

2024 Annual Report

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ST CATHARINE'S CHURCH
HOUGHTON ON THE HILL

*"A thriving, life giving, life transforming community
following the way of Jesus."*

St Catharine's Church is an Anglican Evangelical Church that is part of the Church of England. Our vision is to increasingly become a *"thriving, life giving, life transforming community following the way of Jesus."* We have a passion and heart for Houghton on the Hill and long to see people from all walks of life turn to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith and begin to live life to the full. We want to be a community made up of all ages and all backgrounds seeking to live and grow in the way of Jesus. A community being empowered and transformed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Where people feel safe, at home and where they can live again. A community that provides a place of rest in a hurried world and is a shining light of hope to our village. To that end we have 3 foundations that shape what we do as a church. We desire to be a:

- Faith Sharing Church
- Faith Growing Church
- Faith Serving Church

This Annual Report is a summary of all that has been going on in the life of St Catharine's Church over the past year. I hope you find it encouraging to see what God has been doing this past year.

Rev Steve Ransley

May 2025

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Minutes of previous Meetings

St Catharine's Church, Houghton on the Hill

**Minutes of the Annual Vestry and Parochial Church Meetings
Tuesday 16th April 2024 at 7.30 pm**

Present: Rev Steve Ransley and 17 parishioners.

The meeting started with a welcome from Steve, a reading from Ephesians chapter 2 and a prayer. A hymn was sung.

Annual Vestry Meeting

- 1 Apologies were received from Andrew Fry, Heather Bettles and Phyllis Messenger.
- 2 The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 were approved.
- 3 Richard Morrison and Mike Evans were unanimously elected to serve as churchwardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

- 1 The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 were approved.
- 2 **Electoral Roll Report:** Mike Evans had prepared a report stating that there are now 73 people on the electoral roll.
- 3 **Safeguarding Report:** Caroline Smissen, Safeguarding Officer, had circulated a report. Steve emphasized the importance of being alert to issues that should be reported to himself or Caroline.

- 4 **Annual Accounts 2023:** these had been circulated by Pat Jackson, who was warmly thanked for her hard work in preparing these accounts. The meeting was made aware of the need to increase giving to the church. Roger Bettles pointed out the seriousness of the situation, especially as the stonework needs repairing. The PCC must consider seriously the cost of supporting the building now and in the future. Mike Welsh supported Roger's remarks and commented on the amount of money that has been raised through the efforts of the Friends of St Catharine's, helped by villagers who are often not churchgoers. Pat offered to explain the accounts further if asked. She thinks that the current amount of Parish Share is too high. Mark Scase pointed out that the 2023 accounts have not been submitted to the Charity Commission. Pat is working on these and hopes to have them ready by June.
- 5 **Appointment of Auditors:** Conley Ward Accountants and Tax Advisors have been appointed.
- 6 **Deanery Synod Report:** Rev Steve Bailey had kindly provided this report which had been circulated. Richard Morrison asked about the position of the deaneries should the Minster Community be formed. No-one knew the answer to this. An appeal was made for a new Deanery Synod representative.
- 7 **Church Wardens' Report:** a report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church had been circulated by Richard and Mike. The cost of repairing the building was raised again. Roger suggested using the reserves. Margaret Mayberry felt it was important that the whole church family were made aware of the situation and that help was needed.
- 8 **PCC Secretary's Report:** a report had been circulated by Andrew Fry.
- 9 **Growing Faith Minister's Report:** Mike Corner had prepared and circulated a very full and encouraging report. He was thanked for the tremendous work he had done with our young people, both in a church setting and in school. We are really sorry that he is leaving us but we wish him God's blessing in his new appointment.
- 10 **Vicar's report:** the theme of the report was "Change".

- 11 **Time of Prayer:** following Steve's report, a time of collective prayer was held.
- 12 **Elections:** Isabel Oldham was unanimously elected to serve on the PCC.
- 13 **Any Other Business:** none.
- 14 Steve closed the meeting with words from Ephesians.

Ministry Areas

Worship

We currently have 3 congregations at St Catharine's Church, that make up one church family. We have a weekly Sunday service at 10.30am which has an average Sunday attendance of 35. At our 10.30 service we worship God through song, hear from His word, pray and grow our relationships with one another. We celebrate Communion on the 1st and 3rd of each month. In 2024 we have had a variety of Bible teaching. Series on Patterns for Life, Identity and some of Jesus Parables as well as unpacking books of the Bible including 1 John, the Psalms and Joshua.

Our Wednesday morning congregation meets at 9.15am and celebrates Communion most weeks. This service is more reflective without singing but still has the Bible at the centre. We follow the same pattern of teaching as our Sunday service. Our usual attendance is around 7-8 people.

Our final congregation is Explore. A monthly gathering mainly of families usually totalling around 30 people. We gather at 4pm and then read a chapter of Mark's Gospel and chat about what it shows us about Jesus. We then always eat a meal together through which friendships are grown and deepened. It is becoming a really precious community.

2025 saw the Electoral roll being revised, something that is required every six years. Upon the roll being revised there were

St Catharine's is part of the wider Cornerstone Team of Churches which includes St Luke's Thurnby, St Mary's and All Saints Stoughton and Living Hope Church Plant in the parish of St Michael and All Angels, Thurmaston. During 2024 there was a joint Sunday service and day out together and the leadership and staff teams of these churches have enjoyed closer working relationships. During 2024 we began to explore a potential future partnership with Hope Hamilton Church as part of the Diocesan Minster Community framework.

Children and Young People

As a church we seek to be a family. That means we want people of all ages to experience and grow in the love of Jesus Christ.

In the early part of 2024 we had Kids Church, run by Michael Corner and other volunteers. This was a time for the children in our church family, during our Sunday morning service, to receive age-appropriate teaching looking at the same passage/theme that was being looked at in the church service. The idea behind this was to be able to integrate all of our learning for the morning as a church family. On the last Sunday of the month we had a “serving Sunday” in which the children would be actively involved in the service.

Mike continued his excellent work in the school in his role as Growing Faith Minister. This included planning and leading Collective Worship (alongside Steve) and also running the weekly after school club, Excite. Mike was a regular face at the school becoming unofficially part of the staff team. Mike and Steve were involved in the major festival services (Christmas, Easter and Harvest) that took place in the church.

During Holy Week Mike lead an Easter Fun day which was a great success. We had approximately 25 children as they learned about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. There were some amazing volunteers who pulled together to make that happen.

Mike led a fortnightly youth Bible study and Element Youth Group which met at the Pavilion. This saw some steady numbers of around 10 young people.

Really sadly at the end of May we said goodbye to Mike, Becky, Beth and Josiah as Mike moved on to a new role at St John’s Clarendon Park. We are so grateful for the many years of faithful, exciting and engaging ministry Mike lead with our children and young people.

Since Mike has left we have had to pause our groups for our children on a Sunday morning. However, we are still actively reaching children and young people. Our 10.30am services seeks to involve our children by encouraging them

to serve, whether that be reading, operating the tech or being on refreshments. We want our children to know they are a treasured part of our Church and bring a really valuable contribution. We also seek to make our service as inclusive for all ages as possible by offering worksheets, explaining why we say certain liturgy and also singing songs the children are familiar with from School.

We connected with children and families at Halloween, offering hot chocolate and goody bags with sweets and a little leaflet explaining how Jesus is the light of the world.

Despite Mike's departure we have continued to develop and grow our partnership with Houghton Primary School. Steve gives assemblies every other week, which the children really engage with. Every Tuesday David Shaw, Richard Morrison, Jacqui Smart, Margaret Wolfe, Fiona Richardson, Pat Jackson help to run Excite, the after-school club. Excite sees anywhere between 10 and 18 children attend to learn about Jesus in a fun and safe environment. A big thank you to David especially for taking on the leadership of this crucial ministry. The school continues to have termly services in the church and in particular they do such a good job of re-telling the accounts of Jesus birth at Christmas and his death and resurrection at Easter. As a church we are so grateful to the school for our partnership and how accommodating they are of us.

Writing this report in 2025 reflecting back on the previous year, we have hopes to run a youth Alpha Course (wait for next year to find out about that).

Life Groups

We currently have one Life group that meets weekly. Life Group is a great place to get to know other people in the church in a deeper way. It is a place where people can explore and dig deeper into God's word, seeking to apply it to our lives. They are a place where we care and support one another in the ups and downs of life. They are places of hospitality, safety, and community. During 2024 we tried several different ways of doing Life Group and different methods of study. We looked at the same passage as the previous Sunday as well as looking at some separate courses, such as one on evangelism produced by the Oxford

Centre for Apologetics. Once a month we would gather in the church to pray, as well as have the odd social event.

Evangelism

Lots of what happens at St Catharine's is designed to be invitational to those who are not part of church life or not yet a Christian. Throughout the year we have opportunities to make a special invitation to services such as Remembrance Sunday, Christmas and Easter. We also held a service of remembering where people could come and give thanks for a loved one who is no longer with us.

We also ran an Alpha Course at the Old Black Horse Pub and also the Marriage Course which proved an excellent point of connection with our community. We hope to make these courses a regular pattern in our church year.

We have also hosted events in the church such as Houghton Singers Concerts as well as the Christmas Craft Fayre. Again, whilst not overt evangelism such events do provide a point of contact for us as a Church.

Mission Partners

We continue to financially support four mission partners, that were decided at PCC. Currently we support Open Hands (Leicester based homeless charity), Good News For Everyone (a nationwide Evangelism charity), Open Doors (worldwide charity supporting the persecuted church) and St Francis Hospital in Zambia.

Living Hope

Launched in 2022 Living Hope continued to meet each Sunday at 4pm in Church Hill Junior School in Thurmaston and seeks to engage the next generation, connect with other cultures, and create community.

The church has a worshipping community of 22 people and has a growing fringe of people connected to the life of Living Hope – whether coming occasionally on Sunday, being part of the monthly Saturday Build and Breakfast event for dads and children, the summer children's holiday club, or the light party in October.

During 2024 the church planting curate moved and a new appointment of a part time associate lay minister was made with clergy oversight from Steve, Team Vicar of St Catharine's church.

Also, in 2024 there was a church weekend away and in October 2024 Living Hope took on responsibility for Bright Sparks Toddler group.

Minster Communities

During 2024 there were further conversations and developments in our involvement in forming a Minster Community as steered by the Diocese of Leicester Shaped by God Together process.

Following a two-year process of seeking to form the proposed North East Leicester Minster Community it was agreed by all the parishes involved in September 2024 that it was not possible to continue in the current configuration, with the use of Prayers of Love and Faith bringing into focus the different understandings of vision and mission that would make it difficult to work together.

In late 2024 we joined the Area 3 process (City, Suburbs, and Adjacent villages) and were invited to look at a partnership between the Cornerstone Team of Churches and Hope Hamilton with the aim of forming a Minster Community in 2025.

Reports

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is all that we do to promote a safe culture protecting one another from harm and keeping each other safe. The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play.

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy the PCC is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children,
- young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and
- other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.
- We have two Parish Safeguarding Officers. All our volunteers are safely recruited, with relevant training and checks undertaken as required for different roles. Information about Safeguarding is prominently displayed and regularly updated.

Gartree Deanery Synod

Synod met three times in 2024. Each meeting opens with a prayer and a hymn and receives regular reports from the Bishop's Council, Diocesan Synod, Board of Education, General Synod, Joint Archdeaconry Mission Committee and the Diocesan Board of Finance.

In **January** the deanery welcomed Dan Gower from Open Doors a Christian charity founded by Brother Andrew that serves the persecuted church.

During the **June** there was a presentation by Leicester Street Pastors part of an international body run by the Ascension Trust who equip and enable volunteers to serve the nighttime economy.

The **October** meeting started with the sharing of good news of God at work in the parishes making up the deanery. This was followed by a presentation on diocesan Finances by Simon Wilson. The current diocesan deficit for 2024 is £2.2 million (down from £2.7 million in 2023 and an anticipated deficit of £1.5 million for 2025).

The majority of income to the diocese is through parish contributions, which over recent years have not kept pace with inflation and reflects fewer people attending Church of England churches in the Diocese of Leicester. Investment income broadly covers central costs, and funding has been accessed for Lower Income Communities and specific projects.

To lower expenditure central diocesan posts have been reduced (or are funded by national grants) and the number of stipendiary clergy has been reduced through vacancies not being filled and the implementation of Minister Communities.

Full minutes of the meetings of the Deanery Synod are available on request.

Wardens (fabric and buildings)

A concern is that in the bad wet weather, some stonework in the Church tower continues to be very gradually flaking away. Although, the flakes are very small and the places are not so visible, this is being monitored and the ongoing consideration of repair estimates under scrutiny. This has suggested that repair costs would be way above our ability to commence work, without gaining successful grant applications, as well as setting up a village-wide building fund.

The tower has been cleaned out of sticks used by birds for their nests and the damaged 'window' repaired.

The loan of examples of freestanding stacking chairs was concluded with a preferred choice made by the congregation over a period of 5 months. This matter continues to be on hold in the light of plans for partial re-ordering on the nave.

The organ and clock have been serviced along with fire and lightning protection equipment in and around the church. The sound and vision equipment continues to be used albeit there has been some hiccups throughout the year, whilst the small team of operators have welcomed the assistance of the Ransley boys operating this system.

The plans to propose a faculty for re-ordering of a reduced area of the Church were considered during the final quarter of the year. It was also agreed at PCC to proceed with selling the barn and associated land.

The Church Grounds are now being cleared and refreshed by a new local contact, who is very methodical (eg ground gutters, hedges and borders) and we are grateful to FOSC who pay for this. The main areas of grass cutting are still undertaken by a company employed by the Parish Council for which we are very grateful.

There are plans to install benches within the grounds as memorials for villagers.

Recently, the County Council informed the Church that graveyards over 100 years old could be re-used for future graves. Currently there has been sufficient unused areas for graves here.

Finance

Independently Verified Accounts

We entered 2024 two years in arrears (2022 and 2023) in submitting our annual verified accounts to the Charities Commission. During the 1st half of 2024 this situation was rectified and our accounts submitted thereby bringing us up to date on the Commission's website.

Our Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2024 can be located at the back of these cover notes. They have been verified by an Independent Examiner, (Paul Collins, Bsc FCA) who confirms that our records are in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act, that they comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act and that there are no matters of concern that have come to his attention. This Report and Statements will be submitted to the Charities Commission within the next 7 days.

The fund headings reflect the accounting spread sheet entries as used in previous PCC and APCM financial reports. Each heading represents a different area of church finance and highlights the various areas of income and expenditure during the period under review.

The principle monetary assets are held in two National Westminster Bank accounts and three CCLA reserve accounts.

BACKGROUND AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

GENERAL ACCOUNT NO. 1

This account is used to process all incoming receipts and cover the day to day running costs of St. Catharine's church.

At the close of bank business on 31st December 2024, our cash at the bank (to carry forward into 2025) was just **£12,113.99**. Urgent remedial action was therefore deemed necessary by the PCC to bring the Church's financial position back on track and stabilize our out-goings.

In February 2024 our Parish Share was paused. We would not be able to sustain a monthly contribution of £3,400 to meet our commitment to the Diocese for the year. Nor could we afford to continue to pay the salary and expenses of our Youth Worker without accruing a substantial deficit. It was with much regret that the PCC decided not to renew our Youth Worker's employment contract when it came to an end in June 2024.

These remedial decisions by the PCC enabled us to restabilize our accounts as the year progressed. 2024 closed on 31st December with a cash balance of **£31,210.82** in our General Account No. 1.

GENERAL ACCOUNT NO. 2

To enable easy access to additional funds in the event of a possible overdraft on General Account No. 1, the PCC felt it necessary to transfer £10,000 from our Ordinary Shares Account (held with the CCLA) to our No 2 Account. In the event, it was not necessary to allocate any of these funds to items of expenditure and at the close of business on 31st December the cash balance for this account stood at **£10,839.47**.

INVESTMENT/RESERVE ACCOUNTS HELD WITH THE CCLA

We currently hold three investment accounts with the CCLA, i.e.

Houghton on the Hill St Catharine's PCC – Ordinary Account

Houghton on the Hill St Catharine's PCC – Restoration Deposit

Greasley Charity for Repair of St Catharine's Church

The Restoration Deposit and Greasley Charity for Repairs accounts are restricted funds and can therefore only be allocated to specific purposes agreed with the Diocese. The Ordinary Shares Account is unrestricted and funds can be withdrawn on demand and used at the discretion of the Church.

At the close of business on 31st December the total valuation for each of these accounts was

Ordinary Account	-	£12,733.11
Restoration Deposit	-	£28,480.59
Greasley Charity Repair a/c	-	£ 9,091.40

Patricia Jackson

Governance

The PCC shares leadership with the vicar to enable the mission and ministry of St Catharine's, Houghton. The PCC oversees the life of the church, stewards our building and finances, enables us to meet our responsibilities (as charity trustees, safeguarding, employment), and contributes to the wider life of the Church of England.

PCC members are appointed as set out in the Church Representation Rules. St Catharine's PCC consists of the Team Rector, Church Wardens, 6 elected members. We currently need someone to be elected to Deanery Synod. The PCC met six times in 2024.

The PCC received regular reports on ministry areas in the life of St Catharine's. We also spent time throughout the year time looking at and seeking to implement the ideas that emerged from our day away in 2023. One way to get more buy-in from the church was to have a Sunday dedicated to the ideas that emerged from the day away. From the service the areas of focus were; opening the Church more; being more of a focal point; progressing the re-ordering of the church. We also worked through some of the CPAS material "PCC tonight" which helped us look at the purpose of a PCC as well as review areas of church life. We also drafted a code of conduct to help us as PCC members know our respective roles.

In March 2024 the PCC adopted the CEEC basis of faith including the two additional declarations, with these being consistent with the beliefs and teachings at St Catharine's over many years. This was in response to the development of Prayers for Love and Faith by the Church of England. Four resolutions were passed including; St Catharine's Church offers a generous welcome to all; that it adopts the CEEC basis of faith; that it supports the vicar not to use the PLF; and that we are committed to CPAS as our long-standing patron.

Throughout the year the PCC responded to the proposed North-East Leicester Minster Community (NELMC). This included offering an alternative Minster Community Proposal developed with the PCC of St Catharine's Church,

Houghton and also St Luke's Thurnby. All the parishes involved with the NELMC decided that there was too much difference in vision and mission for a Minster Community to be viable. Through this process a potential partnership with Hope Hamilton developed.

Throughout the year safeguarding was a standing item on the agenda of each meeting. Promoting a safer church policy was approved in March 2024. St Catharine's safeguarding policy was reviewed and updated. The policy is in line with the Church of England's Promoting a Safer Church Safeguarding Policy Statement. Information about safeguarding in the life of our churches is available on our websites and on posters in all buildings. We continue to highlight the importance of safeguarding with two simple principles – "people matter" and "speak up".

During 2024 Andrew Fry, our PCC secretary sadly died. Andrew was a dear brother in Christ who modelled such a godly faith in times of real distress and suffering. He also was a fantastic and valued member of the PCC always bringing a much-needed clear perspective on various issues. We miss him dearly.

Full minutes of the meetings of the PCC are available on request.

Administrative Information

St Catharine's Church, Houghton in the Diocese of Leicester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is St Catharine's Church, Main Street, Houghton, Leicester, LE7 9GD

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Catharine's, Leicester is a registered charity with the Charity Number 1196545

The membership of the PCC during 2024 was:

Ex Officio members

Team Vicar: The Reverend Steven Ransley (chair)

Wardens: Richard Morrison and Mike Evans

Elected members

Isabel Oldham

Simon Richardson

Mike Welsh

David Shaw

Caroline Smissen

Pat Jackson

Financial Accounts 2024

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

("the Charity")

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2024

(registered as a charity in England and Wales: number 1196545)

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Legal and administrative information

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Charities registration number: 1196545 (England and Wales)

Foundation date: 2nd January 1957

Governing document: Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended, and Church Representation Rules that came into force on 2nd January 1957

Registered address: St. Catharine's Church,
Main Street,
Houghton-on-the Hill, Leicestershire
LE7 9GD

Website: <https://www.stcatharineschurch.co.uk/>

Contact: Team Vicar [0116 2416895](tel:01162416895) or [07977298838](tel:07977298838)

Current trustees:

Name	Date appointed
Reverend S Ransley	1st June 2019
M J Evans	20nd November 2020
P A Jackson	14th September 2023
I E Oldham	20th November 2020
R W B Morrison	22nd October 2020
S J Richardson	18th October 2024
D Shaw	12th January 2023
M Welsh	17th May 2023

Bankers: National Westminster Bank plc

1 Granby Street

Leicester, LE1 6EJ

Independent examiner: P.S. Collins BSc FCA

5 Weare Close

Billesdon, Leicestershire

LE7 9DY

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2024

The Trustees present their Annual Report and the financial statements for the year to 31st December 2024. The governing document of the charity is the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended and the Church Representation Rules that came into force on 2nd January 1957. It is registered as a charity under Charity Commission reference number 1196545. The Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton ("the Charity") is currently managed by eight trustees.

The trustees confirm that the accounts comply with current statutory requirements and with the governing document.

Organisation

St. Catharine's Church is a church for the people of Houghton-on-the-Hill in Leicestershire. We are part of the Church of England and follow Jesus in the Anglican way. We are a community of imperfect people from all kinds of backgrounds united by Jesus Christ, seeking to live our lives for him and make a difference to those around us.

Charitable objects

The objective of the charity is to promote in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church. There have been no changes during the year to the charity's objectives or to the policies adopted in order to achieve those objectives.

Risk management

The trustees understand that they have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed, and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The charity's capital is principally held in bank accounts which the trustees regularly monitor.

Reserves

It is the policy of the charity to maintain a balance of unrestricted liquid funds equal to at least 9 months unrestricted expenditure. As at 31st December 2024, the ratio was higher than target, at 19.8 months:

	2024	2023
Unrestricted liquid funds (see page 9)	£57,433	£38,334
Unrestricted expenditure (see page 8)	£34,751	£92,720
Funds held as a ratio of expenditure	19.8 months	5.0 months

As noted in the 2023 annual report, to increase reserves to more acceptable levels, the charity effected expenditure reduction plans during 2024, pausing the Parish Share payments in February 2024 and ceasing the Children's Worker project in July 2024. Subsequent to the year end, the Parish Share payments recommenced in January 2025 and a drive to increase regular monthly giving income was launched in February 2025.

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Trustees' Report (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Review of the year

Income of the trust continues to be derived from donations, rental income and grants.

Income for the year totalled £55,352 (2023: £92,837), a year-on-year decrease of 40%. Regular giving income, excluding gift aid, was £18,574 (32%) lower than last year, with net grant income and other donations also lower this year.

Expenditure for the year totalled £34,751 (2023: £111,431), of which the Parish Share was £3,402 (2023: £40,824), and the youth worker cost £14,696 (2023: £37,519). As noted earlier, the charity put in place expenditure reduction plans during the year, pausing the Parish Share payments in February 2024 and ceasing the Children's Worker project in July 2024. A decrease in donations and professional fees accounted for the majority of the other cost decreases. Parish Share payments recommenced in January 2025.

Overall, a net surplus of £20,801 was reported for the year (2023: deficit of £18,094).

In April 2015, the church land and barn were bequeathed, at nil cost, to the Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance as custodian trustees. The Charity are the beneficial owners of these assets, to enjoy revenues generated from them and any proceeds from their sale. The assets are insured by the Charity at an insured value of £36,000. In June 2024 they were valued at £400,000 (land £310,000, barn £90,000) and this valuation has been included in these 2024 financial statements.

Net assets, principally being the church land, barn and cash at bank, totalled £495,005 as of 31st December 2024 (2023: £74,204).

Trustees

The following served as trustees during the period from 1st January 2024 up to the date of signing of these financial statements on 13th March 2025, serving throughout the whole period unless otherwise stated:

Current as at 13th March 2025

Reverend S Ransley
M J Evans
P A Jackson
I E Oldham
R W B Morrison
S J Richardson (appointed 18th October 2024)
D Shaw
M Welsh

Resigned since 1st January 2024

C Evans (resigned 1st April 2024)
Professor A M Fry (resigned 1st April 2024)

On behalf of the Trustees

P A Jackson - Trustee

13th March 2025

Independent examiners report to the Trustees of the Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

I report on the annual financial statements of the Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton ("The Charity"), for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 8 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiners

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. 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 as examiner to:

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

I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Basis of independent examiners' report

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 financial statements, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the financial statements present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent Examiners Statement

I have completed my examination. In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare financial statements which accord with the 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 financial statements to be reached.

Paul Collins BSc FCA

Independent Examiner

5 Weare Close, Billesdon, Leicestershire LE7 9DY

13th March 2025

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The charity's trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, and the provisions of the charity's constitution, requires the charity's trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities – Statement of Recommended Practice ("SORP").
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Trustees

P A Jackson - Trustee

13th March 2025

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 31 December 2024

2024	2024	2024	2023
£	£	£	£
Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total

Income (note 1)

Income from church activities (note 4)	52,675	-	52,675	90,438
Investment income	1,175	1,502	2,677	2,399
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	53,850	1,502	55,352	92,837

Expenditure (notes 1 and 5)

	34,751	-	34,751	111,431
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Unrestricted	34,751	-	34,751	92,720
Restricted	-	-	-	18,711

Surplus/(deficit) from activities

	19,099	1,502	20,601	(18,594)
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Surplus on revaluation of investments
– note 3

	-	200	200	500
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Total surplus/(deficit) for the year

	19,099	1,702	20,801	(18,094)
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Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Statement of changes in reserves

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total reserves
	£	£	£
As at 1 January 2023	58,070	34,228	92,298

Total surplus/(deficit) for the year	(19,736)	1,642	(18,094)
As at 31 December 2023 (see page 9)	38,334	35,870	74,204
Total surplus for the year	19,099	1,702	20,801
Revaluation of church land and barn (note 2)	400,000	-	400,000
As at 31 December 2024 (see page 9)	457,433	37,572	495,005

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Statement of financial position

As at 31 December 2024

	Reserves note	2024 £	2023 £
Tangible fixed assets (see note 2)			
Church land and barn	Unrestricted	400,000	-
Fixed asset investments (see note 3)			
Central Board of Finance short duration bond fund	Unrestricted	2,650	2,650
Central Board of Finance COIF repair account	Restricted	9,091	8,891

			-
		411,741	11,541
Current assets: Cash and cash equivalents			
Nat West General account	Unrestricted	31,211	12,114
Nat West number 2 account	Unrestricted	10,839	1,764
Central Board of Finance ordinary account	Unrestricted	12,733	21,806
Central Board of Finance restoration deposit account	Restricted	28,481	26,979
			-
Net current assets		83,264	62,663
			-
			-
Net assets		495,005	74,204
			=
Reserves allocation (see page 8)			
Unrestricted – liquid assets		57,433	38,334
Unrestricted - property		400,000	-
Restricted		37,572	35,870
			-
Total reserves		495,005	74,204
			=

These financial statements, including the notes on pages 10-12, were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 13th March 2025, and are signed on their behalf by:

R W B Morrison

P A Jackson

Trustee

Trustee

Charities number: 1196545

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities published on 16th July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (FRSSE) and the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1st January 2015.

The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'.

Going concern

The charity's forecasts and projections show that the charity should be able to operate within the level of its current cash reserves. As noted earlier, a cost reduction program was implemented during 2024, together with a drive to increase regular gift income which was launched in February 2025. After making enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

Income and expenditure

Income represents donations (together with the associated claims for gift aid), grants, income from Investments and interest on deposits and are included in the financial statements when credited or due to be received.

Expenditure is included in the financial statements on a cash basis when paid.

Reserves

Funds specifically received for projects and schemes (i.e. giving for a specific cause), principally repairs and restoration, and our youth worker are deemed to be restricted. All other funds are unrestricted and are available for the general purposes of the charity.

Tangible fixed assets

The church land and barn are included in the financial statements at an open market value and are not depreciated.

The church building is not included in the financial statements due to uncertainty over ownership.

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

2 Tangible fixed assets

Church land and barn:

In April 2015, the church land and barn were bequeathed, at nil cost, to the Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance as custodian trustees. The Charity are the beneficial owners of these assets, to enjoy revenues generated from them and any proceeds from their sale. The assets are insured by the Charity at an insured value of £36,000. In June 2024 they were valued at £400,000 (land £310,000, barn £90,000) and this valuation has been included in these 2024 financial statements.

	£ 2024	£ 2023
Church land and barn		
At 1 st January 2024	-	-
Revaluation	400,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
At 31st December 2024	400,000	-
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Church building:

The church was built in the 13th century. Due to a lack of historical records, uncertainty exists with regard to ownership of the Church. Consequently, no cost or valuation has been reported in the Statement of Financial Position. The building is insured by the Charity at an insured value of £14,283,000.

3 Fixed asset investments

Investments are stated at their open market value, based on middle market prices, with revaluation surpluses and deficits put through the Statement of Comprehensive Income. The CCLA Short Duration Bond Fund was previously known as the Fixed Interest Fund and the Charity are the beneficiary's of the fund, the Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance being the custodian trustees:

	£ 2024	£ 2023
1,831 Shares in the Short Duration Bond Fund at the CCLA Central Board of Finance		
At 1 st January 2024	2,650	2,899
Revaluation	-	(249)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
At 31st December 2024	2,650	2,650
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
448 Shares in the COIF Charity Investment Fund		
At 1 st January 2024	8,891	8,142
Revaluation	200	749
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
At 31st December 2024	9,091	8,891
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
COIF Charity Investment Fund share prices (mid-market)		
At 1 st January 2024	£19.85	£18.17
At 31 st December 2024	£20.29	£19.85

Parochial Church Council St. Catharine's, Houghton

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

4 Income from church activities: analysis

	£ 2024	£ 2023
Income		
Regular giving (includes Parish Giving Scheme)	39,389	57,963
Gift aid claims from HMRC	5,646	4,489
Donations received	546	9,855
Funeral and wedding fees (2024: net of repayments)	1,311	3,402
Grants received (2023: net of repayments)	-	5,058
Rents received	4,292	6,441
Other income	1,491	3,230
Total income	52,675	90,438
Unrestricted	52,675	72,288
Restricted	-	18,150
Total income	52,675	90,438

5 Expenditure: analysis

	£ 2024	£ 2023
Expenditure		
Church activities – parish share	3,402	40,824
Children and youth worker salary and expenses	14,696	37,519
Utilities and insurance	6,029	6,778
Mission and outreach	1,469	2,618
Donations made	4,160	10,000
Professional fees	493	4,479
Other expenditure (includes clergy expenses)	4,502	9,213
Total expenditure	34,751	111,431
Unrestricted	34,751	92,720
Restricted	-	18,711
Total expenditure	34,751	111,431

As a % of total costs

Church activities – parish share
Children and youth worker salary and expenses
Others

	10%	37%
	42%	34%
	48%	29%
	100%	100%