



Annual Report 2023



VICAR'S REPORT

For me, the highlights of 2023 have been:

- finalising our God-given vision and values for the next season of our life as a church
- the gradual increase in numbers of people coming to Sunday worship
- the strides forward in our welcome to newcomers and visitors
- a fireside sunrise service to greet the dawn on Easter Sunday
- the many moments of joy and laughter in each other's company as a church family
- a successful grant application to the lottery's Community Fund to staff St Alban's/The Hive for five years and enable all the positive community engagement that happens there
- the recommendation from the national church that Christian B be trained for ordained ministry
- a fabulous week at The Hive with 16 young people creating a mural for the community garden
- a new venture with 3 other local churches to offer a Christmas event for all ages in Longton Park

Funerals 32 (27 at St Bart's, 5 just at the crematorium, 22 taken by Angela)

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child 1 Baptisms 7

Weddings 7 Wedding Blessings 1

Rev'd Angela

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Home Communion continue to be taken to the sick and housebound and we continue to go to Bradwell Nursing Home. The ministry at Willow Barnes continues to flourish with our monthly Communion Service with hymns, readings, intercessions and a talk. Approximately 6 people attend although the numbers do fluctuate. My thanks go to Brian and Julia for their tremendous help.

The bereavement team have been busy contacting the bereaved. Over the year there have been 31 funerals which is slightly down on last year and most of them have been contacted by telephone. Getting in touch with the bereaved is as important as visiting them as it shows that the church cares. Everything is treated with the utmost confidentiality. At the moment there are 3 of us on the bereavement team.

In the past we have had 2 Annual Memorial Services at 4pm and 6pm where the latter was not well attended. The PCC decided to hold just one service, and it was held at 5-00pm on Sun 5th November and this was very well attended.

Baptism anniversary cards continue to go out, there were not so many last year as there were fewer Baptisms in 2022 which may be due to Covid.

As this will be my final report on Pastoral Care, as Ali will be taking the lead on this important work, I hope you will support her as you have me over the years. Finally I would like to thank all those past and present who have helped and supported me. I am not giving up entirely as I will continue to do what I can for the Lord and the church.

Please hold Ali and the pastoral team in your prayers.

Peter Walker, Pastoral Team Leader



Blurton & Dresden Kids

During the last 12 months our numbers have diminished slightly. However we have a strong team of leaders offering teaching and activities. As we are not currently following a particular scheme we are tending to follow either the readings or Gospel for that particular week.

We have bags with books/jigsaws for the smaller children who may attend church. Our BDK children are upper keystage primary school / high school age.

Hopefully our children's group will grow in this coming year if we have new families attending our services.

Julie Wood

Blurton & Dresden Youth

Whilst we have not run a regular youth group this year, we engaged with 16 local young people aged 8-15 when we ran a half-term Mural Project through The Hive, which was a great success.

Rev'd Angela

SCHOOLS

Angela has continued to lead worship weekly at Belgrave St Bartholomew's Primary Academy, in addition to advising on their RE curriculum, and helping them with a re-visioning process earlier in the year. The school has experienced change over the last couple of years, with the headteacher moving on in the summer of 2022. The two vice-principals were appointed co-principals, but then one of the two was recruited to be principal at another school in the multi-academy trust, meaning that since Easter 2023 there has once again been a single principal.

Towards the end of the Summer term the parish were represented at Belgrave's summer fayre with a stall manned by several church members. In the final week of the summer term 2023, Ofsted arrived to do an ungraded (interim) inspection, which was stressful for the staff team, but from which the school on the Sussex Place site emerged very positively. A full Ofsted inspection will be due within two years.

We welcomed all Belgrave pupils in years 5 and 6 for Experience Lent at St Bart's, and two classes from The Meadows Primary Academy. In May Belgrave's reception children came to explore the church building, and year 4 came for mock weddings. Then in October Belgrave's year 1 and 2 classes came for Experience Harvest.

We have also had some contact with Kemball school and OSSMA.

Rev'd Angela

FOODBANK

In May/June and Oct/Nov we were quieter because those on certain benefits received the £301 cost of living payments.

This year instead of listing the above figures I have broken the count into the picking lists.

2023 Picking lists:

Single (one person) 158

Couple (2 people or adult & child) 85

Family (parent/s and up to 3 children) 128

Large family (parent/s and 4+ children) 34

In November 2023 the foodbank brought out a 24 hour Emergency Picking list for those who come to any Centre without an E-voucher number, giving them time to get a voucher and go to a Centre the next day. We have given 3 of these out to date.

In September we changed our opening day and time from Thursday 2.30pm - 4.30pm to Tuesday mornings 10.30am - 12.30pm. Working alongside the Council run Community Lounge and Salt Box Money Matters. The slight decrease in vouchers is probably due to the change of day and opening time.

During the year the Foodbank office decided to revert back to the issuing of voucher the way it had done before the pandemic. Anyone requiring a food voucher has to apply to any of the numerous agencies not through the foodbank office. The Hive is only one of 15 distribution Centres across this city. If you multiply The Hive figures by the number of Centres you can see the need in this city. People are struggling and the foodbank needs all our support.

City schools have donated food to the Foodbank over the years. They asked Foodbank what happens to food once it's left the school. Caroline who works at Food bank arranged for a group of the children from each school expressing interest to visit the Foodbank Warehouse/Office and a distribution centre. At the warehouse they see the donations arriving, they help to sort/date and crate items. How deliveries for distribution centres are sorted. As we are the nearest distribution centre they then walk up to the Hive and we explain how we meet and greet guests, the voucher system and how we pick and pack the food. So the children leave with the knowledge of what happens to the item of food they take to their school. We have had three visits during the year and more are expected this year.

During 2023 people could redeem up to 5 vouchers per crisis in six months and because of the demand for food the amount given out is far more than the amount of food donated. Because of this in 2024 the foodbank office have regrettably decided to revert back to before pandemic and cost of living increase issuing only 3 vouchers per crisis in six months. This will be reviewed as time goes on or a change in government policy.

I would like to thank all the volunteers at The Hive Foodbank for their support and dedication to this worthy cause: Joan, Peter, Helen, Georgina, Jo, Janet, Jean, Ann, Lesley & Sasha.

Sheila Plant, Lead Volunteer

HOUSE GROUP

The home group has continued to meet regularly on a Wednesday evening. We are a growing and enthusiastic group and we have enjoyed being together and growing in our relationships. Over the year we have explored a number of different courses including 2 on Prayer and Hearing from God. We also took a deeper dive into the book of Romans with the help of course material produced by the Bible Society.

Many of our number had never experienced the Alpha Course before and so Ali joined us over the summer and autumn to help us explore it. The course runs over 13 sessions, although it took us much longer one way or another, it poses and tries to answer common question asked by people who are exploring faith for the first time, questions like: Does God exist? Why did Jesus die? Who is the Holy Spirit? What about the Church? Does God heal today? We found the course both challenged and stimulated us. It asked us to think more deeply about what we believe and also why we believe it. It's probably fair to say that it also raised lots of questions for us and stirred up one or two heated discussions.

Over the year we sadly said goodbye to Christian who has been a valued member and leader of the group since it started 8 years ago. We miss him being among us, but to those of us who have shared these years with him, he will always feel part of the group and we proudly watch to see how his ministry develops.



We are a welcoming group who love being together, laughing a lot, eating cake and what's the other thing? Oh yes, growing in our understanding of the Bible. So, if you are free on a Wednesday night and you fancy any of these things do come and give a go.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

The PCC have undertaken significant pieces of work through the year, including:

- Finalising the plans for, and supervising installation of, a new AV system in St Bart's
- Leading on the completion of the process of discerning a new vision together as a parish
- Renewing the parish branding in line with the new vision
- Revised our parish baptism policy
- Introduced a monthly Prayer & Praise at St Alban's
- Decided to become a Living Wage Employer
- Planning, implementing and reviewing Easter and Christmas worship & events
- Organising two fundraising fayres
- Carefully monitoring parish finances, and organising two weekends of prayer, fasting & giving during the year
- Decided to take both buildings into the Parish Buying scheme for gas and electricity
- Begun the process of drafting a Mission Action Plan, flowing from the vision

DEANERY SYNOD

Only one of the three Deanery Synod meetings were attended this year, in December, by Julia Rushton, Brian Rushton & Dave Stockley (non-elected observers). The Synod enjoyed presentations related to Lichfield Diocese' Strengthening Communities project, on Dementia-Friendly Churches & Schools, Enabling All and Places of Welcome.

The PCC will consider how some of these initiatives might complement our emerging Mission Action Plan.

PRAYER & WORSHIP

Early in the year, our voluntary organist stepped back from playing for us, so we have used predominantly recorded music since then, with some live music from church members. Also early in the year, the PCC decided to place a stronger emphasis on praying together, and decided to offer a second regular opportunity to gather for prayer, by starting a Prayer & Praise monthly on Sunday evenings. Attendance has been low, but the prayer it has enabled has been encouraging nevertheless. The weekly prayer meeting on Saturday mornings continues with a faithful few.

Our main Sunday worship, combined from the morning services at St Alban's and St Bart's from the summer of 2022, has continued to grow gradually in numbers attending, which seems to vindicate the decision to come together for worship for a season. Church members have (on the whole) responded well to the combination of styles of liturgy and music which bringing the two congregations together has necessitated, as well as the monthly all-age service. A Celtic-style liturgy has become part of our worship repertoire, along with occasional Services of the Word, and a wider range of the Church of England's Common Worship liturgy.

During Lent we focused on different ways of understanding Jesus' death on the cross, and on Easter Sunday we held the parish's first sunrise service, around a fire outside St Bart's, followed by the



Easter communion outside St Alban's. After Easter, we focused on the lectionary Acts readings in our preaching, and in the Autumn there was a sermon series unpacking our new parish vision and values. For Advent, we explored the history and theology of three popular carols to help us prepare to sing them at Christmas.

A change in the baptism policy has meant that we now baptise children during the main Sunday service, replacing the communion section with the baptism. This allows us to welcome the whole family into the church, rather than doing baptisms at another time of day when the church family are absent. The first one of these services took place in September, and was well received by guests and regulars.

Rev'd Angela

FABRIC

St Alban's (The Hive) building continues to be managed on a day-to-day basis by Clare, with support from the Wardens where necessary. 2023 has been a very busy year at St Bart's, having to tackle the jobs that needed doing around the building.

February:

- Boiler Serviced

March

- Quote for survey on radiators
- New Audio-Visual system installed

May

- Radiators drained and flushed
- Expansion vessel fitted
- New controller for heating installed
- Drains behind St Bart's unblocked

July

- Painted inside St Bart's (north aisle)

August

- New lights fitted in north aisle
- Timer switch replaced for lychgate light

September

- Organ Tuned
- Wasps removed from bell tower

November

- Camera checked condition of drains
- Toilet fixed in meeting room
- Toilet cubicle inner doors removed

December

- Drone checked condition of the roof

Thank you to all the many volunteers who have helped throughout the year looking after our wonderful buildings and the garden at St Bart's.

Joan, Peter, Brian & Veronica, Churchwardens



SAFEGUARDING

I can confirm that for 2023 we had no incidences or reports of safeguarding issues, which we are very thankful for. We had one query in the summer, but as this was with regard to something that was outside of one of our church buildings, and after seeking further advice, it was deemed not to be a safeguarding issue for us.

We continued to be able to hold more events and activities, both inside and outside of both our church buildings. This enabled us to engage with our local community, and those further afield. At all events we paid regard to our church safeguarding policy. Our church services and events such as, experience Easter/harvest, spring/Christmas fayre, lent and harvest supper. Memorial and carol services were, with the help of our ministry team, wardens, activity coordinator, and volunteers, a great success. Where I believe our community has felt safe, welcomed and respected. All parties have therefore been able to enjoy the hospitality that we have been able to offer as a parish.

We welcomed two new members onto our PCC this year. As all members must complete a basic and foundation course in safeguarding, I can at this time confirm that one new member has completed their certificate. Our second member will have completed theirs in the near future. All other members have a valid certificate.

With regard to all other safeguarding policies and procedures, I believe that we are currently up to date, and working within the guidelines as set out by the Diocese of Lichfield.

Su Wilshaw, Safeguarding Officer





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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It feels like 2023 has been a transitional year for The Hive. We started the year with a cafe partnership with Grocott Centre, and several user groups that did not end 2023 with us. But we started the year with a part-time Cleaner and part-time Activities Coordinator, and ended it with a part-time Cleaner and Full Time Manager, thanks to a successful lottery bid (huge thanks to Peter Teggins for all his hard work). Having re-named as The Hive in 2022, the Committee worked on a fresh Mission Statement in 2023, as it had not been given any attention since plans for the redevelopment in 2009, and the result is below. This helps us to be clear about what we stand for, and where we are heading.

Having Clare full time has made a huge difference, and we have been able to move forward with the redesign of the cafe space, as well as exploring some (not yet successful, but watch this space) possibilities for reducing use of our limited car park space by people not using The Hive. Clare has been able to solve all sorts of building problems and set a great foundation of relationships with Vast and countless local agencies.

It has been great to welcome new committee members this year, including ward councillor Lorraine Beardmore and the Burton family. Considering the financial climate, and the replacement of a boiler in 2023, the end of year figures are encouraging. However, this was largely to do with the percentage sharing of the gas and electricity bills between us, Little Learners and Grocott Centre, a measure introduced to share the risk between major renters while the energy market was volatile, but perhaps less appropriate when it is more stable.

The perpetual balancing act that we work within is ensuring that our costs are covered - difficult in a world of constantly increasing costs - whilst providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and collaborative place for our community. We are hopeful that we can continue to do so into the future.

Angela



The Hive will be:

WELCOMING - to anyone & everyone, comfortable, relaxed, homely, affordable, community-focussed

INCLUSIVE - of anyone & everyone, where acceptance is found, with all sorts of opportunities to get involved in activities, volunteering or join the committee

SAFE - a haven to return to, a place to seek sanctuary, where caring people are found

COLLABORATIVE - evolving & changing as our people do, working with other local groups & organisations



THE HIVE MANAGER'S REPORT

I have now been in post officially as Hive Manager from November 2023 and will combine this year as the Activities Coordinator and Manager role as that has been my remit for most of 2023.

During 2023 the Committee worked up a new Mission Statement, which was followed by re-naming from St Alban's Centre to The Hive, in the hope of reducing local perception of our building as "just a church", and re-branding with a new logo and colour scheme (see right).

Hall bookings

The decision was made to stop late hires, due to the trouble we have had with past bookings. Although this has impacted on the amount of hires we have received, it certainly has been plainer sailing with the respect shown for the Hive, people sticking to hire times, and the amount of children's parties we host is now steadily growing. We have retained the buddhist temple and they as ever have been perfect hirers.

We still get regular booking requests for later hires and this can be reviewed when a Community Worker (funded by the Lottery) is appointed. We are maintaining good rates of bookings considering that we have 4 venues within a 3 mile area that offer free room hire with bar facilities.

Part of the cafe moving forward will be the interest in a catering offering and hall hire. I'm hoping to encourage the use of the hall for baptism parties and funeral wakes. I feel this is an area that can be expanded on with the christenings and funerals currently taking place at St Bart's and are all going elsewhere for refreshments. The set up and clean downs will also be easier with the appointment of the Community Worker.

Renters

Unfortunately we lost Wayne Walker this year due to the economic downturn, but relations are still good with them and we are hopeful they will return in future.

Soccer Lions are struggling for the same reasons but after a negotiation in the rent over the quite Christmas period they are now giving it until Easter to see if numbers go up. We will continue to support them in advertising and word of mouth.

Monday Club are struggling to gain members despite the hard work of Karen and Christine, but have made a plan for the future which we all hope will be fruitful. I am helping to reimagine it as an activities club and encourage new membership with facebook adverts and signposting with local primary care directives to increase numbers.

Little Learners Pre-School relationships remain strong. We are in the process of regular meetings with the newly established rental committee. I try to give them every support they require and we are flexible in accommodating social work meetings that take place in the cafe or my office. They are very accommodating in the hiccups of day to day running like the recent lack of hot water. Things are easily communicated and resolved. Tweedale Academy of Dancing have amended some of their times to keep rent as low as possible. They are quick to sort out any issues as we are with them. Their change in storage at the beginning of last year has helped streamline the storage and hirers table and chairs more accessible. They were flexible in the movement of their class to accommodate the tabletop sale.

Lastly we gained a great new group and renter. They are a newly established club four hours a week in the coffee club. With our help they are established in their own right and now welcome 18-20 members each session. They have had talks from the primary care network on weight, menopause, alcohol and diabetes. They have had debt advisors visit as well as being a test group for a levelling up workshop. They are good at paying their rent ahead of time and have a strong sense of togetherness with The Hive and will help with community afternoons and will look forward to the cafe reopening in due course to support it with this strong customer base.

All users are now aware we now have a communication book for maintenance issues so they are logged and resolved. Everyone is helping with the waste and cleaning of areas whilst in their use. All issues are dealt with swiftly and I hope all groups still feel supported by my assistance.

The Hive Cafe

Grocott Centre ran the cafe until August, but then did not renew their contract because of the lack of profit in running the cafe. This was a financial blow as well as a sadness that once again the shutters are down. On the plus side this has given us carte blanche to move forward with the lottery grant for the redesign and branding. We have several measures happening by the end of February to improve and reimagine the space making it more homely, inviting and acoustically a whole lot more comfortable a space to be in. New flooring, furniture, and tenting of the roof are all in the pipeline. The idea of a community day was rolled out with the foodbank move of dates we now run alongside the community lounge a welcoming space for all. This now benefits the community with free food, advice and a warm place to spend their Tuesdays as we have a hot drink, toast and a free lunch cooked by myself or Angela. This joins forces in the afternoon with flick film club or coffee club which are both pay as you feel so not turning anyone away from accessing our services. Each month we gain more diverse advisors and are seeing a steady rise in the amount of people dropping in. We are now advertised on local public services and radio stations raising the profile of who we are and what we do that in turn helps get the rebranded "The Hive" out there without the cost of a radio advert. We have made a bold choice to ask people or companies to sponsor our Community Lounge. Each week will advertise the day was donated by them in exchange for a £25 donation to cover the costs of the free lunch and drinks. This might be an oatcake shop providing free food, a company paying the bill for the day, even an individual that wishes to sponsor the day in their own right, or in the name of a loved one. This is sponsorship on an affordable level and they can see the direct impact of the money on the services provided.

Volunteers

We have taken on a young lady doing her Duke of Edinburgh Award. We have a new volunteer agreement that will be signed by all our current members of the team. We hosted a parish social for Harvest Festival, with a pea and pie supper, entertainment and games. We have managed to retain a space for Christopher who helped in the cafe with Strathmore and once a week with Grocott, we have found him a volunteering opportunity in the community lounge, he's a member of the coffee Club and Monday Club. I love that we can offer volunteering opportunities to those who don't find positions easy to access because of additional needs, and this has helped us get our excellence in volunteering with VAST.

Car Park

The remarking has taken place in the carpark. More spaces have been created and a slight jiggle in space has given us a second disabled space near the front door. Creative Car Park monitoring has certainly had its teething issues, however we will see how this now moves forward with strong negotiations. This has cleared up the division of space between us and the council and relationships with them are now very positive. They know more about what we do and are themselves signposting people to us for assistance.

Networking and Relationships

Now I'm acting and not reacting to just keep us above water, I feel we have had a very strong year with our engagements with outside agencies and local schools. My additional hours have given me the ability to focus my energies into forging new and past relationships. After a steady stream of closed doors that I experienced when first appointed as Activities Coordinator. We now are regularly talking with Kemball school, who joined us for 2 lantern workshops and cafe experience. Strathmore House has had a change of management and are now open to engagement with us. They are sending two members to Monday Club and we have been able to gain advice for one of their clients

after the loss of a parent. Sutherland School and Ormiston academy have also opened lines of communication through the children's half term project, lantern-making workshops and assistance in benefiting from child poverty actions as part of levelling up. They haven't in the past wanted to communicate or participate in the centre's activities and I hope to grow on this moving forward.

We have great links with the Police & Crime Commissioner and were heavily involved in securing better CCTV for the square local businesses. A new direct radio communication system has been put in The Hive. We can now speak with CCTV, Police and retailers in the square to improve the past reputation for anti-social behaviour. This helped to secure us a grant working with 22 local children for a very successful half term activities club, including the creation of a mural for the community garden, litter picking, craft, games, crime-prevention talks and good food. The 100% feedback was a really positive sign that more of this is needed and the report from the crime commission acknowledged the "what great value the project was, not only monetarily compared to past space schemes in the area."

VAST have been a huge support in the training opportunities I've gained and the networking sessions I've attended alongside Angela to hear about bids and funding. These have been an excellent way of raising the profile of The Hive as well as striving for excellence in what we are doing for the community. We have gained a Gold Standard charity award to show how we respect our volunteers and our commitment to the values required to the VAST charter.

Social workers and schools are now approaching us for help with local families. We seem to be the first point of call for many things and approach it with a can-do attitude that gets the results, even if it's something that doesn't necessarily come under our remit. However the local people are the ones benefitting, after being turned away from several other agencies. These include sourcing beds and bedding for children, feeding families with hot food who are in a local hostel without cooking facilities, and collecting and distributing 600 meals to other local charities when they were struggling to get them logistically to get them to centres, earning us a great deal of praise from foodbank. We then serviced 52 of our local food bank users and elderly clients with Christmas dinners with less than 24 hours notice we had been allotted them. Going above and beyond by all of our team of volunteers is why we are gaining not only praise but also raising our profile.

Building

Whilst we have to acknowledge the building is now starting to show its age, I have been keen to resolve the teething issues as soon as they start. Adrian has supported me greatly in tackling the smaller jobs that can easily become costly. We have managed to do many things for a few pounds or just time and effort. The floors throughout the halls and cafe were deep cleaned, stripped back, resurfaced and polished over the summer. This will need repeating now regularly and we must stay on top of the floors as they are a huge investment we can't afford again. This was done after the repair was carried out on hall 3 floor. Little Learners made an insurance claim. This was carried out with minimal disruption and was seamless in its repair. Unfortunately one of the jobs we couldn't do ourselves was the boiler we needed to replace. With some foresight we saved the old boiler and this has now helped fix two more issues without the cost of parts. We now also undertake regular scheduled servicing to keep our warranty up to date as the previous boiler was under guarantee if we have had it serviced. I am now in the process of applying for funding to replace the second boiler and thermostats to help us in the future. These also will be added with the routine schedule of maintenance and repair meaning we shouldn't have to worry about a huge cost arising again for a long time.

Administration

- Records and files updated & compliance attended to
- Necessary training undertaken, eg First Aid, Fire Marshalls
- Suppliers switched for value for money, eg waste removal, water provider

- Replacements undertaken with a focus on sustainability eg hand dryers, socket replacements
- Committee decision for Fair Trade products & no single-use plastic
- Additional recycling facilities in the pipeline
- Old office appliances donated for re-use

Finally...

Things aren't ever going to change overnight but this report definitely shows things are shifting despite the pressures we still feel from Covid and the economic challenges we are all experiencing.

Clare Hand, The Hive Manager

ST ALBAN'S LITTLE LEARNERS PRE-SCHOOL

During the last 12 months the nursery has continued to open 5 days a week 7am until 6pm.

We currently have 52 children who are attending the setting but obviously the 3-year-olds will leave us at the end of September as they will be going to School, so this is always a difficult time financially for the nursery. We will still have some babies and children under two who will still be attending through the summer holidays who are paying for their nursery fees. The nursery will be open for the first 5 weeks but as always, we will be closed the last week so that the staff can have a well-deserved break.

We had our Early years Health check visit on Wednesday the 22nd of November 2023. This went really well, and they were really pleased with what they observed and could not praise us enough. The Health check is there to get us ready for an Ofsted inspection so we will be very busy getting ready for this over the coming months.

During the last week of December, we held a parent's open day where the parents came into the nursery and did activities with their children. This was very successful, and we were surprised by how many parents came. This gave us a great opportunity to spend time getting to know our parents and for them to spend time doing fun things with their children.

We even had a visit from Santa which the children loved, thanks Santa.

Finance report. St Alban's Little Learners Nursery's finances are low at the moment, we have now got a debt recovery team collecting our outstanding debts who can go back 6 years so we are hoping that this will help. We are still struggling to source funding for the outside area as this is an area that needs developing to get it to a standard that is a better environment for the children. Any volunteers for ideas or help would be welcome.

We had a rent increase in January 2024 which was agreed by both parties. We felt that this was a reasonable and fair amount, but we would really struggle financially if it increased any further as our budget is stretched to its limit.

We feel that we now have a better working relationship with the Centre and are working well together to improve any situations that arise. We have regular meetings with them and we will do our best to attend The Hive committee meetings either in person or via Teams/Zoom in the future. May we thank Clare Hand and her partner for all their help mending and fixing things for us that were not even a part of their job description.

Kind regards, Lisa Bromley and St Albans Little Learners Staff

TWEEDALE ACADEMY OF DANCING

Over the last 12 months we have seen a decrease in our older Saturday pupils, this is due to natural progression as they have left for college or Saturday jobs. Thankfully we have seen an increase in our youngest beginners' classes and even a couple of previous pupils have returned after they left to pursue other hobbies. Tuesday and Wednesday evening classes continue to be consistently attended. We currently have 80 pupils between 2.5 years and 80 yrs. An increase of 15 pupils from last year.

We are in the process of rehearsing for our show Fusion which will be performed at The Rep Theatre from March 20th to 23rd. This is always a very stressful time for us but once the show is running it is also the most enjoyable. We have had two external IDTA (International Dance Teachers Association) examination sessions both with 100% pass rates.

We are grateful to have the facilities of The Hive and the support from Clare that we receive.

Julie Wood

A CUP OF COFFEE

We run the group a cup of coffee, we started the group 17 months ago, 3 of us on a carpark after us breaking free from something else and been nagged by others to please sort them a new start, the rest is thankfully now history. We started meeting in my living room and soon out grew that, so then moved to the cafe, We were soon taking over a great deal of the space in there.

Clare kindly approached us and offered us the chance to use the hall for a meeting space, after a discussion with our members we decided to take her up on her kind offer, almost a year later we are still here, insurance, health and safety certificate in place more to follow, first aid training done, Lunch club in place on a Tuesday, knit and natter on a Thursday.

We are self funding from our generous members by raffles, lunch club, tea and toast sales, donations and craft sales. We have around 175 members on facebook and this active daily with jokes, uplifting quotes and general banter. Weekly we have anywhere between 16 and 22 members attending.

Clare has been amazing in helping us with getting extra help, We are register with VAST I have done a couple of courses, all thanks to Clare, she has helped with advertising as well, helping us to get a local lecture in on health matters, Helen she is amazing, group has had talks now on alcohol depression diabetes, how to access local go services, we are still looking for more people to do talks.

We wouldn't be the group we are today without Clare's help and the Hive. A Cup of Coffee is open to everyone.

Paula E Sherratt & Liz Jackson

GENTLE EXERCISE

The Group started 2022 with 8/10 members. 2023 the members I am pleased to say have increased to 17 members. We meet every Monday afternoon except Bank Holidays. In May because of the King's Coronation there were 3 Bank Holiday Mondays, so one of the weeks we met on a Tuesday instead. The Group are a lively bunch of women and men and enjoy a good chat with their cup of tea after session and if it's someone's birthday there are cakes as well.

All members had lunch (paid for out of funds) in The Hive Café on a Tuesday before Jane left which everyone enjoyed. In December our last session before Christmas, we had a Festive Lunch at the Toby Carvery in Trentham, which we all enjoyed.

I am thankful for my long standing and loyal members and the increase in new members.

Sheila Plant

MONDAY CLUB

It's been a hard 12 months due to a decline in numbers. Unfortunately Janice passed away and Rosie's husband also passed so can no longer attend. Then other members have been very hit and miss due to health problems. Thanks to the Hive for the understanding about not being able to cover rent or we would have had to fold before the end of last year. Despite advertising and trying to increase numbers we have been unsuccessful in obtaining new membership. We have come to the sad realisation that we are going to have to cease. We can't carry on this way. It's been a very tough decision to say we won't be carrying on any longer. As of today 29th of January 2024. We have decided this will be the last meeting. We will review in time to come if things change or improve with the cafe reopening. We would like to thank the Hive for their support but understand we can't continue not paying rent and meeting with such few numbers is soul destroying not to have our formerly busy little club supported.

Karen Harrison

PARISH

OF

BLURTON & DRESDEN PCC
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

**ANNUAL REPORT
AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER 2023

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1191827

PARISH
OF
BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Contents	Page
Trustees Annual Report	1
Independent Examiners Report	2
Statement of Financial Activities	3
Balance Sheet	4
Notes to the Financial Statements	5-11

Independent examiner's report to the members of the PCC of Blurton and Dresden

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on pages 1 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 management committee 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 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 matters have come to my attention:

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have 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.

Slater & Co.

Claire Slater FCCA
Slaters & Co Accountants
Lymore Villa, 162a London Road
Chesterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffs
ST5 7JB

25 March 2024

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES			TOTAL FUNDS		
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023 Total	2022
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS					
Donations and Legacies	2a	34,126	30,234	64,360	56,904
Activities for generating funds	2b	36,106	-	36,106	27,101
Income from investments	2c	1,007	-	1,007	217
Church Activities	2d	9,514	-	9,514	9,815
TOTAL		80,753	30,234	110,987	94,037
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Raising Funds	3a	286	-	286	-
Church Activities	3b	76,424	27,644	104,068	90,787
		76,424	27,644	104,068	90,787
NET INCOMING RESOURCES		4,329	2,590	6,919	3,250
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS		730	(730)	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		5,059	1,860	6,919	3,250
Total funds brought forward		41,235	693,839	735,074	731,824
Total funds carried forward		46,294	695,699	741,993	735,074

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	5	660,005	660,605
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock Debtors		30	30
Tax Recoverable		13,318	14,289
Prepayments		1,478	1,154
Other		745	1,035
Short Term Deposits		17,496	17,125
Cash at Bank		79,708	57,966
Cash In Hand		139	139
		<u>112,914</u>	<u>91,738</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
(falling due within one year)	6	<u>31,212</u>	<u>17,269</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		81,702	74,469
NET ASSETS			
		<u><u>741,707</u></u>	<u><u>735,074</u></u>
Represented by:			
FUNDS			
Unrestricted Funds		46,294	41,235
Restricted Funds		695,699	693,839
		<u><u>741,993</u></u>	<u><u>735,074</u></u>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on

and signed on its behalf by:

PCC Chairman

The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

Accounting Policies

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions. They have also been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Cashflow Statement

The Charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 from the requirement to produce a Cash flow statement on the grounds that the income does not exceed £500,000.

Going Concern

There are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern

Accounting Estimates and Prior Year Errors

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period.

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

Description of Funds

Unrestricted funds are income funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC, including amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or for spending on a future project and which are therefore not included in its "free reserves" as disclosed in the trustees' annual report.

Restricted funds comprise of two elements :-

a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest

b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

Endowment funds are restricted funds that must be retained as trust capital either permanently or subject to a discretionary power to spend capital as income, and where the use of any income or other benefit derived from the capital may be restricted or unrestricted. Full details of all their restrictions are shown in the notes to the accounts.

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

Accounting Policies continued

Income

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received or when the PCC becomes entitled to the resource and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and Legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. Dividends are accounted for when receivable, interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when it is receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Expenditure

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Governance and Support Costs

Support costs should be allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the PCC and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources eg by allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included from the accounts by s.10(2)(a)&(C) of the Charities Act 2011.

Moveable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the Church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements.

No depreciation is provided on buildings as the currently estimated residual value of the properties is not less than their carrying value and the remaining useful life of these assets exceeds 50 years, so that any depreciation charges would be immaterial.

Other tangible fixed assets are valued at cost. The depreciation rates and methods used are disclosed in note 5.

Investments

Investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at market value at the year end. Investments held for re-sale are treated as current asset investments.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount. Subsequently they are measured at cash expected to be received.

Creditors and Accruals

Creditors are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts. Accruals are measured on best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	2				
Donations and Legacies					
Voluntary Income					
Tax efficient planned giving	2a	14,219	-	14,219	15,767
Other planned giving		6,718	-	6,718	7,227
Collections at services		2,822	-	2,822	2,481
All other giving and voluntary receipts including special appeals		6,768	1,804	8,572	16,798
Gift Aid Recoverable		3,599		3,599	3,995
Grants		-	28,430	28,430	10,636
		34,126	30,234	64,360	56,904
Charitable Activities					
Activities for Generating Funds	2b				
Lettings		36,106	-	36,106	24,639
Community Cafe Income		-	-	-	2,432
Sale of Assets		-	-	-	30
		36,106	-	36,106	27,101
Income from Investments	2c				
Bank Interest		1,007	-	1,007	217
		1,007	-	1,007	217
Income from church activities	2d				
Statutory fees (retained by PCC)		7,258	-	7,258	8,431
Fundraising activities		2,256	-	2,256	1,384
		9,514	-	9,514	9,815

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

	3	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
EXPENDITURE					
Raising Funds	3a				
Cost of generating income					
Fund raising costs		286	-	286	-
		<u>286</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>286</u>	<u>-</u>
Charitable Activities	3b				
Church Activities					
Mission giving and donations		2,094	-	2,094	2,311
Diocesan Parish share		25,421	-	25,421	32,481
Employment costs - The Hive		5,878	12,395	18,273	17,657
Pension - The Hive		-	112	112	-
Redundancy		-	-	-	1,959
Clergy and staff expenses		1,441	-	1,441	940
Church Expenses					
Church running expenses - St Bartholomew's		9,258	-	9,258	4,217
The Hive		10,354	81	10,435	6,762
Church Expenses		122	46	168	864
Church utility bills - St Bartholomew's		1,688	2,250	3,938	1,920
The Hive		16,229	2,245	18,474	13,938
Equipment		-	-	-	1,816
Cost of trading		-	-	-	1,555
Activity Costs		92	1,915	2,007	800
Office Expenses St Barts		352	-	352	504
The Hive		755	-	755	974
Telephone		765	-	765	851
Training		590	-	590	-
Donations, gifts and parties		-	-	-	210
Professional fees		310	-	310	350
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	78
Depreciation		600	-	600	600
Major Capital Expenditure					
Audio Visual		475	8,600	9,075	-
		<u>76,424</u>	<u>27,644</u>	<u>104,068</u>	<u>90,787</u>

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

4a Staff Costs

2023 2022

Salaries	£18,385	£19,616
Average number of employees	2	4

During the year the PCC employed a cleaner and activities coordinator.

4b PCC Costs

Mrs V Mountford, a member of the PCC, received a salary of £5,271 (2022: £4,863).

5a Fixed Assets

	Development of St Alban's Property Restricted £	Community Centre Assets Restricted £	Kitchen Equipment Restricted £	Community Centre Assets Unrestricted £	Furniture, Fittings and Equipment Unrestricted	Total £
At Cost or Valuation						
At 1 January 2023	658,829	9,943	25,001	6,009	17,529	717,311
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2023	658,829	9,943	25,001	6,009	17,529	717,311
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2023	-	9,943	25,001	4,233	17,529	56,706
Depreciation for the Year	-	-	-	600	-	600
At 31 December 2023	-	9,943	25,001	4,833	17,529	57,306
Net Book Value						
31 December 2023	658,829	-	-	1,176	-	660,005
31 December 2022	658,829	-	-	1,776	-	660,605

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

6 Liabilities

Amounts falling due in one year

All unrestricted

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals	5,592	2,929
Taxation and Social Security	771	62
Creditors	24,849	14,278
	31,212	17,269

7 Analysis of Net Asset by Fund

	Fixed Assets	Stocks	Debtors	Deposits & Bank	Creditors	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds						
General Fund	9,619	30	15,541	52,030	(31,212)	46,008
	9,619	30	15,541	52,030	(31,212)	46,008
Restricted Funds						
Building	-	-	-	3,265	-	3,265
St Alban's Development:						
Coalfields	95,200	-	-	-	-	95,200
The BIG Lottery	433,000	-	-	-	-	433,000
Co-op	30,000	-	-	-	-	30,000
Church Urban	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000
Staffordshire Environmental Trust	29,973	-	-	-	-	29,973
St Modwen Trust	25,000	-	-	-	-	25,000
S-O-T City Council	25,000	-	-	-	-	25,000
St Alban's development fund general	2,213	-	-	-	-	2,213
Grant - Lichfield Diocese	-	-	-	116	-	116
Graveyard	-	-	-	2,333	-	2,333
Children's Work	-	-	-	334	-	334
Youth Work	-	-	-	3,457	-	3,457
Social Survey	-	-	-	25	-	25
Flowers	-	-	-	84	-	84
Decoration fund	-	-	-	120	-	120
Mural	-	-	-	806	-	806
The National Lottery - Activity Coordinator	-	-	-	28,378	-	28,378
Big Lottery - Covid 19 Family & Community	-	-	-	3,843	-	3,843
Big lottery - Covid 19 Recovery	-	-	-	2,552	-	2,552
	650,386	-	-	45,313	-	695,699
TOTAL	660,005	30	15,541	97,343	(31,212)	741,707

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

8 Movement in Funds

Unrestricted Funds

	At 1st January £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfer	At 31st December £
General Fund	29,759	39,741	(37,867)	730.00	32,363
The Hive	11,476	41,012	(38,557)	-	13,931
	<u>41,235</u>	<u>80,753</u>	<u>(76,424)</u>	<u>730</u>	<u>46,294</u>

Restricted Funds

Building	3,265	-	-	-	3,265
St Alban's Development:					-
Coalfields	95,200	-	-	-	95,200
The BIG Lottery	433,000	-	-	-	433,000
Co-op	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
Church Urban	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Staffordshire Environmental Trust	29,973	-	-	-	29,973
St Modwen Trust	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
S-O-T City Council	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
St Alban's development fund	2,213	-	-	-	2,213
Grant - Lichfield Diocese	116	-	-	-	116
Graveyard	2,333	-	-	-	2,333
Children's Work	380	-	(46)	-	334
Youth Work	3,457	-	-	-	3,457
Social Survey	25	-	-	-	25
The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	-	-	-	-	-
The National Lottery - Activity Coordinator	15,502	25,555	(12,679)	-	28,378
Big Lottery - Covid 19 Family & Community	3,843	-	-	-	3,843
S-O-T Council - Gentle exercise	-	-	-	-	-
Big lottery - Covid 19 Recovery	2,552	-	-	-	2,552
Electrical Repairs	-	-	-	-	-
A V System	8,000	600	(8,600)	-	-
Toy Appeal	730	-	-	(730)	-
LDBF Gran towards Cost of Energy	1,250	1,000	(2,250)	-	-
Flowers	-	84	-	-	84
Warm Space grant	2,000	500	(2,500)	-	-
Decoration Fund	-	120	-	-	120
Mural	-	2,375	(1,569)	-	806
	<u>693,839</u>	<u>30,234</u>	<u>(27,644)</u>	<u>(730)</u>	<u>695,699</u>
TOTAL	<u>735,074</u>	<u>110,987</u>	<u>(104,068)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>741,993</u>

PARISH OF BLURTON AND DRESDEN
(Churches of St Bartholomew and St Alban)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

TOTAL FUNDS

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	2021
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS					
Donations and Legacies	2a	35,488	21,416	56,904	78,976
Activities for generating funds	2b	27,101	-	27,101	37,467
Income from investments	2c	217	-	217	22
Church Activities	2d	9,815	-	9,815	9,174
TOTAL		72,621	21,416	94,037	125,639
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Church Activities	3a	81,074	9,713	90,787	109,691
Raising Funds	3b	-	-	-	-
		81,074	9,713	90,787	109,691
NET INCOMING RESOURCES		(8,453)	11,703	3,250	15,948
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS				-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(8,453)	11,703	3,250	15,948
Total funds brought forward		49,688	682,136	731,824	715,876
Total funds carried forward		41,235	693,839	735,074	731,824

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25 March 2024