

## **St Paul's Parish Church - Gilford**

### **Trustees' Annual Report**

#### **Year Ended 31 December 2024**

The trustees present their annual report together with the independently examined financial statements consisting of the Receipts and Payments Account and the statement of Assets and Liabilities for St Paul's Parish Church Gilford for the year ended 31 December 2024.

#### **Objectives and Activities**

The main Charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is for the advancement of Religion.

The principle function of St Paul's Parish Church is to support the advancement of the Christian faith by promoting through the work of the Vicar, Select Vestry and its parishioners the whole mission of the church, Pastoral, Evangelistic, Social and Ecumenical. A caring Church supporting the needs of the community since 1869 the church has continued to be open and engaging with the community and offering support for those needing help which is fundamental to the practical benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity in pursuit of the advancement of the Christian Faith, St Paul's Parish Church has custody of property, records, materials and artifacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage of the community. Maintenance is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St Pauls Parish Church.

#### **Achievements, Performance and Public Benefit**

St Pauls Parish Church has weekly services on Sunday mornings at 11:30am and an additional early morning Communion Service at 9:30am once monthly. All services comprise of a mixture of Morning Prayer, Holy Communion, Family Service, Baptism together with other special services during the year comprising of but not limited to Lenten Services, Holy Week, Harvest Thanksgiving and Christmas Services. Pastoral Care is also provided by the Vicar with regular home, hospital and care home visits.

The Vicar of St Paul's Parish sits on the Board of Governors of Gilford Primary School and supports and encourages the work of the school to maintain good standards and practices both academically and through the advancement of Religion. The Vicar attends regular services within the School.

## **St Paul's Parish Church - Gilford**

### **Trustees' Annual Report**

#### **Year Ended 31 December 2024**

#### **Financial review**

- The principle source of Income to St Paul's Parish Church continues to be from Free Will Offering Donations and loose plate collections. Gift Aid income is also derived from the above source of income.
- The principle expense of St Paul's Parish Church is in respect of Vicars Stipend, Diocesan Pension and Costs as well as Church maintenance expenses.
- St Paul's Parish Church had a surplus of receipts outweighing payments by £14,419 for the year ended 31 December 2024.
- Essential repairs to the Church, Church Hall and Vicarage are noted in the Parish report and have attributed to the decline in total cash funds from the repair and development fund account.
- RCB investment income of £16,811 is restricted solely for use for the Vicars Stipend.
- Funds reserved in Ulster Bank Accounts are restricted for use against essential maintenance and development costs to the parish.
- St Paul's Church continues to be in a healthy financial position as at 31 December 2024 with total cash funds of £55,487.
- St Paul's Church aims to retain sufficient reserves to meet its expected future expenditure requirements as well as potential future capital projects.
- The Hall Project for the replacement of the Hall Roof and Internal Redevelopment commenced in May 2021 and was completed in May 2022. We received an advance of £50,000 by way of on-going credit facility from Stramore Credit Union with monthly interest of Bank of England base plus 3.9% capped at 6%.

Loan balance as at 31 December 2024 was reduced to £24,485. Funds totalling £29,399 (£21,399 of which is restricted funding) are held in Credit Union Offset Account to reduce interest liabilities on the loan.

- During the year, Bequests totalling £6,200 were lodged to Credit Union Offset Account at the families permission with a dividend paid by Stramore Credit Union of £595 backdated from June 2022 as a gesture of Goodwill. Current balance in Offset Account is £29,399 of which £8,000 is a loan from repair account on a temporary basis to mitigate interest payments with the Bequest Balance now at £21,399. These monies are restricted and not for use for any purpose other than interest.
- The Church has set up a Discretionary Fund through which donations are received and allocated at the discretion of the Vicar to assist those who are in need of help, support and assistance within the Parish.

## **St Paul's Parish Church - Gilford**

### **Trustees' Annual Report**

#### **Year Ended 31 December 2024**

The Parish Treasurer gave an update to the parish in June and December 2024 detailing the current progress with finances in the parish. The December update included a significant volume of repair works pending and due for completion over the coming 5 years. Attached for reference.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

#### **Going Concern**

The trustees have reviewed its planned expenditure for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure the Parish can continue its activities and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 can be signed off as a going concern.

#### **Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity**

Chapter 111 of the constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial Organisations. The Select Vestry are Charity Trustees.

#### **Organisational Structure**

The Select Vestry consists of a member of the Clergy serving in the Parish, the Church Wardens, Glebe Wardens and generally not more than twelve other members elected at General Vestry.

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day to day management of the Parish. The select vestry is chaired by the incumbent or any other member of clergy officiating within the parish. Select vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how parish funds can be applied within the remit of Finance, Furnishings and Fixtures.

The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by the members or the Diocesan Synod. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the chairperson or church wardens.

#### **Appointment of Select Vestry (Trustees)**

All members of the Church of Ireland who are over the age of 18 and who are either resident within the Parish or live elsewhere but have been accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months and it is demonstrated that they have contributed regularly to the parish by way of Freewill Offering, may register as members of the General Vestry of the Parish. The register of members is opened for a period of 4 weeks each February and closed and validated by the Select Vestry. Being noted on the Register of Vestrypersons allows them to attend and vote at meetings of the General Vestry and stand for election to the Select Vestry. The Vicar can appoint a Vicars Church Warden and Vicars Glebe Warden with the General Vestry appointing Peoples Church Warden and Peoples Glebe Warden all of which are automatically appointed to the Select Vestry. All Select Vestry members hold their positions for a period of one year and may be re-elected annually with no limit on the terms to be served.

St Paul's Parish Church - Gilford

## Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 December 2024

### Compliance with Public Benefit

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that activities entered into during the year have assisted to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities as well as providing public benefit.

### Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with income of less than £250,000 allows the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year. The trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to do this.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the assets and liabilities of the Parish. They are also responsible for the safeguarding of assets and hence for taking all reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Statement as to disclosure to our examiners

In so far as the trustees are aware at the timing of approving our trustees' annual report:

- There is no relevant information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware; and
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make ourselves aware of any relevant examination information and to establish that the Independent examiner is aware of that information.

### Independent Examiners

The examiners, Kennedy & Co, have indicated their willingness to continue in office and a resolution concerning their reappointment was proposed at the Annual Easter Vestry Meeting.

This Trustees' Annual Report was approved on 31/03/25 and signed on its behalf by



Clive Serplus  
Treasurer



Rev. Denise Caddoo  
Vicar

# St. Paul's Parish, Gilford



Dear Parishioners

When I wrote to you in May this year I had committed to give a further update on the parish finances and also a review on the ongoing essential maintenance works that we as a parish are obligated to complete to ensure that our Church building, Church hall and Vicarage are in good condition.

In terms of Parish finances whilst 2024 has been a very challenging year I am confident we should end the year in a stable position building again on the encouraging growth and cost reductions from both 2022 and 2023. Also, we at vestry have been encouraged by the addition of new members to the parish whom I know are now very much part of our church family.

**Freewill Offering** : Freewill Offering though envelopes and loose cash donations is trending up year on year at 7% with Weekly Donations averaging £929.00. Whilst this is an encouraging uplift on 2023 at present the weekly day to day running costs of the parish average approximately £1,600 weekly and we are very reliant on the income from Gift Aid and Investments however the actual deficit is currently approximately £50 per week with further increased costs due in 2025.

I would encourage all parishioners to consider their weekly giving to the parish as a minimal increase of £1.00 per week from each parishioner would help close the gap and ensure the parish meets any increased costs in 2025. It would be great to aim for a target of £1,000 per week which is more than achievable.

**Hall Project Fund** : I am pleased to advise that the balance on our loan held with Stramore Credit Union now stands at **£24,500** and I anticipate the year end balance to be around £23,000. This is a fantastic achievement if you consider that we have been only paying off the loan in less than 3 years.

I would note however that approximately 44% (39 Parishioners) regularly donate to this fund which has dropped from 2023. We are thankful for the hard work by the Events Committee who have worked tirelessly throughout the year organising events which have been very well supported raising £6,500 in funds which have helped reduce our loan liability.

I am mindful that some parishioners had donated via one off giving at the beginning of the project however I would encourage all parishioners to donate to this fund if you are able.

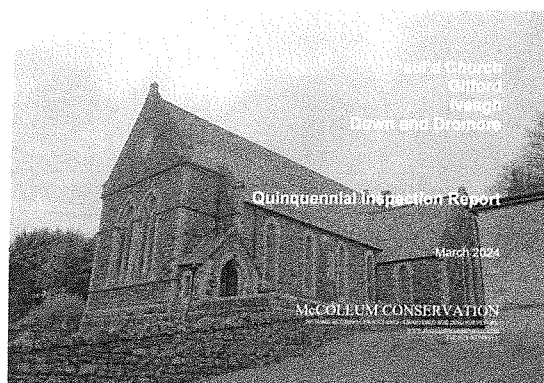
**Discretionary Fund** : Discretionary Fund Donations have reduced this year. As I noted in May these envelopes were at the back of the Freewill Offering packs and have now been moved to the front to highlight this important fund which has been used by Denise to support members of our parish family in need this year whom I know have been blessed by the support given.

**Repair Fund** : Donations to the Repair Fund show a slight increase on 2023 which again is encouraging. This coming year the Repair Fund will be a vital source of income as we look to continue with repairs to both the Church Building and Vicarage. I noted within my letter in May this year that we had received the Quinquennial Inspection Report facilitated by the Representative Church Body and this has highlighted a number of urgent and short term works to be carried out.

We have also received a very kind donation from a Parishioner to complete the internal lighting works within the Church building which will commence in the new year providing much needed and more efficient lighting to assist in our electrical costs.

I have detailed some of the more urgent works which Vestry will be looking to commence in 2025 alongside applications to various Grant Funding bodies to assist with the costs.

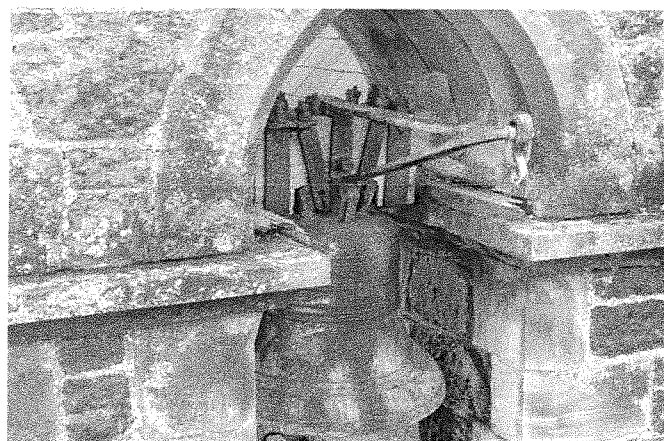
Q20



Identify and remove asbestos downpipes (provisional).	£3,000
Replace rainwater hoppers along south gutters.	£1,000
Clean gutters.	£500
Take down and reset gutter and hopper to Transept at Organ Loft abutment.	£1500

A Immediate item	Re-fix loose ceiling tile to the Nave.	£ 300
B Within 12 months	Clean gutters.	£ 500
	Take down and reset gutter and hopper to Transept at Organ Loft abutment.	£1,500
	Redecorate downpipes where required.	£ 800
	High level inspection of Bellcote.	£2,000
	Clean tapered gutter at Porch.	£ 100
	Removal of neighbouring trees.	£ Nil
	Point entrance gate piers.	£ 400
C Within 2 years	Varnish external doors.	£ 500
	Periodic review of the McMaster Memorial.	£ Nil
	Fill potholes.	£ 600

One of the major issues identified within the report was the Bell Tower and what appears to be a crack in the tower. You may have seen a drone recently above the church which took some further photographs and it now appears that the wood within the bell tower itself has also rotted alongside rusting bolts and requiring repairs in the near future. We have engaged with a number of contractors and estimated costs have been quoted in the region of £20,000 to complete repairs and vestry will review matters early in the new year.



In addition as you will see inside Church parts of the interior walls are in need of replastering and painting now that the exterior issues have been mainly completed and the walls drying out. We have been quoted approximately £10,000 to complete these works.



021

At present only 30%, (28 parishioners) donate to the Repair Fund on a regular basis. Given the extent of the works required in the next 24 months I would encourage you to consider donating to what is a very important fund to the parish and will help to maintain and ensure our historic building is fit for future generations.

**Gift Aid** : Thankyou to those Parishioners who have signed up for Gift Aid this year. With your declaration we will be able to claim backdated Gift Aid on your Donations.

As I noted within my Parish Report HMRC refunds 25p back to the parish on every £1.00 for eligible donations and this remains a very important income for the parish with approximately £11,000 claimed for the financial year end December 2023. All that is required is that you pay Tax on your income either through employment including self employment, savings or Pensions. Indeed given the recent budget there is a high likelihood that some of our more elderly parishioners receiving state pension may well fall within the income tax threshold in the coming year and will therefore be eligible to sign up for Gift Aid.

If any parishioner wishes to speak to me for further information please do not hesitate to speak to me directly and I will be more than happy to assist.

You will note in Church there are One Off Giving Envelopes now in each Pew. This is to allow any parishioner or visitors who wish to donate and also allows Gift Aid to be claimed on the donation.

As your Treasurer I want to thank you all for your support and encouragement over the past year and I look forward to serving you in the year ahead as we navigate further challenging times. I am confident that with your support, prayers and through the guidance of God that we will as always fulfil our ambitions as a parish.

Finally, as we approach the Christmas period please remember those not so fortunate in your thoughts and prayers. As has been announced by Denise all loose plate collection donations will be donated to both Craigavon Food Bank and Southern Area Hospice. Thankyou in advance for your kind generosity.

Yours in Christ

Clive



TO GOD BE THE GLORY



# St. Paul's Parish, Gilford



Dear Parishioners

It has now been two years since we officially reopened our newly refurbished Church Hall which Bishop David dedicated on Sunday 22nd May 2022. This gives me an opportunity to provide you all with an update on the progress of the repayment of the loan of £70,000 from Stramore Community Credit Union and also an update on other financial matters within the parish.

When I completed the financial report for the year end to December 2023 the balance on our loan was £37,785. I am pleased to inform you that the balance as of the end of May 2024 now stands at £31,985 mainly due to the success of the events that have taken place this year to date which alongside other one off donations which totalled just over £3,000. Also, with the redistribution of both the legacy monies and the Repair Fund lodged with the credit union on a temporary basis the result is that we now only pay interest on £9,380 and this will reduce further as the year progresses and I fully expect we should be interest free by early 2025. The nett effect of this is that we will save approximately £1,400 on interest payments alone in 2024 and therefore continue to reduce the capital further.

On a slightly more negative note donations to the Hall fund from envelopes have declined against last year by approximately £100 per month. We still only have approximately 50% of Parishioners currently regularly donating through envelopes or standing order and I would encourage those who have yet to donate to please consider donating on a monthly or one off basis as this will help reduce the loan balance further. Notwithstanding this the current outlook is that we remain within our 5 year plan and we thank GOD for his blessings and answers to all our prayers.

In terms of the main financial position of the Parish as I noted within my report at year end we continue to be in a stable position and again with the Gift Aid reclaimed from all funds allocated to the General Account this continues to be the case.

Freewill Offering Donations to the end of May 2024 have been encouraging with an increase of 3.5% against the same period last year. In addition the Repair fund has also seen an increase in donations of 2.5%. This is a very encouraging position however we continue to face increased costs of approximately 5% against last year. Notwithstanding this considering the continuing financial pressure we all face as families I want to record the thanks from our Vicar Denise and the Select Vestry for your continued commitment in donating on a regular basis to the parish as we continue to navigate, as with all other parishes alike through challenging financial pressures.

I will continue as your Treasurer alongside the support of Vestry to try and reduce any costs to the parish and to this end we are in the second of a three year deal with our insurers with no increased premiums and also are now engaging with NI Water to reduce our payment by approximately £400 a year.

We do have a challenging few years ahead and also some further repair works to the Church itself following the recommendations made by the Representative Church Body who recently completed their Quinquennial Report. This is a report completed every five years by the RCB which sets out urgent and long term repairs to be completed on the church and vicarage and this will be reviewed in full at the next vestry meeting to agree a plan to complete these necessary works on a phased basis. We also soon will complete the necessary works to the sound system area at the rear of the church to bring all sound and projection to one place.

**Gift Aid** - We continue to receive income from Gift Aid with a number of new declarations completed this year which will bring further income to the parish. I would encourage those who pay income tax either through employment or pensions to consider signing up to gift aid your donations to the parish.

**Discretionary Fund** - The Church Discretionary Fund envelopes were mistakenly added to the rear of the envelope pack for this year and you may not have noticed these. I would encourage you to donate to this fund and equally if you know of any of our parishioners who would benefit from this fund please speak confidentially to Denise.

Finally thankyou again for your trust in me as your Treasurer and thankyou for your continued commitment to our parish though your donations, presence, help and support at various events and last but by no means the least our thanks to GOD who continues to bless us with in our worship together.

*Oliver*