church of England Investment Fund which is managed by CCLA. During the year the value of these investment funds increased from £25,137 at December 2022 to £28,595 at December 2023.

This £3,458 increase in value is obviously welcome, but, in practice, it broadly returns the investment value back to where it was in December 2021 or, in other words, it means the ground lost in a very disappointing 2022 has been recovered.

St Helen's Church: Summary of Funds

	2023	2022	2021
Funds on 31 st December	£	£	£
Current account less unpresented cheques	25,709	17,746	12,316
Investment account	28,595	25,137	27,929
Total funds	54,304	42,883	40,245

The PCC needs to be clear about which funds are restricted, and which are unrestricted and or designated.

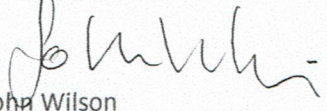
- 'Restricted funds' are sums of money that are held on trust for particular purposes and can only be spent on those purposes.
- 'Unrestricted funds' can be spent on any of the PCC's general purposes.
- 'Designated funds' are sums of unrestricted money earmarked by the PCC for specific purposes.

All the Restricted Funds and Designated Funds were spent on the Heritage project, which ran from 2016 to 2019 so all current PCC funds are Unrestricted.

St Helen's Church Accounts: treasurer statement and audit certificate

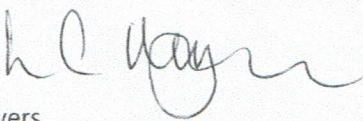
Treasurer statement:

These accounts are an accurate, fair and full representation of the finances of St Helen's Church at 31 December 2023.

 08/02/24
John Wilson
St Helen's Church PCC Treasurer

Audit certificate:

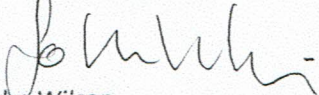
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 6/2/24
Leisa Myers
St Helen's Church Auditor

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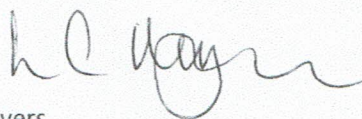
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