

# BELFAST/Belfast/St Bartholomew/St Bartholomew/Connor/Church of Ire- land

## Stranmillis Parish, St Bartholomew's Church Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 December 2024



“In the community, for the community”

Charity Registration Number: NIC 101979

# **Stranmillis Parish, St Bartholomew's Church**

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

## Contents

References and administrative details of the Charity Pages 2 - 4

Trustees' report Pages 5 - 11





## References and administrative details

Charity Name: St Bartholomew's Church  
Charity Registration Number: NIC 101979

Contact Address: St Bartholomew's Church  
183 Stranmillis Road, Belfast BT9 5AJ

## Trustees

Reverend Canon Kevin Graham MBE DL	Rector
Reverend Stephen Green	Curate Assistant (OLM)
Irwin McFarland	Rector's Churchwarden
June McDermott	People's Churchwarden
Ian Berryman	Rector's Glebewarden
David Dennison	People's Glebewarden
Lisa Henderson	Honorary Secretary
Clodagh Dalzell	Honorary Treasurer
Florence Boyd	
Jill Gillespie	
Robert Hood	(from 8th April 2025)
David Olver	
David Sansom	
Elizabeth Sansom	

The Trustees named above are all of the members of the Select Vestry who are also the current charity trustees.

Robert Hood was elected as a Trustee at the Easter General Vestry meeting on 8th April 2025.

## Principal Office-bearers

Clergy: Reverend Canon Kevin Graham MBE DL Incumbent and Chair of Trustees  
Clergy: Reverend Stephen Green Curate Assistant (OLM)  
Honorary Treasurer: Mrs Clodagh Dalzell  
Honorary Secretary: Mrs Lisa Henderson



**Independent Examiner:**

Myles McKeown

McKeown Consultancy Ltd

32 Spinners Avenue

The Rock Road

Armagh

BT60 2PG

**Bankers:**

Ulster Bank

Business Direct Belfast

Ground Floor

Danesfort

Stranmillis Road

Belfast

BT9 5UB

References and administrative details

Charity Name:

Charity Registration Number:

Contact Address:

**Trustees**

Reverend Canon Kevin Graham MBE DL

Reverend Stephen Green

Iain McFarland

Jane McDermott

Ian Berryman

David Dennison

Lisa Henderson

Clodagh Dalzell

Florence Boyd

The Gillies

Robert Hood

David Oliver

David Searson

Elizabeth Searson

(from 8th April 2022)

The Trustees named above are all of the members of the Select Vestry who are also the current charity trustees.

Robert Hood was elected as a Trustee at the Easter General Vestry meeting on 8th April 2022.

**Principal Officers**

Clergy: Reverend Canon Kevin Graham MBE DL Incumbent and Chair of Trustees

Clergy: Reverend Stephen Green Curate Assistant (OLA)

Honorary Treasurer: Mrs Clodagh Dalzell

Honorary Secretary: Mrs Lisa Henderson



## **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024**

The Trustees present the Annual Report and Statements of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities for St Bartholomew's Church for the year ended 31 December 2024.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

The principal function of St Bartholomew's Church of Ireland Stranmillis Parish is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of St Bartholomew's the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society, as a whole and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, St Bartholomew's has custody of property and of records, materials and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage and maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St Bartholomew's.

### **Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit**

St. Bartholomew's has been serving the area of Stranmillis since 1913. As a church, we believe that one of our primary callings is to share the love of Christ with the people of this area and further afield. Over the past year, we have done this through a wide range of activities as follows:

- 1) Church services were available for in person attendance and also continued to be live-streamed for those unable to attend.
- 2) General information was also posted on Facebook.
- 3) Pastoral support returned to normal during the year whilst caution was exercised when appropriate, such as wearing masks if visiting anyone particularly vulnerable. The Rector continued to ensure that Hospital Chaplains were informed of any parishioners as inpatients and they received spiritual support this way, as well as visiting hospitals and care homes in person.
- 4) We were able to have the complete set of activities and worship services over Christmas 2024. This included a Christmas Fair, A Seniors' Christmas lunch, a children's Christmas party, A Service for Christmas Holy Communion for Seniors with festive refreshments, the making of Christmas Swags, a Service of



Nine Lessons and Carols, Midnight Communion, Christmas Day Services and a Nativity Play.

- 5) Sunday worship (weekly at 9:00am and 10.30am and monthly at 6.30pm) is at the heart of all we do and informs all our other activities. Whilst there was a core group of about 100 regular worshippers, nevertheless it is open to all regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background age or disability. Many comments have been received about the quality of the worship at St Bartholomew's and how it enables engagement with the Divine. We also have special worship services engaging with the wider community, Stranmillis University College Carol Service, Advent and Christmas Carol Services, Holy Week and Easter Services and services for the Belfast Lieutenancy. We also have midweek services which offer a space for reflection and prayers for those ill in the wider community. After major acts of worship, refreshments are available to reinforce the sense of community.
- 6) During Sunday morning worship services in term time we usually hold weekly Sunday School and Tots' Church where our children, from 20 months up to age twelve, learn more about our purposes as a church and through activities and stories, they learn in a fun way about the Christian Faith. Those attending continued to grow during 2024. Our children's ministry is a vital part of what we do.
- 7) Bart Players, an external amateur dramatic group meet twice weekly (Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00pm) and put on several shows a year which draws in people from the wider community. The group is well known in the area and through their performances contribute to the finances of the parish.
- 8) We have two women groups, Ladies Guild and Mother's Union. The Ladies Guild is an opportunity to meet monthly and share fellowship together over a cup of tea and a bun. The Mother's Union organises monthly meetings open to all with invited speakers. They support families and family life in the parish and provide catering on many occasions. They also carry out housebound visitations and contribute to the funds of St Bartholomew's.
- 9) On the fourth Saturday of the month, except December, July and August the Men's Breakfast meets with a cooked breakfast available and an opportunity for those present to join in discussion and support. It is open to all men.
- 10) St Bartholomew's was a founding member of South Belfast Foodbank and continues to contribute to the work of the Foodbank by prayer, volunteers from the parish, food donations and financial assistance.
- 11) The weekly lunch club continued throughout the whole of 2024, with seasonal breaks at Christmas, Easter and summer. This group enjoy a hearty meal and



good company. During the course of 2024 the lunch club was attended by both parishioners and non parishioners.

- 12) Following longstanding restrictions following the pandemic of 2020 onwards a renewed effort was focussed on fundraising. A new fund raising committee was formed and a very successful range of events took place throughout 2024. More fundraising events are organised for 2025.

As a church, we also offer pastoral support to all in the community, regardless of whether they have any contact with St. Bartholomew's. This takes the form of visiting the sick, elderly and bereaved wherever they are located.

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's statutory guidance on public benefit when relevant to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.



## **Financial Review**

Our church building was completed in 1930 and will require some works in the mid to long term. Our church halls were completed in 1963 and require some modernisation. We continue to monitor finances closely and applying for other grants where appropriate.

## **Coronavirus Pandemic**

The Trustees continue to assess the impact of the pandemic on fundraising, activities, uncertainty over future plans, going concern and financial impact and review the risk register regularly. As regulations ease the Trustees hope to return to a more normal pattern of fundraising.

## **Debts**

An appeal for financial support was made to Parishioners during 2019 for repairs and maintenance and in particular for the costs of the boiler replacement and several loans from Parishioners were made to the Parish and a number of gifts were received. One loan has not been repaid as yet. The Parish has secured an overdraft facility as a safeguard.

## **Reserves Policy**

The trustees review the availability of any unrestricted reserves at each select vestry meeting. The trustees keep a tight control of costs. Given the size and activities of the charity the trustees have been unable to build up any significant reserves and income is expended during the financial year. Some necessary and preventative refurbishment of the church was carried out 2024 and none are planned for 2025. There are no other major works planned. There is a reserve amount in an NS&I account which is in a restricted fund.



## Investment Policy

In keeping with common practice our endowments are invested with Representative Church Body and Church of Ireland Trustees.

## Going Concern

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

## Pay and remuneration

The incumbent of the Parish, the Rector, is entitled to a stipend that is paid directly by the Parish, which is in accordance with figures approved by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and office and locum allowances and pension contributions (as is seen by examination of the accounts). The Rector is a Trustee and Chairman of the Select Vestry. The incumbent provides his services under a contract for services and other trustees provide professional services on occasion. Expenses are payable to reimburse costs incurred on a vouched basis.

## Organisational structure

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day-to-day management of the parish. The Select Vestry consists of the member of the clergy serving in the parish, the Rector, the churchwardens, the globe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the General Vestry elected at the Annual General Vestry.

The incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish chairs the Select Vestry. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how parish funds are to be applied.



## **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024**

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

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

Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial Organisation. The Select Vestry members are the Charity Trustees

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

All members of the Church of Ireland who are over the age of 18 and are either resident within the Parish or live elsewhere but have been accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months and subscribe to the parish by a means for which a receipt may be issued may register as members of the General Vestry of the parish allowing them to attend and vote at meetings of the General Vestry and to stand for election to the Select Vestry. Meetings of the General Vestry are held at least once a year. The Select Vestry is elected as part of this General Vestry meeting. The Select Vestry will hold their positions for a period of approximately one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually and there is no limit on the number of terms which may be served.

#### **Pay and remuneration**

The Incumbent of the Parish, the Rector, is entitled to a stipend that is paid directly by the Parish, which is in accordance with figures approved by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and office and locomotory allowances and pension contributions (as is seen by examination of the accounts). The Rector is a Trustee and Chair of the Select Vestry. The organist provides his services under a contract for services and other trustees provide professional services on occasion. Expenses are payable to reimburse costs incurred on a vouched basis.

#### **Organisational Structure**

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day-to-day management of the parish. The Select Vestry consists of the member of the clergy serving in the parish, the Rector, the churchwardens, the glebe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the General Vestry elected at the Annual General Vestry.

The incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish chairs the Select Vestry. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how parish funds are to be applied.



The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by the members. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the chairperson or the churchwardens. In 2024 the Select vestry met nine times with a quorum present each time.

### **Compliance with Public Benefit**

The trustees have considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's statutory guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have furthered the Parish's objectives, for the public benefit.

### **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with Income of less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

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 safeguarding the assets of the Parish and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on Behalf of the Trustees

Trustee 1: 

Trustee 2: 

Date: 9th September 2025