

**Desertmartin Parish  
Church of Ireland**

**Trustees' Annual Report and Statement of Receipts and Payments,  
including Assets and Liabilities**

**For the year ended 31st December 2024**

**Charities Number: NIC 104698**

# **Desertmartin Parish (Church of Ireland)**

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

### **Contents**

	Pages
References and administrative details of the Charity	3
Trustees' report	4 - 7
Independent Examiners' Report to the Trustees	8
Receipts and payments account	9 - 13
Statement of assets and liabilities	14 - 15
Notes to the financial statements	16

# **Desertmartin Parish (Church of Ireland)**

## **References and administrative details**

Charity Name: Desertmartin Parish (Church of Ireland)

Charity Registration Number: NIC 104698

Contact Address: 25 Dromore Road, Desertmartin, Magherafelt, BT45 5JZ

## **Trustees**

Mr David Austin  
Mrs Lois Austin (Treasurer)  
Mrs Barbara Hudson  
Miss Hilary Hutchinson  
Mrs Jacqueline Johnston  
Mrs Lois Kane  
Mr Harold Bradley  
Mr Samuel Hudson  
Mr Trevor Kingston  
Mr Andrew McKeown  
Mrs Pauline Taylor  
Mr John Woodward  
Mrs Claire Robb (Secretary)  
Rev Philip Benson (Chairperson)  
Mrs Elizabeth Whitaker  
Mr Stuart Whitaker

## **Principal Office-bearers**

Clergy/Chairperson: Rev Philip Benson  
Treasurer: Mrs Lois Austin  
Rector's Church Warden: Mrs Elizabeth Whitaker  
People's Church Warden: Mr John Woodward

## **Independent Examiner**

Ms Lorraine Craig  
69 Churchill Road, Larne, BT40 2EW

## **Bankers**

Danske Bank, Branch Business, P.O. Box 182, Donegal Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

The trustees present the annual report and statements of Receipts and Payments, including Assets and Liabilities for Desertmartin Parish (Church of Ireland) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

### **Objectives and Activities**

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

The principal function of Desertmartin Parish is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through its work, the whole pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical mission of the Church. Being open to and engaging with society, and offering support to those who need help, are fundamental to the practical delivery of Christianity's benefits.

As a result of its activity in advancing the Christian religion, Desertmartin Parish has custody of property and records, materials, and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage. The select vestry of Desertmartin Parish maintains these.

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

#### *Worship and Prayer*

Desertmartin Parish Church is under the incumbency of the Reverend Philip Benson and is part of a larger group that includes Termoneeny Parish (Knockloughrim). The parish offers a wide range of weekly public acts of worship, including Morning Prayer and the celebration of Holy Communion. Our worship is conducted in accordance with the Church of Ireland's Book of Common Prayer, and we also join with our sister parish for the bi-annual "Confirmation" of faith service, led by the diocesan Bishop. We also provide for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and ongoing pastoral care. Special services throughout the year include Christmas Carol Services, Lent/Holy Week Services and Advent Services, which all provide intimate and reflective environments for worship. All are welcome to attend our worship services.

In addition to our regular services, some parish members are unable to attend church due to illness or age. Rev Benson regularly visits such parishioners to celebrate Holy Communion with them and to offer pastoral care and practical support, either in their homes, hospitals, or nursing homes. We have also introduced live streaming, allowing those unable to attend our services in person to participate from home. This is particularly important for those who are housebound or unwell.

At present, there are 80 families consisting of 164 individuals. The average weekly combined church attendance was 50, rising during special festivals. We celebrated one baptism during 2024, but no weddings or funerals.

In addition, the parish has hosted religious services in association with local community groups, including the Loyal and Masonic orders, such as the Orange Order, and the Royal Black Preceptory. Rev Philip is also a member of the Board of Governors for Knockloughrim and Magherafelt Primary Schools and is part of a rota for leading morning assemblies.

Additionally, in association with "Mid Ulster Clergy Together," an ecumenical group representing a diverse range of Christian denominations within the Mid Ulster council area, we have participated in community-wide acts of worship and supported the Magherafelt Food Bank Christmas appeal.



Desertmartin Parish has engaged in “Safe Church” training and is a registered “Safe Place” to support those in our community suffering from domestic violence.

#### *Sunday School & Messy Church*

Our parish has a well-established Sunday School, open to all children of preschool/primary school age. We also hold regular Messy Church-style events throughout the year, which are open to the broader community and well attended. Children and young people are an essential part of our parish. Rev Benson has a regular children’s address during our worship services, and children from the Sunday School participate in our monthly Worship Together Services.

#### *Other Parish Activities*

Other parochial groups include our Bible Study, Ladies Group, Indoor Bowling Club, and Craft and Chatter Group. These groups draw membership from our parishioners and the wider local community. We also hold several events over the year, including a children’s Easter Egg Hunt, an open-air service, and a Picnic and Parish Dinner.

Over the year, we have continued developing our Parish News magazine, distributed to our parishioners and freely available at the back of the churches. The magazine keeps our parishioners informed about important matters affecting our parish and includes articles that deepen our knowledge and faith in Jesus.

#### *Mission and Evangelism*

The church supports mission partners and other local charities, such as Crosslinks, Bishops’ Appeal, Tearfund, local food banks, Poppy Appeal, CMSI, and the Air Ambulance.

#### *Cross-Community Relationships*

The Select Vestry continually works to improve relationships with other denominations, particularly within the Roman Catholic community. Rev Benson takes an active role in the local clergy groups, including representatives from many local churches. These groups are inter-denominational, organise joint events and shared services, and represent their congregations in the public sphere by raising concerns about social issues. In addition, many of the activities and events we organised during the year were supported by all community sectors, and everyone was welcome to share in our activities and services.

#### *The Rectory*

Our rectory is located within the parish boundary and is well-maintained, with regular maintenance to keep it in good condition. In addition to providing a home for Rev Benson and his family, it is also used for meetings, pastoral appointments, and other parish activities. Termoneeny Parish assists with a share of our rectory costs and parochial expenses.

#### *Diocesan Synod*

Representatives of the parish sit on the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Synod, providing an essential link between the parish and the broader structures of the Church of Ireland.

#### *Public Benefit*

The benefits of public worship include contributing to the spiritual well-being of participants, reinforcing Christian values, and providing practical support to struggling local families through Desertmartin Parish Church's partnerships with specialist support organisations. Our Child Protection

Policy is in accordance with the Safeguarding Trust policies of the Church of Ireland. We confirm that we have mitigated any potential harm arising from the parish's activities by adhering to the requirements of the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Trust policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

The Parish has carefully considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities and provided public benefit.

### **Financial Review**

The year's results are set out on pages nine to fifteen, which the Trustees consider satisfactory.

The reserves of the parish are held for the advancement of its charitable purpose, other than restricted reserves, which are held for a designated purpose.

### **Going Concern**

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

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

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

Chapter III of the Church of Ireland Constitution governs Parishes and Parochial Organisations. 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 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 one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually, and there is no limit to the number of terms that may be served.

#### **Pay and Remuneration**

The parish does not pay the rector directly. A monthly assessment is paid to the Diocese, which comprises a stipend, locomotory allowance, employer's national insurance and employer's clergy pension contribution. No other trustee receives remuneration, reward, or other private benefit for carrying out their trustee responsibility.

#### **Organisational Structure**

The select vestry is responsible for the day-to-day management of the parish. The Select Vestry consists of the members of the clergy serving in the parish, any curate assistant ("the curate"), the churchwardens, the glebe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the general vestry elected at the Easter Vestry.

The select vestry is chaired by the parish's incumbent or other clergy member officiating. Its members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including how parish funds will be applied.

The select vestry meets at times fixed by the members or by the diocesan synod. The chairperson or the churchwardens may convene special meetings at any time. In 2024, the Select Vestry met 9 times, with an average attendance of 93%.

#### **Compliance with Public Benefit**

Desertmartin Parish has carefully considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities and provided a public benefit.

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

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

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and always disclose the Parish's assets and liabilities with reasonable accuracy. They are also responsible for safeguarding the Parish's assets and, hence, for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

#### **Signed on Behalf of the Trustees**

  
Chairperson: Rev Philip Benson

  
Treasurer: Mrs Lois Austin

**Date:** 28th October 2025

## **Independent Examiners' Report to the Trustees of Desertmartin Parish (Church of Ireland)**

I report on the accounts of the above Trust for the year ended 31st December 2024.

### **Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for preparing the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of the independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act, and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the charity's accounting records and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention, giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above, and in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Name:   
Ms Lorraine Craig

Date: 28th October 2025

Address:  
69 Churchill Road, Larne, BT40 2EW

# Receipts and Payments

Page 1 of 5

Printed: 30 October 2025

## Parish of Desertmartin

Period: 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	2024	2023
<b>Receipts</b>						
Voluntary Giving	1	43,968.32	655.15		44,623.47	43,890.10
Extraordinary General Income	2	2,100.00			2,100.00	43,863.96
Investment Income	3	216.07	290.66		506.73	377.62
General Parish Income	4	5,159.30			5,159.30	19,546.03
Fundraising Events	5	19,571.76			19,571.76	14,438.12
Property Related Income	6	7,872.82			7,872.82	6,092.77
Other Funds Raised	7	406.27			406.27	
Parish Groups	8		1,386.00		1,386.00	490.74
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>79,294.54</b>	<b>2,331.81</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>81,626.35</b>	<b>128,699.34</b>
<b>Payments</b>						
Repairs/Upkeep	9	(21,092.06)	(15.00)		(21,107.06)	(69,757.24)
Staffing Costs	10	(3,260.80)			(3,260.80)	(50.00)
Light, Heat and Power	11	(1,589.47)			(1,589.47)	(1,504.76)
Diocesan Levies	12	(35,376.00)			(35,376.00)	(35,050.00)
General Parochial Overheads	13	(5,390.84)			(5,390.84)	(6,096.47)
Parochial Ministry Overheads	14	(2,238.81)	(260.79)		(2,499.60)	(4,436.30)
Financial and Professional Costs	15	(451.45)			(451.45)	(1,246.98)
Fundraising Costs	16	(3,807.36)			(3,807.36)	(3,026.79)
Donations to Charities and Missions	17	(100.00)	(677.65)		(777.65)	(1,715.51)
Parish Groups	18		(1,702.38)		(1,702.38)	(628.73)
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>(73,306.79)</b>	<b>(2,655.82)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(75,962.61)</b>	<b>(123,512.78)</b>
<b>Excess of Receipts over Payments before transfers</b>		<b>5,987.75</b>	<b>(324.01)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5,663.74</b>	<b>5,186.56</b>
<b>Transfers</b>						
Gross Transfers between funds - in		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
- out		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Excess of Receipts over Payments</b>		<b>5,987.75</b>	<b>(324.01)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5,663.74</b>	<b>5,186.56</b>

# Receipts and Payments

## Parish of Desertmartin

Page 2 of 5

Printed: 30 October 2025

### 1. Voluntary Giving

	2024	2023
Weekly envelopes	20,924.94	22,139.28
Annual donations	520.00	600.00
Other general donations	25.00	50.00
Loose Collections	1,169.05	1,478.66
Standing orders	8,250.00	7,459.00
Gift days	5,865.00	5,420.00
Gift aid tax recovered- regular giving	6,499.33	5,228.65
Donations for specific purposes	1,042.65	419.20
Bishops' Appeal annual collection	190.00	350.00
Bishops' Appeal response collections	0.00	441.81
Poppy Appeal collection	137.50	103.50
Sunday School charity collections	0.00	200.00
	<u>44,623.47</u>	<u>43,890.10</u>

### 2. Extraordinary General Income

	2024	2023
Non-recurring one-off grants	525.00	1,680.00
Vintage Rally grants	1,575.00	945.00
Rural Hall Grant Scheme	0.00	41,238.96
	<u>2,100.00</u>	<u>43,863.96</u>

### 3. Investment Income

	2024	2023
Dividends	88.18	81.29
Bank and building society interest	418.55	296.33
	<u>506.73</u>	<u>377.62</u>

### 4. General Parish Income

	2024	2023
Parish magazine donations	215.00	230.00
Funeral donations	30.00	0.00
Graveyard fees	0.00	1,900.00
Parish dinner contributions	392.50	500.00
Termoneeny parochial share	2,741.55	3,591.15
Termoneeny rectory share	1,780.25	13,216.04
Rates refund	0.00	38.84
Training cost contributions	0.00	70.00
	<u>5,159.30</u>	<u>19,546.03</u>

### 5. Fundraising Events

	2024	2023
Special Fundraising Events	2,409.60	0.00
Vintage Rally	8,510.16	5,147.12
Vintage Rally - sponsorship (2022)	0.00	4,815.00
Vintage Rally - sponsorship (2023)	4,645.00	3,780.00
Vintage Rally - sponsorship (2024)	3,585.00	0.00
Tin can collection	0.00	276.00
Parish quiz	422.00	420.00

# Receipts and Payments

## Parish of Desertmartin

Page 3 of 5

Printed: 30 October 2025

	19,571.76	14,438.12
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### 6. Property Related Income

	2024	2023
Rent from lands or buildings	952.78	2.73
Church hall lettings - charitable objectives	0.00	120.00
Sexton's house rent	4,160.04	4,160.04
Rent land - W Hutchinson	450.00	450.00
Rent land - G Fleming	360.00	360.00
Rent land - S Marron	1,450.00	0.00
Rent land - Desertmartin FC	500.00	1,000.00
	7,872.82	6,092.77

### 7. Other Funds Raised

	2024	2023
Sundry Income	406.27	0.00
	406.27	0.00

### 8. Parish Groups

	2024	2023
Bowling Club income	275.00	0.00
Ladies Guild income	1,111.00	490.74
	1,386.00	490.74

### 9. Repairs/Upkeep

	2024	2023
Church repairs and maintenance	0.00	(12,861.60)
Church light and power	(1,588.50)	(1,873.00)
Church broadband	(358.36)	(377.10)
Church decoration	0.00	(1,865.00)
Hall repairs and maintenance	(11,719.00)	(37,992.00)
Hall light and power	(231.64)	(102.25)
Rectory repairs and maintenance	(662.40)	(4,042.00)
Rectory heating	(2,911.00)	(3,785.00)
Building repairs and maintenance	(170.00)	(898.00)
Building light and power	(969.76)	(1,140.29)
Upkeep of grounds	(1,285.40)	(4,821.00)
Upkeep of graveyard	(1,211.00)	0.00
	(21,107.06)	(69,757.24)

### 10. Staffing Costs

	2024	2023
Clerical	(1,260.80)	(50.00)
Lay	(2,000.00)	0.00
	(3,260.80)	(50.00)

### 11. Light, Heat and Power

	2024	2023
Rates	(1,489.13)	(1,317.18)
Water Rates	(100.34)	(187.58)

# Receipts and Payments

## Parish of Desertmartin

Page 4 of 5  
Printed: 30 October 2025

	(1,589.47)	(1,504.76)
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### 12. Diocesan Levies

	2024	2023
Diocesan Levy - Standard	(35,376.00)	(35,050.00)
	(35,376.00)	(35,050.00)

### 13. General Parochial Overheads

	2024	2023
IT software	(462.12)	(798.00)
Photocopying	(611.31)	0.00
Photocopier lease	(468.44)	(468.44)
Equipment - servicing and repairs	(240.00)	(327.40)
Equipment - new	(1,373.00)	(2,421.49)
Insurances	(2,235.97)	(2,081.14)
	(5,390.84)	(6,096.47)

### 14. Parochial Ministry Overheads

	2024	2023
Other worship related costs	(574.37)	(233.73)
Clergy and staff training	0.00	(420.00)
Community building activity	(513.31)	(369.70)
Sunday School	(216.92)	(387.73)
Parish dinner expenses	(1,195.00)	(1,140.00)
Communion ware	0.00	(1,885.14)
	(2,499.60)	(4,436.30)

### 15. Financial and Professional Costs

	2024	2023
Audit and accountancy	0.00	(570.00)
Legal fees	(50.00)	(396.00)
Other professional fees	(131.98)	0.00
Bank fees and charges	(269.47)	(280.98)
	(451.45)	(1,246.98)

### 16. Fundraising Costs

	2024	2023
Fundraising costs	(201.50)	(204.90)
Vintage Rally expenses	(3,605.86)	(2,821.89)
	(3,807.36)	(3,026.79)

### 17. DONATIONS TO CHARITIES AND MISSIONS

	2024	2023
Donations to other charities	(427.65)	(694.20)
Donations to Bishops' Appeal	(350.00)	(946.81)
Donations to Poppy Appeal	0.00	(74.50)
	(777.65)	(1,715.51)

### 18. Parish Groups

	2024	2023
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Receipts and Payments  
Parish of Desertmartin

	2024	2023
Bowling Club expenses	(296.24)	(82.58)
Ladies Guild expenses	(1,406.14)	(546.15)
	(1,702.38)	(628.73)

# Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Page 1 of 1

Printed: 29 October 2025

## Parish of Desertmartin

As of 29 October 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	2024	2023
<b>Bank &amp; Deposit Balances</b>					
Bank & deposit balances brought forward	54,754.36	19,198.06		73,952.42	68,765.86
Excess of Receipts over payments for the year	5,987.75	(324.01)		5,663.74	5,186.56
Transfers between funds					
Bank & deposit balances carried forward	60,742.11	18,874.05		79,616.16	73,952.42
<b>Investment Assets</b>					
CIT Unit Trusts			242.14	242.14	220.86
RCB Unit Trusts			14,401.88	14,401.88	14,139.37
<b>Assets Retained for Charity's Own Use</b>					
Parish Hall		174,920.79		174,920.79	
Rectory		680,697.63		680,697.63	
Sexton's House		62,016.18		62,016.18	
School House		127,368.45		127,368.45	
Glebe Land (Farm)		125,000.00		125,000.00	

**Bank Balances**  
**1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

	Opening Balance 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024	Closing Balance 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024	Increase/Decrease
Sustention Account (No1 Account)	£26,595.00	£26,907.87	+ £312.87
General Account (No2 Account)	£11,064.38	£11,226.70	+ £162.32
Farm Account (No3 Account)	£7,825.05	£10,585.05	+ £2760
Church Hall Account (No4 Account)	£9,723.43	£12,177.70	+ £2,454.27
Investment Account	£17,066.11	£17,355.93	+ £289.82
Bowling Club Account	£842.53	£821.29	- £21.24
Ladies Guild Account	£835.92	£541.62	- £294.30
Total Bank Balances	£73,952.42	£79,616.16	+ £5,663.74

**Signed on Behalf of the Trustees**

Philip Benson  
**Chairperson: Rev Philip Benson**

L. Austin  
**Treasurer: Mrs Lois Austin**

**Date: 28th October 2025**

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

### 1. Accounting Policies

Set out below are the principal accounting policies adopted in the compilation of the Receipts and Payments Account and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

#### (a) Receipts and Payments Account

All income and expenditure items included within the Receipts and Payments Account have been accounted for on a cash receipts basis.

#### (b) Statement of Assets and Liabilities

##### (i) Assets retained for the Parish's own use

The assets of the Parish, retained for its own use, comprise:

- Church Building and Graveyard
  - Parish Hall
  - Glebe House (rectory)
  - Sexton's House
  - School House
  - Glebe Land
- 
- The Church Building and Graveyard are deemed to be Heritage assets as defined by the Charities SORP (FRS102). These Heritage assets are not included in the statement of assets and liabilities as information on the cost or valuation is not available, and such information cannot be obtained at a cost commensurate with the benefit to the users of the accounts and the parish.
  - The Parish Hall was built in 1981. There are no reliable records of its construction cost, and the valuation approach for such a building lacks sufficient reliability. Therefore, the building does not need to be recognised in our statement of assets and liabilities. However, we have provided the insurance value placed on it by our insurers.
  - The Glebe House (rectory), Sexton's House, and School House are recognised at cost based on the insurance value, which the Select Vestry deems to represent the value of the properties on 1st January 2024. The Select Vestry maintains these buildings in good repair, and the current estimated residual value is not less than their book/carrying value. The remaining useful lives of the buildings exceed 50 years.
  - The Glebe Land has been valued at a value that the Select Vestry deemed to represent the value of the land on the 31st of December 2024.

##### ii) Investments

Fixed-asset investments comprising investment properties, equities (ordinary shares), and RCB/CIT Unit Trusts are initially recorded at cost and subsequently stated at fair value at each year-end. Unquoted investments are recorded at cost and assessed annually for impairment.

### 2. Transactions with the Trustees

No trustee received any remuneration during the year. No trustee or a person related to a trustee had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year.

### 3. Governance Costs

Governance costs of £0 were incurred during the year, including £0 in fees paid to the independent examiner. Governance costs are included within Administration costs in the Receipts and Payments Accounts.