

DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY
The Parish of the Bridge Group

Comprising the churches of St Peter's Bridge, St Mary's Patrixbourne, St Peter's Bekesbourne,
St Mary's Lower Hardres and St Mary's Nackington.

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2024

Incumbent

Reverend Canon Estella Last

Bankers

In respect of The Bridge Group Parish

The Co-operative Bank PLC

and

The CBF Church of England Funds
85 Queen Victoria St, London EC4 4ET

*There are residual bank accounts in respect of
Bridge, Patrixbourne, Lower Hardres and Nackington held with*

Lloyds TSB bank PLC
49 High Street, Canterbury Kent CT1 2SE

And in respect of St Peter's Bekesbourne
Natwest

Independent Examiner

David Muggridge FCCA MAE
Ackland Webb Ltd

Introduction

Since January 2020, the churches of St Peter's Bridge, St Mary's Patricbourne, St Peter's Bekesbourne, St. Mary's Lower Hardres and St Mary's Nackington have formed one ecclesiastical parish. This is now known as The Parish of the Bridge Group in the County of Kent, within the East Bridge Deanery of the Diocese of Canterbury of the Church of England.

We are an episcopal church led by The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York; the See of Canterbury is currently vacant following the resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby last year. He is assisted by The Rt Rev'd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, the Bishop of Dover. Our Patrons are The Archbishop of Canterbury and the President and Scholars of St John's College Oxford. This is the fifth Annual Report of the newly created Parish of the Bridge Group.

Aims and Purposes of this report

This annual report is made to the parishioners of the Bridge Group of churches and the members on the church electoral roll who live within or outside the parish. The Church Representation Rules (Rule 9 (1) (b)) require 'an annual report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the church generally' to be received by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), to be held this year on Wednesday 30th April 2025. The APCM is invited to discuss it.

The PCC sincerely thank all those people who voluntarily give their time and money to serving the church in many ways thus enabling the five churches in our Parish to flourish as a Christian community.

2024 – Progress to report

At the time of the last Annual Report, the PCC had paid the Diocesan Parish Share for 2023 in full, but was carrying forward historic arrears of over £20,000 from the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021. The Diocese offered to write off 50% of the arrears in return for immediate settlement, and we took the difficult decision to make the reduced payment from endowment funds, with the aim of restoring these, if possible, at some point in the future.

Within a few weeks, the PCC received a donation of great generosity which has enabled us to make good the withdrawal from the endowment funds entirely, and has, in addition, greatly increased the reserves in the Fabric Fund at St Peter's. The donor has chosen to remain anonymous, but the PCC and the wider church community will benefit greatly from this gesture, and we are immensely grateful.

After several years of preparation and planning, the project to provide toilet and kitchen facilities for visiting pilgrims at St Mary's Patricbourne has been granted a Faculty, allowing work to proceed. At the time the Faculty was granted, it was unclear whether sufficient funds would be available, and it seemed likely that the project would have to be scaled back. However, another anonymous donation of great generosity has been received, allowing the project to proceed as planned. Building work will commence at the beginning of March 2025.

So these are exciting times, and the Parish enters a new year in good financial health and with much to look forward to. The pattern of church services developed since the creation of the

single Parish is now well established, and the sense of community across the five churches has been notably enhanced. The work of Estella, Miriam and the Ministry team continues to hold our church community together and drives us forward, and we are fortunate to be led by such inspiring and dedicated individuals. Curate Miriam will sadly be leaving us soon, and will go with our thanks and heartfelt best wishes. Wherever she goes, her parishioners will be fortunate and blessed by her ministry.

Rory Wetherell , PCC Secretary

Vicar's Report

Having read through all the reports for this year's Annual Report I find there isn't much more for me to say. The report itself is a great encouragement. I know at times it can feel hard to be the Church of England at the moment for all sorts of reasons and we have not had an easy year in some ways, but I think with the limits on resources, both human and financial that we have, we do a great job all things considered! Eco church, Care Home visits, Messy Church, Coffee mornings and other social and fundraising events, toddler group and our support group for parents of children with neurodiversity all add to our shared life together over and above the work of being the church and our life of worship and prayer together.

We continue to develop good relationships with families from all over the Parish partly due to our relationship with Bridge and Patricxbourne School but also to the times when we offer worship and events at which families are welcomed and can participate in. We have particularly enjoyed having the Choir from Bridge and Patricxbourne School fulfil the role of Church Choir at a number of services, and it has been a joy to welcome the children and their families on these occasions. Full and lively churches over festival periods, Easter and Christmas also demonstrate that our communities still embrace the opportunity to be in church at these times, if not every week.

It is a huge benefit to us that working together as we do across the Parish, the responsibilities of Governance, Administration, Finance and Safeguarding are shared, and we are able to tackle our challenges together. We also have those who work to fundraise for the fabric and for special projects in each of our churches. We have been particularly blessed in 2024 with some extremely large donations which will support the fabric of our church buildings and enable exciting projects at Patricxbourne and Nackington to come to fruition in 2025 as well as the Lychgate at Bekesbourne and hopefully see some improvements to the Audio-Visual facilities at Bridge in the coming year.

All of this is thanks not just to the Clergy and Ministry Team but to all those who give their time and energy to support the work of the church and ensure that we can serve the communities in which we are set. Particular mention must be made of all the Churchwardens who shoulder the lion's share of this work, and all who help them, and of course to our PCC members as well. In the background though there are bellringers, flower arrangers, those who care for our churchyards, those who clean, make the coffee and wash- up. The list goes on but often many individuals take on more than one job, perhaps 2025 can be the year when we encourage more people to get involved and help us with the work that we do – I wonder, who could you ask to help you with whatever it is you contribute to the life of our churches or how could you get more involved if you're not already?

I mentioned earlier that in some ways 2024 had not been an easy year. Between us we conducted something in the region of 28 funerals and a further nine Interments of Ashes on a separate occasion (some of these were in churches outside our parish to assist parishes in vacancy or due to pastoral connections). Many of these were folk well known to us in the villages but we should make particular mention of Bob Thomas who had worked tirelessly in support of St Mary's Nackington for more than 50 years, Margaret Clarke who in her capacity as Lay Reader and friend to all had given so much to the churches and parishes working almost full time for decades, Elizabeth Kirkwood who had served as a sidesperson at St Mary's Patricbourne and John Harris, who had been organist at both Bekesbourne and Patricbourne for a number of years. Faithful folk who had served the church in so many ways during their lifetimes and whose loss is felt in ripples across our Parish. As 2025 began the losses to our community have continued. We celebrated the long 104 year span of Dorothy King, previously choir mistress and sometimes organist at St Peter's Bridge and more recently that of David Spencer who finally succumbed to the cancer which he had battled for so long; and John Hill whose contributions to the Parish over the years have ranged from PCC member to candlestick maker and almost all things in between over many decades of living in Bridge. I am writing this report as Easter approaches and so I am reminded strongly of the hope we share in the promise of eternal life and our prayer for all our faithful departed loved ones that they may indeed, rest in peace and rise in glory.

This year in our Lent Course we have been encouraged to seek Living Hope, even in the challenges of life, and especially at points when we have felt despair. The evolution of House Groups during Advent 2024 and Lent 2025 is, I think, an encouragement in itself and one which I hope we will continue to explore in 2025. How good it is to come together in small groups to study scripture together, to share our life experiences, and to pray for one another. As we look for new ways to enliven the life of our churches in the coming year and deepen their connection in and with their village communities, maybe this could be one of the marks of who we are as a church community. A church that supports and sustains one another through study and prayer and not just on Sundays.

In some ways 2024 has continued to be as 2023 was, a year of consolidation and embedding of worship schedules and practices not just post pandemic but for us as well, post single parish. I think though as we move forward in 2025 we will need to give some thought to what the future looks like, to continue the work of enabling our churches to be assets to the communities we serve (rather than simply monuments to be preserved) and to consider how we can shape our worship in such a way that it is reaching the most people, offering the best missional opportunities and being as accessible as possible. A common theme in the Bible regarding welcome and invitation is found in passages encouraging hospitality and love for others, even those who may be considered strangers. Some verses emphasize the importance of extending a warm welcome to all, while others focus on inviting people to a spiritual and eternal invitation from God. For those of us who work for the Church it is good to be reminded that we are the agents of God's welcome and hospitality, and our work is not simply about sustaining the church we like or want but building a church that can enable everyone to grow in faith and discipleship for many years to come. May this be our focus as we go forward together this year.

Rev'd Canon Estella Last
Vicar

Updates from each of our Churches

St Peter's Bridge

Services

Our services (mainly) followed the established pattern –

1st Sunday Choral Evensong at 6pm. The September service was entitled “Hymns and Pimms”

2nd Sunday Parish Communion at 10 am. On Mothering Sunday, the school choir attended. On Palm Sunday the service was preceded by a procession from the school to church led by Banks the donkey (who stayed in church during the service). The school choir also attended the July and October services

3rd Sunday Family Service at 4 pm. This service ran from January to May, but with gradually dwindling numbers the Clergy/Leadership team considered the viability of this service and, reluctantly, discontinued the service.

In September and November there was a youth led service, called “Breakthrough”. This was led by Teenagers for interested youths. It was held at 6pm on a Saturday.

Additional services throughout the year included – Ash Wednesday Communion, Maundy Thursday evening Tenebrae, Remembrance Day service in church and at the War Memorial with the Nailbourne Scouts (all ages) attending, Carol Service and 2 Christingle Services.

The school held services for Easter, Summer (end of term), Year R Reception, Harvest, Advent and Year 2 Nativity. The school also participated in Lent Prayer Station over 2 days.

The Nailbourne Scouts held their Christmas service in December.

There were two Baptisms, one Wedding, one Wedding Blessing, five Funeral services (of which two services were attended by over 350 people) and two Interment of Ashes

Church Building

The building is mainly in good order and is open every day.

There continue to be minor flaking of various areas of stonework, which are kept under review.

The Belfry cleaning and re-netting was carried out in late summer.

In the gales in late November a section of the spire was dislodged by the wind. Although it looked serious at first it was found on closer inspection that it was a “panel” which was repaired and re-fixed promptly by Colman Contactors.

The clock is mainly in working order, thanks to Mark Esdale who looks after it. A fault with the Automatic Winding mechanism developed, resulting in the striking being disconnected.

The fire extinguishers were inspected/serviced in February.

The heating boilers were serviced in June. A fan fault was discovered but rectified under Warranty.

During the autumn the Vicar's vestry was painted.

In December there was a problem with the toilet being blocked but this was cleared thanks to assistance from Steve Briant.

The organ had an annual tuning.

The church silver and vestments are in good order.

The choir is led by Jean Barber, who is our main organist. Dan Luck and Gerard Ahearn assist with organ playing as required.

Rosemary Whatley is our Sacristan, Viv Brasier organises the flower arrangers, there is a small team of volunteer cleaners. Eco church recycling continues and volunteers take the materials to various places for onward recycling.

Churchyard

The churchyard continues to be maintained by Canterbury City Council, who just cut/trim the grass during the mowing season. Any other maintenance/tidying is carried out by volunteers as and when they are available. Some help is occasionally available from staff from The Pig. Overhanging dead tree branches are still a concern but are being monitored.

Laurence Dunderdale and Evelyn Andrews
Churchwardens

St Mary's Patrixbourne

The congregation for the 10am Sung Communion service on the 3rd Sunday of the month consistently ranges from 25 to 40 people with Gerard Aherne playing the organ. Coffee is served after the service and people appreciate the chance to chat to each other. On 3rd October we hosted the funeral of Elizabeth Kirkwood, a regular member of the congregation and a former Sidesman at the church. The Carol Service was attended by 40 people including four children. Once again, the carols were chosen by residents and the congregation of the church, and the lessons were read by adults and children living in the village.

On the 15th June, we hosted the volunteers from the Pilgrims Hospice who provided refreshments to 350 walkers on the sponsored walk from Dover to Canterbury with a further optional leg from Canterbury to Wye. They were hoping to raise £100,000 for the charity. The number of people visiting the church continues to rise and 20 pilgrims have stayed overnight at the church. The number of visitors signing into our Visitors' book is being analysed by a lady from London to use the data for her Master's degree on the number of people undertaking pilgrimage. We have also been visited by a Swedish researcher, wanting to look at English churches offering overnight Sanctuary to pilgrims in England, with a view to introducing it along the pilgrim routes in Sweden, although all churches in Sweden are maintained and run by the Swedish State.

We now have an electronic card reader in the church, which allows visitors to use a card to donate to the church and sign up for Gift Aid to be added to their donation too. Many people readily use the machine. As there is no internet access at the church, the machine is periodically collected by Rev Estella Last and transactions downloaded once the internet can be accessed at the Vicarage.

The clock has continued to function spasmodically throughout the year, with visits from the clock engineers only temporarily solving the problem. The church yard continues to be maintained by Tim Millet, but the ground has been plagued by moles when the ground is wet. During the year we have hosted a hornet monitoring station in the churchyard as part of a network set up by East Kent beekeepers.

A rota for flowers at the altar in the church is managed by Mary Evans and we are very grateful to Rosemary Whatley for cleaning the church prior to our monthly service.

The Faculty for the extension at St Mary's was received in late December 2023, but in January the planning permission from Canterbury City Council expired so had to be applied for again. This was granted in March 2024. Once this was received applications for grants to fund the work were submitted but were unsuccessful. However, a donation of £100,000 towards the building

work was received from a private donor and work to build the extension on the north side of the church is due to commence in the spring of 2025. The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out by Andrew Clague, the church architect, in October and missing tiles and blocked gullies were rectified by Colman Contractors in November.

Andrea Nicholson and Pauline Pritchard
Churchwardens.

St Peter's Bekesbourne

Services

Our Songs of Praise service continues to be very popular. It is a lay-led service which takes place on the first Sunday of the month at 10.00am. The services are planned around a particular theme and led by different volunteers. We are grateful for all the advice and support we receive from Estella, our vicar and Miriam, our curate. Either one or both attend the services. Refreshments are served after the service, and everyone is encouraged to stay and chat.

In 2024, four Parish Communion services were held (January, March, June and August)

The Carol service on Christmas Day at 11.00am was enjoyed by a congregation of 120 and 11 dogs

In September the bellringers from the South East area met to ring together and hold their Annual Service and AGM in the church with refreshments afterwards.

In 2024, there was one funeral (Alan Hayes) and one Baptism (Georgina Cox)

Bell Ringers

We have an enthusiastic band of bellringers who meet to practice every Monday evening. They ring before all our services and many of them stay and participate in the service. In May they held an Open Afternoon when people were invited to come along and find out what bell ringing was all about. Four beginners were recruited. Two of them have dropped out for various reasons but two remain. Dave Durrell has organised an additional practice session for them on a Friday morning.

The Church Building

A faculty to restore the lychgate has been approved. Mervyn Gulvin has drawn up the plans. They have been sent out to tender. We are hoping the work can be agreed and completed with as little disruption as possible.

Our Bevington organ is regularly serviced and is normally played at all services. Andrew, our organist, plays at all our Songs of Praise services and does not take payment. We give him a 'thank you' gift at the end of the year. We would welcome visiting organists to come and play as the organ would benefit from being used more often.

The churchyard is an 'open churchyard' and is maintained by volunteers. It continues to be our policy to maintain the churchyard by balancing ecologically sound management, good accessibility for present and former parishioners to visit their family graves, and a beautiful setting for the church. Several working parties organised by Ian Gillanders tidy the churchyard and cut back trees and shrubs where necessary. We have welcomed two new younger members to the group this year.

Regular mowing is carried out by a contractor. The Parish Council of Bekesbourne with Patribourne pay a substantial grant towards this.

Nicky Fry, Churchwarden

St Mary's Nackington

An uneventful year during which John Meardon has spent considerable time on work towards the church improvement programme. The Faculty has been granted and the Canterbury City Council has given planning permission for the proposed works to proceed. The first phase of the project is planned to start after Easter.

The service pattern remains unchanged with 8 am Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month and Morning Prayer on the third Sunday. The attendance numbers have not significantly changed this year. There have been four weddings, all very different, during this past year. There was a large one in the summer when the church was full to capacity; following the service the guests were entertained by a white suited Dixie Band in the church yard as they waited for the Red Route Master bus to take them away to the reception. A smaller wedding took place, when the best man/ ring bearer was a fairly well-behaved black dog. The final smaller wedding just after Christmas had a delightful string quartet to entertain the guests. Other services during the year have been held for Easter, Ascension Day, Benefice Harvest & Remembrance Sunday.

The Christmas Eve service was well attended and appreciated by the congregation. Gerard played for this service. We have also held one funeral and three services for interment of ashes.

Several longstanding and loyal members of the congregation have died this year.

Bob Thomas died last Spring. The church was full for a service which was live streamed to Parsonage Farmhouse Barn where a further 90 friends and colleagues were present. Bob has been a hugely active and involved member of the local community and surrounding area over a long time; he was a Church Warden and member of the Parish Council for over 40 years. Bob organised the last church refurbishment, the church yard extension and the relocation from the old village hall to the new site.

Margaret Clarke died in the Autumn. Her funeral was held in Bridge Church and then there was a lively tea party in Parsonage Farmhouse Barn for her many friends and family. Margaret was a good friend to Nackington, and always supportive of any Friends event that was being held.

We thank John and Ann for their help and support over the year, and Philip & Susan Cheetham for their help with our music.

Daphne Reece & Scilla Wright
Churchwardens

St Mary's Lower Hardres

We have continued with the same pattern of services this year with Lower Hardres having the Parish Communion Service at 10am on the fourth Sunday of the month. This service continues to be well supported with people from across the wider parish. There are always refreshments available at the end of the services for people to enjoy while they chat and catch up with each other.

We were delighted to have the Easter Sunday Communion Service in St Mary's Lower Hardres this year. The church was beautifully decorated with flowers and the service was very well attended. Hot cross buns were served afterwards and there was an Easter Egg Hunt in the churchyard for the children.

On Thursday 6th June, at 8.45pm, a special Commemoration Service was held in the church to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. A peace lantern was lit at 9.15pm to join with the 800 beacons being lit at this time along the coastline and across the countryside with hundreds of smaller lamp lights to mark the occasion.

A short memorial service was held as usual at the war memorial in Lower Hardres on Remembrance Sunday at 10.45am. The service was led by Miriam Westendarp, our Lay Chaplain, and was attended by more than 30 people. Douglas McCully laid the poppy wreath and read the Roll of Honour and the National Anthem was sung.

On Friday 13th December at 6pm, the Community Carols were held in the church instead of the John Baker White hall which meant that the Carol singing could be combined with the telling of the Christmas Story and the setting up of the crib with the help of the children. Mulled wine, hot chocolate, sausage rolls and mince pies were served and a Christmas tree was decorated in the church. This went well and over 60 adults and children attended.

There were no baptisms, weddings or funerals this year in the church but Margaret Clarke was received into the church on Wednesday 25th September at 4.30pm prior to her funeral the next day in Bridge Church. Margaret Clarke had served as a Lay Reader in the parish for nearly 30 years and had devoted much of her time, energy and love to the church in Lower Hardres and the people in the parish. There was an opportunity for people who knew her from Lower Hardres or were connected to her through her services and outreach in the village to come and light a candle and spend some quiet time with her for the last time. The church was beautifully decorated, absolutely full of flowers of every colour and the fragrance in the church was wonderful. A large team of volunteers spent much time and love making the church look special for Margaret. She will be sorely missed.

St Mary's Church is open as usual, all day, every day of the year for visitors and private prayer.

I am very grateful to the small team of helpers who keep the church clean and tidy and who help make the church beautiful with flower arrangements throughout the year.

The churchyard is open and is mown regularly by Mr Chris Tanton. We are grateful to the Parish Council who make a donation towards the upkeep of the churchyard every year which enables us to keep it looking well cared for. I would also like to thank David and Ann Nicholls who have helped keep the churchyard clear and tidy again this year. Areas of the churchyard are left 'wild' to encourage wildlife and we have been part of the God's Acre Project for many years. This is all part of our efforts to be as environmentally friendly as possible in all aspects of the church and its grounds.

I would like to thank the Friends of St Mary's Lower Hardres and the members of our church team for their interest and support. I would especially like to thank Ann Nicholls for all that she has done throughout the year to help and support the church in Lower Hardres and myself as Churchwarden.

Carol Day, Churchwarden

Friend's Organisations

Friends of St Peter's Bridge (FOSP)

Established 2014 for major fabric repairs and outreach into the community, Coffee & Cake Concerts began with Carols in 2016 . They remain popular and the concerts in 2024 were:

- (1) Jan - Classical Concert (Violin & Piano) [£100 to Porchlight & £100 to Church*]
- (2) Feb - Favourite Things (Bill Lloyd Hughes) [£120 to Médecins sans Frontières & £124 to Church*]
- (3) Mar – Spring Show (Sharon & Amanda) [£115 to Guide Dogs for the Blind & £120 to Church*]
- (4) Apl – ‘A Shelter for Sadness’ (Anne Booth) [£200 to Porchlight & £125 to Church*]
- (5) May – ‘The Gypsy’s Bride’ (Katie Hudson) [£196 to Christian Aid*]
- (6) Sept – Charles Wills (95 years in Bridge) [£180 to Foodbank & £35 to Church*]
- (7) Oct – Canterbury Ladies Choir & Canterbury Voices [£200 to Canterbury Vocals Scholarship Fund & £106 to Church*]
- (8) Nov – Another morning of songs (Allan Richardson) [£120 to Christian Aid & £80 to Church*]
- (9) Dec – 8th Annual Carol Concert [£275 to Embrace the Middle East & £51 to Church*]

Total Proceeds £2247 with £1506 going to various charities and £741 to Bridge Church General Fund.

[* Sharing arrangements agreed with Concert givers]

NOTE – Coffee & Cake Concerts are planned monthly through to June 2025

Alan Barber

Friends of Bekesbourne Church

The Friends’ strongly believe our work helps towards protecting the future of our Church building. We do this by organising various events bringing the community together throughout the year.

Last year’s events are listed below together with the profit made from each event.

100 club Draw, organised by Steve Thomas, raised £1250 in 2024
Wine & Wisdom Quiz Night in the Village Hall, raised £506.50 in May
Summer Lunch Party at the Old Palace, raised £460 in July
Charlie Sings Evening in the Village Hall raised £140 in October
Xmas Bazaar in the Village Hall, raised £552 in December

We have also received donations of £300. Our reserves currently stand at a healthy £18,776 some of which will be used to towards restoration of the Lych Gate. We also funded the replacement of a new Chancel ceiling light, costing £338.

We wish to thank our wonderful volunteers who enable us to run these. At the same time we are very keen to encourage all villagers to be involved and support the events we organise throughout the year. These events bring together newcomers and encourage them, and the stalwarts, to enter into the community spirit. We would like to thank the villagers who have supported and helped at our events during 2024 and hope you continue, and more villagers will follow your example in the future. Please spread the word and look out for events the Committee is organising this year. If any of you have your own ideas of what you would like to see us organise, please do not hesitate to contact any one of us. Again, thank you all for your continuing support, and we will endeavour to achieve a successful and profitable 2025 continuing to support the fabric of our beautiful church.

Christine Dutfeld, Chair Friends' of Bokesbourne Church

The Friends of Nackington Church

In April, a talk by Dick Bolton entitled "Gardens Great and Small" was cancelled as Dick was ill. However, the talk was re-scheduled and took place on 2nd October 2024. Ticket sales and generous donations amounted to £600.

On 4th December, The Salvation Army Band came to Parsonage Barn for Carol Singing and refreshments. This event made £400 in ticket sales and donations for the church, and the retiring collection for the Salvation Army amounted to another £300. Thanks to Scilla and Evelyn Wright for allowing us to use their Barn for these events.

We have now received both the Faculty for the development project and planning consent from the City Council. We are hoping that work will start after Easter with the installation of the new heating system as the first stage.

There will be further fundraising events to raise money for the full project during the year.

Ann Meardon

Deanery Report

During 2024 new appointments have been made in the Deanery. The Rev Caroline Turvey has been appointed to the Canonry Benefice and Rev Clary Read has become the Curate in the Barham Benefice. The Rev Estella Last is the new Area Dean.

In 2024 three Deanery synod meetings were held and a joint East Bridge and West Bridge Deanery Roadshow was held in September. The May Deanery meeting looked at what was working well in our Parishes and what could be even better. The July meeting looked at the Diocesan 3 bold outcomes, which are:

- 1) Doubling the number of children and young disciples in today's church.
- 2) Creating 200 new Christian communities by 2030
- 3) Every Parish, Benefice and Deanery should be showing signs of revitalisation by 2030.

The September Joint Deanery Roadshow was attended by Bishop Rose and various Diocesan officers and offered four workshops looking at:

- 1) Creating routes for growing young disciples
- 2) Noticing and naming God's movement in the world around us
- 3) Mission Action Planning
- 4) Parish Share and how will we be able to afford it.

With many members of both deaneries present, lively discussion took place in each workshop and such joint working proved to be very inspiring.

The November meeting spent time looking at the Diocesan budget and how it would affect Parish Share in the coming year. Representatives were also asked to suggest topics for forthcoming Deanery Synod meetings. The issue of appointing a new Lay Chair is still to be resolved.

Andrea Nicholson, Deanery Synod Representative 2024.

Christian Aid report

Christian Aid Week in 2024 focused on Burundi. At the start of Christian Aid Week a film was shown at Bridge about a community raising themselves out of poverty by setting up a savings and loan society funded by a Christian Aid partner organisation.

As in 2023 Christian Aid Week was celebrated in our Parish over the whole month of May, with money raised in several ways. The May Coffee and Cake concert raised £196, envelopes in our five churches £129, deliver-only envelopes in selected roads in Bridge £429.19, a Plant Sale at Bekesbourne Wednesday Coffee Morning £119.70 and the Parish online e-envelope £652, totalling £1,525.89, only a little less than in 2023. The majority of donations were Gift-Aided.

Bridge and Patrixbourne Primary School took part in the 70k Challenge. All the children walked around the playground three times carrying a full cup of water to recognise how precious water is. This raised £269.18 in sponsorship.

In addition, the Count Your Blessings Lent Appeal envelopes raised £55, some late envelope returns and other donations £39.19 and the Bridge Flower Festival and Rosy Atkinson's retirement party in July £319. Therefore the total donation to Christian Aid for 2024 from the Parish was £1,935.08.

The Canterbury Christian Aid committee has met regularly to plan awareness and fund-raising events. We had a Christian Aid stall focusing on poverty and climate change at the Diocesan Eco Fayre and this was transferred to the Cathedral for Christian Aid Week. On Whitsunday at the end of Christian Aid Week the Cathedral hosted Patrick Watt, the Director of Christian Aid, who preached an inspiring sermon at the morning Eucharist.

Thank you to everyone who supports Christian Aid in the Parish in any way.

Jean Barber.

Parish Eco-Church Team

Due to other commitments the Eco Church Team has found it difficult to come together regularly so has met only once this year. We have not started any new environmental projects but have continued to make progress with existing ones.

The Bridge Recycling Station continues to be well used. Soft plastics and blister packs are collected weekly and taken for recycling by two teams of volunteers. These containers in church are frequently over-flowing. More volunteers would be welcome, especially for the blister packs.

Bridge churchyard continues to be maintained by volunteers from the village. Some of the dangerous tree branches have been removed.

Bekesbourne Church had a successful volunteering day with people from the village helping in the churchyard and surrounding woodland. Families are being encouraged to explore and use the natural environment.

Bridge Eco Church had a display table at the Diocesan Eco Fayre at St Peter's Anglican Church in May. Interest was shown by people wishing to start their own Eco Church Group.

Three members of the Team attended the Diocesan 'Growing Greener' Conference in October. The focus was mainly on decreasing churches' carbon footprint by efficient heating, lighting and insulation. Churches were encouraged to do an Energy Audit.

An Eco Church Newsletter was produced in June and distributed to all five churches.

We had a Fairtrade stall at Bekesbourne Christmas Bazaar, focusing on ways of living more sustainably rather than fund raising. We sold Fairtrade goods from our local supermarkets at cost price to show how much is available locally and encourage people to shop fairly. We also had goods from the Refillable Van and ideas for cleaning with natural products, as well as Christmas wreaths using fresh foliage and fruits.

The Parish has achieved its target of having a single utilities contract for all its churches. The supplier is British Gas Lite. The Parish now has four smart meters, and the final two are due to be fitted soon.

A Rocha has published a revised Eco Church Survey which we will have to consider as we attempt to maintain our Eco Church Silver Award status. There are 10 silver level churches in Canterbury; we are responsible for five of them.

We would welcome support from more members of the church community to help us to reinvigorate our eco efforts!

Megan Shirley, Jean Barber, Nicky Fry.

Choir and music report for APCM 2025

The choir has seven regular members (eight including the Vicar) but it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide a full number for Sunday services, due to travel and other commitments. This means the choir sings a Communion hymn or anthem only occasionally now. Hilary Whiting, who has sung in the choir for many years, has had to retire for family reasons but Rosy Atkinson is now singing regularly. Many thanks to Hilary for her strong commitment through the years.

It has been good to welcome children from the Bridge and Patricxbourne School Choir with their music teacher, Helen Brookes to lead two of our services in the past year and we look forward to them returning on Mothering Sunday.

The experimental 'Come and Sing' Evensongs started well and over a dozen new people have sung with the choir over the past year and a half, but numbers have now diminished and the

arrangement has become hard to sustain. Because of this and the dwindling Evensong congregation, it was decided to discontinue them and an evening service will now take place only on special occasions.

The Parish Choir continues to form the core of a community choir which performs at locally arranged Saturday Coffee and Cake Concerts. The Carol Service at Bridge went well with a few extra singers supporting. Some of the choir and other friends also sang carols at the Red Lion after the Christmas Farmers Market and at The Pig on Christmas Eve.

Many thanks to our regular team of organists in the Parish – Gerard Ahern (Bridge and Patribourne), Andrew Cooper (Bekesbourne), and to Philip and Susan Cheetham for the music at Nackington. We are grateful to Dan Luck who plays for our Christingle services, sometimes for the 2nd Sunday Parish Communion at Bridge and covers on other occasions.

Mander Organ Builders continue to tune and maintain the organs annually.

Patribourne and Bridge churches are affiliated to the RSCM and an annual fee is paid.

Jean Barber,

Bridge and Lower Hardres Organist.

Bridge CEP School

The school remains oversubscribed with a full role of 420 pupils and 70 staff members. Estella is on the Board of Governors and PTA committee and the ministry team lead collective worship in school weekly. The PCC nominates two Foundation Governors (Graham Duplock and Victoria Pattison). During the year we sadly lost Margaret Clarke who had supported the school and children for so many years.

The House system and naming of classes continues to give children inspiration and ownership of their groups with House Behn winning the Cup for 2023-24. Parental Phonics and Reception workshops were held.

Our senior leadership structure has changed following KCC approach to second James Tibbles to provide School Improvement services for two days a week. He is now Executive Head with Michael Taylor becoming Head of School. This provides us with significant financial return to bolster our financial position.

The financial situation remained challenging this year, but school has retained its diversity and quantity of experiences for the children, protecting its arts/music provision, expanding Forest School and offering a great variety of visits and classroom focuses (many repeated each year) including:

Swimming lessons, exchange with pupils from Montpelier, Dutch teachers visited this year, year 5 pupils day at the Science Museum, a Safer Internet Day held, Museum of Kent Life visit, outdoor learning on site and Forest School visits at Covert Wood, Sports Day, year 5 & 6 residentials, year 6 production of The Wizard of Oz, full school year of class trips and interschool sporting events including: Tag Rugby, Girls & Boys Football, Dynamos Cricket, Netball, Hockey and Cross Country running.

Children have continued to visit Bridge Church for Lent, Easter, end of year, year R welcome with parents, Harvest Festival, Advent and year 2 Nativity services.

Working with the local community is important to the school with events: Messy Church at school, PTA Firework Display (raising >£15K) and joint Summer Fete (with Church) taking place. Our usual preparations for the Christmas Festival; Church Christmas Card design competition, Salvation Army concert, children's Nativities, senior citizen's party, Carols in the village took place.

We again had more than 50% of pupils assessed as eligible for grammar school places and our KS2-SATS results showing 85 – 90% meeting required standards for Reading, Writing, Grammar Punctuation Spelling and Maths compared to 70 – 75% nationally.

The foundation governors would like to thank the staff, parents and PTFA for their continued support for the school throughout the year. The school community has continued to provide a Christian foundation for its children and the community.

Graham Duplock
Foundation Governor

Parents of Neurodivergent children coffee and catch-up

This group meet approximately monthly during term time. It's a chance for parents and caregivers of neurodivergent children to share their experiences, and provide mutual support for some of the specific challenges facing these families. There is a core group of around 6-12 regulars, and we enjoy a cuppa and a chat, and share information and ideas. It has been well received again this past year.

We will continue meeting monthly for the current school year, and then there is a question to ask about how the group might continue (if parents would like it to) in my absence next year.

Miriam Bier Hinksman, Assistant Curate

Parish Magazine

On the Nail is the Parish magazine for Bridge, Patricxbourne and Bokesbourne.

10 editions were published in 2024. 500 copies are printed each month, of which 290 copies are delivered to subscribers in Bridge, 43 to Patricxbourne and 115 to Bokesbourne.

Copies are available in each of our five churches. Rev. Estella has copies to hand out. Copies are available in some retail premises in Bridge. The Pig has copies to hand out to guests. Copies are posted to former residents.

The annual subscription remains at £5.00. Printing costs are higher (currently 59p per copy) but the advertising revenue helps cover this cost.

Megan Shirley, our Parish administrator, gathers the information monthly, edits and typesets the magazine prior to printing. Steve Thomas co-ordinates the advertising.

Our thanks go to Megan, Steve and all the volunteers who deliver the magazine across our three villages.

Laurence Dunderdale

Single Parish Electoral Roll 2024-5

The total on the Electoral Roll for the parish this year is 157, three less than last year.
A complete revision of the Electoral Roll will be made with effect from 30th April 2025.

Rosemary Whatley
Electoral Roll Officer

Safeguarding 2024-2025

I am pleased to report that there have been no Safeguarding issues in the past year.
In the light of recent events the importance of all concerned strenuously following Safeguarding guidelines, has been given even higher priority.
A Parish Policy for Safeguarding is in place. We encourage an open culture so that anybody with concerns regarding safeguarding issues knows that they can report them to me, the Vicar or Curate. Any concerns will be taken in strict confidence and referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for advice.
An online parish Dashboard and Hub for record keeping have been made available and we have begun to use these tools to help ensure that guidelines are being followed.
Training for those with a variety of roles in the Parish is proceeding on a three-year rolling programme. Churchwardens should now undertake the Leadership Level of training. There has been some delay for those trying to access this course due to high demand. Some have now completed the level, and others are about to do so.
Enhanced DBS checks for all lay people who assist in the parish are up to date. At present DBS checks are in place for 20 people and these too last for three years.
As Safeguarding Officer, I receive regular updates from the Diocese and will act on these as necessary so that the Parish continues to fulfil Safeguarding requirements.

Rosemary Whatley
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Parish Giving Scheme

The PGS continues to be an efficient, safe and popular way to support all our five churches. 63 individual donations are received monthly, paid by direct debit and received on the 1st of each month. PGS claim the gift aid on our behalf and this is paid monthly into our account with the donations. This enables the Finance Team to monitor our parish finances effectively.
Our thanks are expressed to all who donate to our churches, if you wish to consider either a one-off gift or make a regular donation, please see the weekly pew sheets for guidance or contact me on 01227 830960.

Evelyn Andrews
PGS and Gift Aid Secretary

Financial Review for the Year Ending 31st December 2024

Since the amalgamation of parishes in 2019 the financial figures represent a consolidated view of the accounts of the three former PCCs plus the Benefice Group. The results of the Friends of Bekebourne Church (FoBC), which had been reported separately in 2020, were integrated into the Parish accounts for the first time in 2021 and continue to be included in a comparable manner for 2024.

Each PCC is required to pay its allocated "Parish Share" to the Diocese of Canterbury, which goes towards the overall Diocesan budget for selection, training, stipends, housing and pensions of the clergy, and administration of the Diocese. Effectively it is the cost of providing ministry to the Parish.

The 2024 parish share was increased by approximately 5% compared to 2023, to £73,202.85 (from £69,703). As a group we successfully paid 97% of our Parish Share for 2024 (£71,202.85 in total). Although we did not quite fulfil the full Parish Share payment in 2024, we still successfully paid £1,499.85 (2%) more than in 2023. Due to our underpayment, we had an arrears in Parish Share of £1,999.89.

At the end of 2023 we had a Parish Share arrears, due to our underpayment of Parish Share during Covid of £21,824. During 2024, the Diocese offered the opportunity of a *two for one* offer to help pay off Parish Share arrears. We took up this offer and so paid £10,912 on the 27th February 2024, which enabled us to fully pay off our Covid Parish Share arrears. This was a very successful achievement.

The Statement of Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year is attached. As required by the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, this Statement has been subject to an independent examination.

We have had our challenges during 2024, in particular with the relatively high cost of energy again. This has meant that our energy bills have continued to be higher than we had previously become accustomed to. But we have managed to meet the challenges posed and 2024 started with our new energy provider (British Gas Lite), which was set up for all church energy accounts in December 2023.

Church building insurance premiums in some of the past years have been reimbursed/partially reimbursed from Restricted Funds (often from Friends' accounts) but for 2024, insurance premiums were funded from Unrestricted income and so this is a noteworthy success. In total for 2024, the insurance cost for all five churches was £10,855.

In Unrestricted Funds, our Planned Giving and Collections were higher than 2023, which reflects the success and hard work put in with the Parish Giving Scheme in particular. Our overall Unrestricted Voluntary income from Planned Giving and Collections was 5% higher in 2024 (£89,853) compared to 2023 (85,567).

For Restricted Funds, our income for 2024 was significantly higher than 2023, in total we received £230,757. This is in many ways, thanks to some extremely generous donations (£108,662.40 in a single donation to the Bridge Fabric Fund and a single donation of £100,000 to the Patribourne Fabric Fund). There were also a number of donations from supporters of our churches and interest (£15,793) to add up to the total. Due to the various donations our total in Restricted Funds has risen from £257,514 at the end of 2023 to £470,422. It should be noted that the Restricted Funds are for various designated uses, such as the project work at St Mary's Patribourne and improvement works at St Mary's Nackington, and we still very much require the ongoing generous Planned Giving and Collections to continue to fund the day to day running costs of our wonderful churches.

As in prior years, our churches received grants towards our churchyard maintenance and we are very grateful for the ongoing support of our Parish Councils who again, kindly provided these maintenance grants.

During 2024 we made a number of contributions to charities through a variety of fund-raising activities. Some of the charities supported were: Porchlight, Christian Aid, Red Cross, Canterbury Food Bank, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Royal British Legion and the Children's Society.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the support of all those who have generously contributed to the life of the Parish over the past year, especially in the areas of planned giving, collections and donations.

Peter Turrell

PCC Treasurer

Administrative information

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). Under these rules, the PCC must meet four times during the year and conduct an Annual Parish Meeting. The administrative load has increased since the formation of the single parish, and we have increased our number of meetings so that we meet every other month.

Since the formation of the Parish of the Bridge Group on 1st January 2020, the annual turnover of the PCC has exceeded the threshold for registration with the Charity Commission. Registration was successfully completed on 13th January 2022; the PCC's Registered Charity number is 1197483.

PCC Membership

PCC members who have served during 2024 are:

Ex Officio members:

Incumbent:	Rev'd Canon Estella Last	
Curate:	Rev'd Dr Miriam Bier Hinksman	
Lay Chaplain:	Miriam Westendarp	
Lay reader:	Margaret Clarke (deceased)	
Wardens:	Laurence Dunderdale	Nicola Fry
	Evelyn Andrews	Scilla Wright
	Andrea Nicholson	Daphne Reece
	Pauline Pritchard (Vice-Chair)	Carol Day

There are two Churchwarden Vacancies (Lower Hardres and Bekesbourne)

Deanery Synod Members:

	Amanda Barker
	Andrea Nicholson
	Daphne Reece
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Turrell
Safeguarding and Electoral Roll Officer:	
	Rosemary Whatley (Co-opted member)
Secretary:	Rory Wetherell (also elected rep Patrixbourne)

Elected Members:

Rosy Atkinson (elected rep Bridge)
Alan Barber (elected rep Bridge)
Bob Thomas (elected rep Nackington, deceased 11.3.24)
John Meardon (elected rep Nackington)
Amanda Barker (elected rep Bekesbourne)
Graham Duplock (elected rep Bekesbourne)
William Day (elected rep Lower Hardres)

There are 3 elected member vacancies (1 x Patrixbourne, 1 x Lower Hardres, 1 x Nackington)

Finance Committee – appointed by the PCC as a sub-committee

Rev'd Estella Last (Incumbent)
Peter Turrell (Treasurer)
Evelyn Andrews
(Gift Aid Secretary/Assistant Treasurer, Bridge, Patrixbourne,
Lower Hardres & Nackington)
Zan Clifford
(Gift Aid Secretary/Assistant Treasurer, Bekesbourne)
Laurence Dunderdale
John Meardon

This Annual Report has been approved by the Parochial Church Council by correspondence (email) on 25th April 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Rev'd Canon Estella Last, PCC Chair

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

This report on the financial statements the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2024 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. You consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations section 44(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) of the Act and to be found in the Church Guidance 2006 edition, issued by the finance division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the financial statements with those records. It also includes considering 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to:
 - a. Keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; and
 - b. To prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and Regulations 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.

David Muggridge FCCA MAE
Ackland Webb

Date

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	2024			2023		
	Actual UNRESTRICTED	Actual RESTRICTED	Actual ALL FUNDS	Actual UNRESTRICTED	Actual RESTRICTED	Actual ALL FUNDS
	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2023	Full Year 2023	Full Year 2023
RECEIPTS						
VOLUNTARY						
Planned Giving	64,471	6,302	70,773	57,066	15,000	72,066
Collections	21,827	-	21,827	9,645	-	9,645
Gift Aid Recovery	3,555	-	3,555	18,856	-	18,856
Voluntary Subtotal	89,853	6,302	96,155	85,567	15,000	100,567
OTHER						
Parish Contributions to Benefice	-	-	-	834	-	834
Other Voluntary Receipts	17,660	208,662	226,322	25,912	4,438	30,350
Fund Generation Activities	11,981	-	11,981	10,136	3,959	14,095
Church Activities Receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Receipts	-	-	-	1,900	-	1,900
Investment Income	552	15,793	16,345	533	7,612	8,145
Other Receipts Subtotal	30,193	224,455	254,648	39,315	16,009	55,324
TOTAL RECEIPTS	120,046	230,757	350,803	124,882	31,009	155,891
PAYMENTS						
Church Costs						
Diocesan Share	87,902	-	87,902	64,873	-	64,873
Benefice Contribution	2,571	-	2,571	834	-	834
Church Activities Payments	1,033	2,469	3,502	10,659	-	10,659
Church Running Payments	48,389	5,545	53,934	48,493	11,210	59,703
Benefice Administration Payments	-	-	-	3,318	-	3,318
TOTAL PAYMENTS	139,895	8,014	147,909	128,177	11,210	139,387
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(19,849)	222,743	202,894	(3,295)	19,799	16,504
MOVEMENT IN RESERVES DURING THE YEAR						
TOTAL RESERVES AT 1ST JANUARY	23,022	257,514	280,536	22,979	241,053	264,032
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	(19,849)	222,743	202,894	(3,295)	19,799	16,504
FUND TRANSFERS	9,835	(9,835)	-	3338	-3338	-
TOTAL RESERVES AT 31ST DECEMBER	13,008	470,422	483,430	23,022	257,514	280,536

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	2024			2023
CASH BALANCES	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	ALL FUNDS	ALL FUNDS
Bank Account (see notes 1 & 2)	2,238	14,423	16,661	22,770
CBF Deposits (see note 7)		438,075	438,075	229,812
Cash in Hand	-	-	-	-
Cash at Bank and in Hand: End of Period	2,238	452,498	454,736	252,582
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS				
Investments (see note 10)	10,769	17,924	28,694	27,953
OTHER ASSETS				
(See note 3)	-	-	-	-
OTHER LIABILITIES	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ASSETS AND LIABILITIES	13,008	470,422	483,430	280,535

1 £500 is held in PCC St Marys Lower Hardres account which is restricted for use of the Lower Hardres 100 Club.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

2 Bank balances as at 31st December (non CCLA/Investment Accounts):

	2024			2023
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	ALL FUNDS	UNRESTRICTED
Bridge Group Parish PCC	1,433	N/A	1,433	8,685
The Bridge Group of Parishes	5	N/A	5	68
PCC of Bekesbourne Current Account	750	N/A	750	2,010
PCC Bekesbourne Reserve Account	N/A	14,423	14,423	10,268
PCC St Marys Lower Hardres (see note 7)	50	500	550	550
PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington	-	N/A	-	815
PCC St Marys Nackington	-	N/A	-	36
PCC Patricxbourne with Bridge	-	N/A	-	337
	2,238	14,923	17,161	22,769

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

- 4 The Financial Statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- 5 Other Assets - The Movable Church Furnishings are listed in the inventory (held by the Church Wardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal).
- 6 Reserves Policy - it is our policy to invest funds' balances with the CBF (Church of England)
- 7 The Restricted Funds comprise the following accounts and values at year-end:

	2024	2023
<u>St. Peter Bridge & St Mary Patrixbourne</u>		
Sale of Vicarage Land (General) Fund	137,095	136,685
SUBTOTAL	137,095	136,685
<u>St. Peter Bridge</u>		
Fabric Fund	109,517	14,926
Choir Fund	263	248
SUBTOTAL	109,780	15,174
<u>St. Mary Patrixbourne</u>		
Fabric Fund	113,364	10,337
SUBTOTAL	113,364	10,337
<u>St. Peter Bekesbourne</u>		
Friends of Bekesbourne Church	18,776	16,162
SUBTOTAL	18,776	16,162
<u>St. Mary Lower Hardres</u>		
Fabric Fund	4,131	2,079
Daisy Law Churchyard Fund	3,933	3,735
Friends of Lower Hardres Church	591	562
Lower Hardres General Fund	55	52
Lower Hardres 100 Club	500	500
SUBTOTAL	9,210	6,927
<u>St. Mary Nackington</u>		
Fabric Fund	21,587	20,477
Friends of Nackington Church	23,175	19,328
Nackington General Fund	2,917	2,770
Chancel Income Fund	2,171	1,952
SUBTOTAL	49,850	44,527
TOTAL	438,075	229,812

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

- 8 Voluntary Parish Share contributions for 2020 and 2021 were not paid in full due to reduced income as a direct consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The total arrears is shown against 2023.
- 9 Due to a slightly late payment for the December 2023 Parish Share, our accounts for 2023 show an underpayment. This was swiftly rectified in early 2024, as £5,808.58 was paid in January 2024.

	2024	2023
Total Parish Share Covid arrears:	-	21,824
Parish Share arrears:	-	5,809

- 10 The Investment Assets comprise the following accounts and valuations at year-end:

	2024	2023
<u>St. Mary Lower Hardres</u>		
Units		
<u>RECTORY LAND FUND (Unrestricted)</u>		
CBF Investment*	208.5 4,821	4,713
CBF Fixed Interest Securities	378 564	547

* Dividends are credited quarterly to the church's general fund (PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington).

<u>St. Mary Nackington</u>		
<u>RECTORY LAND FUND (Unrestricted)</u>		
CBF Investment*	208.5 4,821	4,713
CBF Fixed Interest Securities	378 564	547

* Dividends are credited quarterly to the church's general fund (PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington).

TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INVESTMENT ASSETS	10,769	10,520
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<u>NACKINGTON CHANCEL FUND (Endowment)</u>		
CBF Investment**	182 4,208	4,114

**Dividends are credited to the Chancel Deposit Fund

<u>MISS DORIS RYE BEQUEST (Restricted)</u>		
CBF Fixed Interest Securities***	6515 9,715	9,430

*** The income from this bequest is restricted to the church's Fabric Fund and dividends are credited to the St. Mary Nackington Fabric Fund.

<u>St. Peter Bekesbourne</u>		
<u>WARDELL BEQUEST (Endowment)</u>		
CBF Investment****	172 4,001	3,888

**** The income from this bequest is credited to the St. Peter Bekesbourne current account.

TOTAL RESTRICTED INVESTMENT ASSETS	17,924	17,432
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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

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Respective Responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. You consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations section 44(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) of the Act and to be found in the Church Guidance 2006 edition, issued by the finance division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the financial statements with those records. It also includes considering 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to:
 - a. Keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; and
 - b. To prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and Regulations 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.

David Muggridge FCCA MAE
Ackland Webb

Date

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	2024			2023		
	Actual UNRESTRICTED	Actual RESTRICTED	Actual ALL FUNDS	Actual UNRESTRICTED	Actual RESTRICTED	Actual ALL FUNDS
	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2024	Full Year 2023	Full Year 2023	Full Year 2023
RECEIPTS						
VOLUNTARY						
Planned Giving	64,471	6,302	70,773	57,066	15,000	72,066
Collections	21,827	-	21,827	9,645	-	9,645
Gift Aid Recovery	3,555	-	3,555	18,856	-	18,856
Voluntary Subtotal	89,853	6,302	96,155	85,567	15,000	100,567
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Parish Contributions to Benefice	-	-	-	834	-	834
Other Voluntary Receipts	17,660	208,662	226,322	25,912	4,438	30,350
Fund Generation Activities	11,981	-	11,981	10,136	3,959	14,095
Church Activities Receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Receipts	-	-	-	1,900	-	1,900
Investment Income	552	15,793	16,345	533	7,612	8,145
Other Receipts Subtotal	30,193	224,455	254,648	39,315	16,009	55,324
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TOTAL RESERVES AT 1ST JANUARY	23,022	257,514	280,536	22,979	241,053	264,032
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	(19,849)	222,743	202,894	(3,295)	19,799	16,504
FUND TRANSFERS	9,835	(9,835)	-	3338	-3338	-
TOTAL RESERVES AT 31ST DECEMBER	13,008	470,422	483,430	23,022	257,514	280,536

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	2024			2023
CASH BALANCES	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	ALL FUNDS	ALL FUNDS
Bank Account (see notes 1 & 2)	2,238	14,423	16,661	22,770
CBF Deposits (see note 7)		438,075	438,075	229,812
Cash in Hand	-	-	-	-
Cash at Bank and in Hand: End of Period	2,238	452,498	454,736	252,582
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS				
Investments (see note 10)	10,769	17,924	28,694	27,953
OTHER ASSETS				
(See note 3)	-	-	-	-
OTHER LIABILITIES				
	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ASSETS AND LIABILITIES	13,008	470,422	483,430	280,535

1 £500 is held in PCC St Marys Lower Hardres account which is restricted for use of the Lower Hardres 100 Club.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

2 Bank balances as at 31st December (non CCLA/Investment Accounts):

	2024			2023
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	ALL FUNDS	UNRESTRICTED
Bridge Group Parish PCC	1,433	N/A	1,433	8,685
The Bridge Group of Parishes	5	N/A	5	68
PCC of Bekesbourne Current Account	750	N/A	750	2,010
PCC Bekesbourne Reserve Account	N/A	14,423	14,423	10,268
PCC St Marys Lower Hardres (see note 7)	50	500	550	550
PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington	-	N/A	-	815
PCC St Marys Nackington	-	N/A	-	36
PCC Patrixbourne with Bridge	-	N/A	-	337
	2,238	14,923	17,161	22,769

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

- 4 The Financial Statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- 5 Other Assets - The Movable Church Furnishings are listed in the inventory (held by the Church Wardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal).
- 6 Reserves Policy - it is our policy to invest funds' balances with the CBF (Church of England)
- 7 The Restricted Funds comprise the following accounts and values at year-end:

	2024	2023
<u>St. Peter Bridge & St Mary Patrixbourne</u>		
Sale of Vicarage Land (General) Fund	137,095	136,685
SUBTOTAL	137,095	136,685
<u>St. Peter Bridge</u>		
Fabric Fund	109,517	14,926
Choir Fund	263	248
SUBTOTAL	109,780	15,174
<u>St. Mary Patrixbourne</u>		
Fabric Fund	113,364	10,337
SUBTOTAL	113,364	10,337
<u>St. Peter Bekesbourne</u>		
Friends of Bekesbourne Church	18,776	16,162
SUBTOTAL	18,776	16,162
<u>St. Mary Lower Hardres</u>		
Fabric Fund	4,131	2,079
Daisy Law Churchyard Fund	3,933	3,735
Friends of Lower Hardres Church	591	562
Lower Hardres General Fund	55	52
Lower Hardres 100 Club	500	500
SUBTOTAL	9,210	6,927
<u>St. Mary Nackington</u>		
Fabric Fund	21,587	20,477
Friends of Nackington Church	23,175	19,328
Nackington General Fund	2,917	2,770
Chancel Income Fund	2,171	1,952
SUBTOTAL	49,850	44,527
TOTAL	438,075	229,812

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE BRIDGE GROUP

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

- 8 Voluntary Parish Share contributions for 2020 and 2021 were not paid in full due to reduced income as a direct consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The total arrears is shown against 2023.
- 9 Due to a slightly late payment for the December 2023 Parish Share, our accounts for 2023 show an underpayment. This was swiftly rectified in early 2024, as £5,808.58 was paid in January 2024.

	2024	2023
Total Parish Share Covid arrears:	-	21,824
Parish Share arrears:	-	5,809

- 10 The Investment Assets comprise the following accounts and valuations at year-end:

	2024	2023
<u>St. Mary Lower Hardres</u>		
Units		
<u>RECTORY LAND FUND (Unrestricted)</u>		
CBF Investment*	208.5 4,821	4,713
CBF Fixed Interest Securities	378 564	547

* Dividends are credited quarterly to the church's general fund (PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington).

<u>St. Mary Nackington</u>		
<u>RECTORY LAND FUND (Unrestricted)</u>		
CBF Investment*	208.5 4,821	4,713
CBF Fixed Interest Securities	378 564	547

* Dividends are credited quarterly to the church's general fund (PCC Lower Hardres & Nackington).

TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INVESTMENT ASSETS	10,769	10,520
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<u>NACKINGTON CHANCEL FUND (Endowment)</u>		
CBF Investment**	182 4,208	4,114

**Dividends are credited to the Chancel Deposit Fund

<u>MISS DORIS RYE BEQUEST (Restricted)</u>		
CBF Fixed Interest Securities***	6515 9,715	9,430

*** The income from this bequest is restricted to the church's Fabric Fund and dividends are credited to the St. Mary Nackington Fabric Fund.

<u>St. Peter Bekesbourne</u>		
<u>WARDELL BEQUEST (Endowment)</u>		
CBF Investment****	172 4,001	3,888

**** The income from this bequest is credited to the St. Peter Bekesbourne current account.

TOTAL RESTRICTED INVESTMENT ASSETS	17,924	17,432
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