

St Peter's Church, Ropley



Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2024

St Peter's Church, Ropley
PCC Contents of the
Financial Statements For
the year ended 31st
December 2024

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Amber blessing our wonderful new altar. The brass plate underneath reads *"This Altar was made by Hugo Egleston in 2024 for St. Peter's Church Ropley, following the Great Fire in 2014. The wood came from a Walnut Tree at Ropley House blown down by a Storm in 1990. Thanks Be to God."*

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024 — Vicar's Report

"I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love." Ephesians 3:17b-18

2024 has been a momentous year in the life of St Peters. 10 years on from the fire, we took stock of where we had come from, what we are good at, as a serving people of God and where God was calling us to next.

We began the year with the launch of our children's Church which runs at the same time as our 10 o'clock service. This has been running throughout 2024 and we've seen our regular children really enjoy youth shaped activities for them to learn about Bible stories and the heart of the Christian faith.

We had a wonderful Spring, which saw some fab events, a stunning acapella Community Tea Concert by Cantores Episcopi, a cool clothes sale and a brilliant production of Talking Heads. We also had all of our regular Easter events, our quarterly Crafty Church, we had the school give a fantastic performance of The Three Trees, and a moving Maundy Thursday Tennebrae Holy Communion in the round.

The summer saw us continue with our fantastic events, with an effervescent selection of music performed by the Ropley King's Singers at our Summer Concert and a Pentecost Party for children who had learnt dances to worship songs in the run up. Around the 10 year anniversary of the fire, Winchester Diocese Communications team wrote an article about St Peters, which was shared widely and we found great interest in.

During the summer months, we also surveyed the congregation in the village, hearing views about how people would describe St Peters and what people thought we could do in the next season to serve the community and God. This resulted in our Vision and Values booklet and our five Values being decided. These five words describe what people can find at St Peter's and are the values at the core of who we are. Our Values are Welcome and Acceptance, Care and Inspiration and Transformation. With an overarching vision of Discovering and Sharing the Generous Love of God, this solidifies a language of how we describe what St Peter's does and gives vision to what will be doing in the future.

Autumn was a fun time in the church. The relationship between the school and the church was built upon when a new headteacher started. We welcomed Mr Mills to various events in the church. He, along with the rest of the school, have been a real support to church / school relations and we hope to build upon everything we do with the school this year.

A standout event in 2024 was our Autumn Fair, which was run by an extraordinary team of volunteers who drew together local businesses and local produce and created a beautiful market feel in the church building, with the addition of homemade lunches.

Also in Autumn, we ran our first Light Party, where families came on a dark evening to have a disco, with different lights and a fire pit in the church yard! We had an extraordinary turnout to this event with over 100 people joining us from around the village. This, along with a successful Harvest Lunch, a very reflective benefice All Soul's service at St Nicholas Bishop's Sutton, and a large Remembrance Service, enabled us to give thanks for a buzzing and growing church last autumn.

The year ended with yet another fantastic Ropley King's Singers Advent Concert, which was full of Christmas spirit and musical entertainment. We had a wonderful carol service and over 250 people join us on Christmas Eve, at our Christingles and Midnight Communion.

All the while, in the background, all of the running of the logistics of the church like heating, repairs, health and safety, event planning and management, Finance, Safeguarding, children's organisation, musical coordination, churchyard maintenance, flowers and the wonderfully welcoming hospitality, are the backbone of the life of St Peter's, sharing that generous love, which we discover when we receive from God and one another.

A special thanks goes to the wardens and all on our PCC, committees and teams, and for Angela Henderson, whose administration of the church office has revolutionised how we all work together.

So many people to thank and so many reasons to Praise the Lord for 2024.

Amber

Reverend Amber Beresford

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St Peter's Church is situated in Church Street, Ropley. It is part of the Alresford Deanery in the Diocese of Winchester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

St Peter's Church, Church Street, Ropley, Hants SO24 0DR.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The Registered Charity Number is 1176142

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2024 until the date this report was approved are:

Vicar:

Reverend Amber Beresford

Churchwardens:

Mrs Sarah Earthy

Mrs Barbara Pettegree – *to May, 2024*

Mrs Susan Thomas – *from May 2024*

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mr Keith Monkhouse, Mr Humphrey Carr

Elected Members:

Mr Ron Beal	Website Manager
Mr Humphrey Carr	Parish Stewardship Promoter
Mr Greville Dawson	<i>from May, 2024</i>
Mrs Julia Flory	Minutes Secretary
Mr Alan Parsonson	Treasurer
Mrs Barbara Pettegree	<i>from May, 2024</i>
Mrs Deborah Shellard	
Mrs Susan Thomas	Safeguarding Officer (<i>to May, 2024</i>)
Mrs Alison Wood	Electoral Roll Officer, PCC Secretary

Co-Opted Members

Mr Andy Bonner	Church rebuilding co-ordinator
Ms Anne Carter	<i>(Resigned January, 2025)</i>

In addition to the PCC, two other members of the church undertake important roles:

Mrs Wilma Hainsworth Safeguarding Officer (*from May, 2024*), and
Mrs Angela Henderson Benefice Administrator (*from February, 2025*)

As at the 31st December 2024 there were 102 people on the Church Electoral Roll, of whom 75 were resident in the parish.

The total Worshipping Community at the end of 2024 was 85.

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Peter's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of working together with the incumbent in promoting the Christian Church throughout the parish of St Peter's. This includes the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church and churchyard of St Peter's, Church Street, Ropley.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The PCC is committed to welcoming as many people as possible to worship in our church and to become part of our Christian community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and offers guidance on how our services can become a place of welcome, support and encouragement. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

OUR CHURCH THIS YEAR **Report of The Churchwardens**

2024 has been a time of deepening joy at St Peter's as we explore the possibilities of our new church and what God intends for us as a community of worshippers, and we have welcomed new members into our congregation. We have settled into new ways of

working and being under Amber's inspiration and guidance, nobly supported by Angela Henderson, our new (and first!) Benefice Administrator.

Our additional forms of worship include Café Church on the first Sunday of the month, a less formal service with discussion, crafts and activities for all ages, combined with coffee and pastries. Then Explorers Church (for children) is led in the Coffee Room during normal services with the children returning in time for Communion, and Minecraft Church on Tuesday evenings has shown how the Gospel can be taught in so many new and amazing ways – thank you, Toby Beresford for introducing and leading on these exciting new developments. We also have the reflective, quiet Celtic Morning Prayer on Tuesday mornings which follows the Northumbrian Community service pattern, and our usual services of Holy Communion and Morning Worship on Sundays – we hope something for everyone. We are delighted that the Rev Bryce Fletcher has continued to take services for us this year.

We have had several Baptisms and three wonderful weddings in 2024; we have also held funerals and interment of ashes for old friends, sending them on their final journeys.

During the year there have been Easter and Advent Crafty Church sessions, and riotous Spirit and Light Parties at Pentecost and All Soul's, the year ending with Community Carol Singing in the Churchyard. We are so pleased that children and their families continue to see the Community room as a home from home, and other villagers to use the church as a warm place for meetings, work, and a games club. The link with Ropley C of E Primary school continues under Mr Mills, the new Headmaster, and we have enjoyed their services for Easter, Harvest, Christmas and their Leaver's Service, all held in the church. Part of our outreach has been to set up a food bank in the North Porch, which is in regular use.

The Prayer Group continues to hold the community in their hearts with their regular monthly sessions to which all are welcome, and we are so grateful to Julian and Debbie Shellard for running it.

We are also blessed to have Alison Benton as Director of Music, who is a wonderful organist and choir mistress and has inspired us to have a sung Holy Communion on the 4th Sunday (with anthems!). Apart from St Peter's Choir, she also runs the Ropley King's Singers who give two concerts a year, fundraising for St Peter's and broadening our range of music. Our thanks go to her and also Alison Lester, John Bate and an eminent selection of local organists who have played for us this year.

Another great joy was the arrival of our new altar in April. Made from a walnut tree blown down in the 2020 gales at Ropley House, it has been designed and commissioned by very generous local benefactors, and gives us a beautiful focus for worship.

In the Autumn we held prayer evenings, issued a Parish questionnaire and had a PCC Away Day to discern where God is leading us, resulting in these being combined as our "Vision and Values", to be formally launched by Bishop Philip in January 2025.

We had hoped for the bells to be rehung before Christmas, but while we wait a new team of ringers are learning their craft in local churches, ably led by Rodney Skinner, Jason Clements and Roger Booth. Meanwhile the bell tower has been cleared for action, and a noise reduction system fitted to reduce annoyance to our neighbours when the bells finally return.

The churchyard is being steadily reclaimed by our faithful team of Quintin Sandell, Pete Whatley, Barbara Pettegree and Ian Hainsworth, who meet every Tuesday morning (fortified by coffee and cake). They have enabled families to visit long concealed graves, sown a wildflower patch, refilled potholes in the carpark and now have a compound for sheds and a compost heap. Anyone who would like to help them will be made most welcome. Barbara Pettegree and Greville Dawson are splendid at inspiring us to be mindful of the environment and creation care.

Linda Goddard continues to do a magnificent job in keeping the church clean, no easy task in such a wet and muddy year, for which we are most grateful.

There are so many people who regularly contribute to the running of the church in quiet and faithful ways, the readers, intercessors, welcoming team of Roy and Shirley Wyeth, Jason Clements, Roger Wood and Liz Wheeler, the coffee and hospitality team led by Alison Wood and Christine Drewienkiewicz, and the talented flower arrangers, led by Jill Shakespeare, Liz Wheeler and Christine Drewienkiewicz. Then there are the stalwart many who move chairs and staging, sweep floors and tidy toys more times than we're sure they care to remember. Without them all, St Peter's could not be the warm and welcoming place we know and love.

The Events team, led by Jules Flory and Anne Carter, have arranged a fascinating variety of events throughout the year, including a Community Tea Concert, productions of Talking Heads and a Christmas Carol, and our first Autumn Fair. They have also managed regular lettings for yoga, an art group and Mini Crotchets (music for small children). The main aim of the fundraising is for the footpath improvements which we hope to see completed very soon.

We look forward to putting our Vision and Values into action in 2025, spreading God's generous love for us to others.

Pictures overleaf: Jill assembling Pedestal Displays; The "Flower Ladies"; Ellie's North Porch Creation; Our splendid new altar in pride of place; The Churchyard Volunteers take a well-earned rest!



ROPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

(Report by Revd. Amber Beresford)

St Peter's relationship with Ropley CE primary school has gone from strength to strength. The combination of going in every week for Collective Worship on a Tuesday morning, and the various times the school have been able to use the church as a bigger meeting space, and performance space, has meant that the children feel the church is their church and they are always welcome. The school is a great priority for us as a church and is one of the main ways we can serve the community of parents and children in Ropley.

The children have also been part of the worshipping life of the church. The School children come into the church for services quarterly, the highlights of which have been the Christmas Carol service and the end of term Leavers service for Year Sixes. They also partake in church life and have joined in with our Pentecost celebrations and Remembrance ceremonies.

September saw a new headteacher start, and through the two foundation governors and myself as incumbent being a governor, we were able to be part of the recruitment process. We are very blessed to have welcomed Mr Mills, who has already brought fantastic vision and encouragement to Ropley Primary, and strengthened communication and relationships between church and school.

We are still looking for more congregants to engage with the school, as part of the St Peter's offering. If you would like to be part of Collective Worships or have ideas of ways you can support Ropley Primary, with time, ideas or financial resources, please let me know.

Amber

DEANERY SYNOD

(Report by Keith Monkhouse)

There were 3 meetings in 2024. The following items were the main topics covered:

Common Mission Fund (CMF).

The (CMF) shortfall was frequently raised as it is leading to a negative balance in church accounts which cannot go on forever. Discussions are ongoing.

Focal Ministry

Focal Ministry is becoming increasingly discussed as a very successful alternative to a priest when a priest is either unavailable or working elsewhere in the Parish/Benefice.

Deaneries working together

The proposal for Alresford and Alton Deaneries to work together, as discussed at the February Deanery Synod meeting, has now been put into effect. Both Deaneries meet for a combined meeting first then split for individual Deaneries to meet separately. Works well.

Net Zero Action Plan

Early consideration is being given to a Net Zero Action Plan, one plank of which could be the phasing out of oil and oil tanks. Early days but it was pointed out that replacing oil with electricity at the moment would be most expensive.

STEWARDSHIP **(Report by Humphrey Carr)**

Although our main focus for fundraising had been for the renewal of the church footpaths and the installation of ground level lighting, the PCC decided that money raised from Events should go towards the cost of servicing the loan which we received from the Diocese towards the cost of the rebuild. However since the end of 2024 the Parish Council have agreed to contribute toward the footpaths, as the Public Footpaths pass through the churchyard, and we now have the funds we need to proceed.

The number of our congregation contributing to the Diocesan Common Mission Fund (CMF) has increased from 26 to 30, and with Gift Aid this regular giving amounts to £37,606. The collections at church services raised a further £5,970, making a total of £43,576.

Although we have sufficient funds to meet our payment to the CMF, which has increased from £26,000 in 2024 to £30,556 in 2025, we have to remember that it costs nearly £550 a week to run St Peter's, and we are now starting to repay the loan from the Diocese towards the rebuild, so we cannot rest on our laurels.

Humphrey Carr

SAFEGUARDING REPORT **(From Wilma Hainsworth - PSO)**

Safeguarding has featured prominently and regularly in the media during 2024 and I report on St. Peter's Church Ropley and also on situations pertaining to the National Church.

I took over the reins as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) in late Spring and completed the Church of England (CofE) Induction training course. I have been richly blessed by superb support from our previous PSO (Sue), our Vicar (Rev. Amber), the PCC and members of the congregation. This constructive support confirms the importance that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. I have been able to gently mould the

role to utilise my experience, skills and knowledge of safeguarding issues. As a local Parish Church, we have updated and adopted CoFE policy documents, with some being displayed on the Church website. We have raised our communication/media presence to publicise and ensure that St. Peter's Church remains a safe environment. We have identified clear structured avenues to follow when harm, neglect or abuse is disclosed. Any concerns will be followed through by the Vicar and myself. The administration of DBS certification is carefully monitored and members of the PCC are compliant. There is regular liaison between the PCC and myself.

BEST OF ALL... Our training on safeguarding has moved to a new level. 21 (yes, twenty one) willing members participated in a three hour safeguarding course which covered Basic and Foundation levels and Raising Awareness and Responding Well to Domestic Abuse. Other members completed their training by e-learning courses. I am thrilled to see so many parishioners at our Sunday services who are highly clued up and enthusiastic on safeguarding matters.

We celebrated Safeguarding Sunday in November with special prayers from myself and from Julia during the intercessions. Our Vicar delivered a very pertinent sermon during that special service.

Overall, St. Peter's Church, Ropley can be proud of its commitment in raising and maintaining a high level of safeguarding standards. Safeguarding at St. Peter's Church is compliant with the aims of the Charity Commission and the requirements of CoFE directives.

2024 has turned out to be an annus horribilis in Safeguarding matters for the National Church. In January 2024, Professor Alexis Jay CBE published her splendid, well-founded Report on "The Future of Church Safeguarding". This was commissioned by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

As a fellow Scot, her style is straight-forward and direct.

She states ... "Overall, Church safeguarding falls below the standards expected and set in secular organisations. The Church's system of operational safeguarding is not compatible with best practices whilst its management and accountability remains within the 42 dioceses. Further tinkering with existing structures will not be sufficient to make safeguarding in the Church consistent, accountable and trusted by those who use its services".

Her recommendations are ...

"We recommend the creation of two separate charities, one for independent operational safeguarding and one for independent scrutiny of safeguarding.

These charities will be funded by the Church but structurally independent of them, in order to ensure that safeguarding decisions are implemented in full, and not

subverted, to provide fully independent scrutiny and to mark an unambiguous change of culture.”

The Church of England’s Response Group will deliver its own deliberations and recommendations on this Report to SYNOD in February 2025.

Various other Reports and Reviews highlighting cases of abuse circulated during the year including the Soul Survivor Independent Review and the resultant withdrawal of the Lambeth Award from Mike Pilavachi. During the summer, the Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB) was disbanded.

Later in the year, recrudescence descended in the long-awaited Makin Review which highlighted the prolific, brutal and abhorrent abuse carried out by the late John Smyth QC. This Review attracted wide-spread publicity in daily newspapers and TV programmes and the outcry was fierce from members of the public. The Bishop of Newcastle, a lone voice in the wilderness, demonstrated a strong moral compass and acknowledged the systemic issues of dysfunction both in the institution and its central capacity and called for immediate action by the hierarchy. The furore of shock, horror and complete bewilderment that this abuse could happen without responsible action being taken to address the situation, alarmed ordinary members of the Church. This led the Archbishop of Canterbury to consider his position and subsequently resign from his post.

In summary, locally we are promoting and maintaining high standards of safeguarding, ensuring folks feel confident in reporting harm, neglect and abuse knowing that decisive action will be offered in support. We are happy to work and liaise with the staff from the Diocese and appreciate their support. In National matters, we await the developments and decisions taken at Synod in February 2025.

Thank you to all members of our congregation for your support and encouragement, it is greatly appreciated, we are all working together.

Wilma Hainsworth. January 2025.

MUSIC IN ST PETER’S

Music in St Peter’s went from strength to strength this year. We have two resident choirs:

St Peter’s choir numbers around 20-25 singers. We have two short Friday evening choir practices and sing at one Sunday service in the month. The choir has steadily grown in numbers and in skill. We have confident singers in all parts and have tackled a variety of anthems both accompanied and unaccompanied. Special services such as Christmas and Easter attract even more singers with around 30 singing at our Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. During the year we were also able to enhance the worship in the

church by the addition of the Salisbury Service by Grayston Ives which we sing at Sung Holy Communion around twice a month.

The Ropley King's Singers, the community choir, is invited to sing in two concerts a year – summer and Advent. The summer concert was based around Vivaldi's Gloria with guest soloist Ruth Shannon and solos from the choir followed by lighter summer fare and interspersed with readings. In the Advent concert, we performed extracts from Messiah, welcoming Ruth Shannon back again to sing the solo numbers along with Daniel Benton. We are very fortunate to be able to call on the services of Andy Lumsden, organist extraordinaire and composer Peter Gritton, both local residents. Again there were lighter pieces and humorous readings from members of the choir.

In August the great organ transplant took place with a new organ for the church which was being underused in my house. The previous organ which was kindly donated to the church by Eileen Adkins has gone to the home of a talented young local organ student who is overjoyed to be able to practise at home.

Grateful thanks go to singers, Alison Wood, Sue Thomas, Alan Parsonson, Catherine Mitchell and Sally Palmer who help with the day-to-day running of both of the choirs and provide valuable advice on all matters both musical and non-musical!

Alison Benton, Organist and Director of Music



The King's Singers

WEBSITE (Report by Ron Beal)

The Benefice website ropleybenefice.church provides the primary online information resource for St Peter's and the rest of the Benefice. It complements other online resources such as our Events website (stpetersropleyvenue.org.uk), the [Benefice Google Calendar](#) which lists all services, and Facebook, all of which are linked from the website.

The website contains a comprehensive History section with extensive image galleries from before, during and after the fire as well as images capturing the rebuilding.

EVENTS AND LETTINGS (2024 Report by Julia Flory)

It has been another great year at St Peter's Ropley. Thanks to everyone who has supported us through donations or by attending one of our fantastic events. We are proud to say our events raised over £11,000 for St Peter's and we made a donation of £1,200 to [Allegra's Ambition](#).

Last year we enjoyed music, drama and held our first Autumn Fair. For a year in review visit our [Past Events](#) page. Looking ahead we have a busy calendar; a mixture of fundraising and community events and we hope to see as many of you there as possible! Tickets can continue to be booked through our website ([visit our website](#)).

Following her resignation, our sincere thanks go to Anne Carter for all her work with St Peter's and the Events Team since the Church opened in 2022. None of this could have happened without a full team effort.

We are also pleased to say that outside lettings are picking up. We now have a weekly yoga class and host Mini Crotchets - a toddler music class. If you know of anyone who might want to hire St Peter's, please contact the Events Team on events@stpetersropleyvenue.org.





OUR CHURCH BUILDING (Report by Andy Bonner)

It would seem that my prediction in last year's report that the bells would be returned to St Peter's in late 2024 was a little optimistic but, at the time of writing, I am sure that they will be back in early 2025. There was a lot more involved in getting the bell recast, and the failure of supply of some of the materials, prevented the installation.

The building has continued to function well during the course of the year with lots of exciting events and increased use by groups and organisations as well as church services.

The addition of the sheds near the car park has also helped greatly with storage and for use of the grounds management team who have been keeping the graveyard in the best condition possible and have plans for plantings and renovations over the next year.

There have been some small difficulties with the operation of the building in 2024. The worst of these being a breakdown in the underfloor heating. The fault took some time to identify but came down to a very small leak in the plant room.

The box tomb to the north east of the church that had to be dismantled due to not being safe is coming near the end of the faculty process and should be reconstructed in mid-2025.

Plans have also been going ahead for next year. During the course of 2024 sufficient money was raised to be able to give the go ahead on the renovation of all of the paths around the church so that the path to the lych gate can be made safer and all of the paths resurfaced. Lighting will also be provided at each of the gates and at key points on the paths. This should be completed during summer of 2025.

CREATION CARE **(by Greville Dawson)**

In *Our Vision and Values* publication, introduced in the first weeks of 2025 we state that, "St Peter's is committed to seeking sustainable and climate friendly operations in our Creation Care – we care about the world around us".

To put this in to practice our aim is to take the practical steps necessary to realise the Church of England's *Fifth Mark of Mission* – "To strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth".

So, the past year has seen the introduction of St Peter's *Creation Care* initiative, which seeks to encourage all of us to take action to care for God's creation.

In May we took the first step. Encouraged by our Diocese and the Church of England we, like hundreds of parishes across the nation, arranged for an energy audit to be undertaken. Though St. Peter's church is of a modern design the audit showed that there are actions we can take to reduce our "carbon footprint" – the equivalent amount of greenhouse gases (primarily carbon dioxide) released into the atmosphere by our daily actions. The PCC is considering how we can plan for and implement the changes. Whatever we decide, the measures we take must be completed by the end of 2030 in order to meet the Church of England's "Net Zero" initiative.

We also engaged with the UK's Eco Church Awards scheme, an initiative run by a charity named A Rocha, which is part of a global network of Christian organisations that works to protect and restore the natural world. Our first step was to determine where we are in relation to its assessment of how we perform in five key areas: Worship, Buildings, Land, Lifestyle of us and the local community and Engagement with external organisations. There are three levels of award, St Peter's being Bronze (the other two are Silver and Gold). Our certificate, received in July, is posted in the South

Porch. We are now working to see how we can move to Silver status. This means that we need to concentrate on Lifestyle and Engagement.

This means that the members of our church and all of those who live and work in the village will, over time, become aware of what we suggest. For instance, we are working with our Diocese through its Environmental Officer, to see what we as a church can do that will permanently impact all of our activities in our care for creation. In addition, in the development of St Peter's Mission Action Plan, we will include careful consideration of all we do, including for example how we celebrate Creation in our worship and how we can encourage everybody to consider the effect we each have on the world around us.

When it comes to changing aspects of our lives to move ever more towards a sustainable future we will find some challenges along the way. Every one of us can work to change a small portion of events and, as was noted in a sermon at the end of July, *God does not ask the impossible of any of us, neither does he give us tasks that we are not capable of undertaking.*

TREASURERS REPORT 2024 **(by Alan Parsonson)**

In June 2024 a financial presentation highlighted the challenges the PCC would be facing in 2024 and future years - these being the need to finance the final building contractor's fees, the restoration of the bells, repairing the footpaths, finishing the car park, and servicing the £200,000 loan from the Diocese. In this presentation our forecast was for a loss of £10,000 in the Unrestricted Funds for 2024, after the monthly loan interest and capital servicing costs which commenced in July.

I am now pleased to report that, in 2024, we received the final building contractor's invoices, which involved no additional unexpected costs, and, having drawn down the remaining grant from the Diocese, these invoices have now been settled.

During the year we secured grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Portsmouth Guild of Bell Ringers, and Friends of St Peter's specifically for the restoration of the bells and, with sufficient funds available to fund this project, work has commenced and the bells should be in use again by the time this report is published. Not all of these grants have yet been drawn as some are payable only once work has been completed. However, after this work is paid for the Restricted funds will have sufficient reserves to complete the repair of the footpaths, without exhausting these funds completely.

The actual result for the Unrestricted Fund was significantly better than was forecast and it was decided, in addition to the capital repaid through our monthly payments to

the Diocese, that a further £10,000 should be allocated to further reduce the capital outstanding and, hence, lead to a lower monthly servicing cost. This was funded by a transfer of £5,000 from the Restricted Funds and £5,000 from the Unrestricted Fund. I am pleased to report that this still resulted in a surplus being generated in the Unrestricted Fund for 2024.

Again, the PCC is grateful for the generosity of individual donors to the church, both those who make regular donations and the collections at services. This accounts for nearly 70% of our income with the remainder being generated from various events held during the year, lettings to 3rd parties, plus retained fees from weddings and funerals. At the beginning of the year, we had an unexpected windfall of c.£4,000 from our electricity supplier in respect of historic over-charging and, in the attached accounts, this refund has been netted off against electricity costs for the year.

The PCC's expenses are largely made up of amounts payable to the Diocese, by way of the Common Mission Fund (34%), and the costs of utilities and maintenance of the church (32%). Last year I reported that the total "Running Costs" for the building were £78.86 per day, in 2024 this cost was slightly reduced at £76.65 per day.

At the beginning of the year, Angela Henderson was retained to provide benefice-wide administrative support to the Vicar with 90% of her gross fees being met by St Peter's and 10% by St Nicholas' PCC.

I would like to thank Graham Dix for his ongoing 3rd party check of accounts and Tim Wettone for his help in the preparation of these accounts and in setting out items in more detail than has been presented in previous years. Further, we have identified a different independent examiner from that approved at the last annual meeting, but subsequently approved by the PCC, resulting in a considerable saving of fees.

The PCC's Reserves Policy is to maintain sufficient funds in the Unrestricted Funds equivalent to six months' running costs and that the Restricted Funds, net of Investments established for specific purposes, have sufficient funds to meet known financial commitments.

As at the end of the year I can confirm that the funds held by the PCC are sufficient to meet its Reserves Policy.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure and is a Registered Charity with the Charity Commission. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules.

At St Peter's the membership of the PCC consists of the Vicar, churchwardens and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. Others, who bring particular insight and experience, may be co-opted onto the PCC or attend occasionally to present reports, for example the parish Safeguarding Officer. All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and, if they so wish, stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC meets regularly throughout the year and has the ultimate responsibility for a wide range of matters affecting St Peter's church, including such matters as compliance with health and safety and disability discrimination legislation, canon law, diocesan policies, safeguarding and creation care. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

Sub committees comprising of at least one PCC member and others were set up in 2024 to focus on specific areas of church life including: worship, prayer and discipleship; community; communications; fabric and grounds; stewardship; commercial (events and bookings) and major fundraising. The authority to make significant decisions remains with the full PCC.

In addition to the main body of the PCC there is a Standing Committee comprising of the Vicar, Churchwardens, Treasurer, and Secretary. They meet as required and are authorised to decide on issues which may arise between PCC meetings and need to be decided upon immediately. The Standing Committee is responsible to the PCC and decisions made by the Standing Committee are reported to and where necessary ratified at the next PCC meeting.

The full PCC met every two months during 2024 with the Standing Committee generally meeting once between PCC meetings.

**APPROVED BY THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL & SIGNED
ON THEIR BEHALF BY PCC CHAIR**

Rev'd Amber Beresford
PCC Chair
Date: 21st April 2024

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act') .

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

L Chapman ACA

Dated: 31 March 2025

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	58,895	91,666	150,561	66,673
Charitable activities	3	26,119	0	26,119	54,136
Investment income	4	18	1,151	1,169	1,018
Total income and endowments		<u>85,032</u>	<u>92,817</u>	<u>177,849</u>	<u>121,827</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	73,822	12,591	86,413	90,389
Church restorations	6	0	76,437	76,437	56,113
Total expenditure		<u>73,822</u>	<u>89,028</u>	<u>162,850</u>	<u>146,502</u>
Net gains on investments		0	857	857	2,284
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>11,210</u>	<u>4,646</u>	<u>15,856</u>	<u>(22,391)</u>
Transfers between funds	7	7,038	(7,038)	0	(1)
Net movement in funds		<u>18,248</u>	<u>(2,392)</u>	<u>15,856</u>	<u>(22,392)</u>
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2024		<u>(119,546)</u>	<u>126,601</u>	<u>7,055</u>	<u>29,447</u>
Funds carried forward at 31 December 2024		<u><u>(101,298)</u></u>	<u><u>124,209</u></u>	<u><u>22,911</u></u>	<u><u>7,055</u></u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The equivalent statement for the previous year is shown in Note 17.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Fixed Assets					
Investments	8	0	23,897	23,897	<i>23,040</i>
Current Assets					
Debtors	9	1,678	17,043	18,721	<i>132,092</i>
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>77,745</u>	<u>91,071</u>	<u>168,816</u>	<i><u>152,333</u></i>
		79,423	108,114	187,537	<i>284,425</i>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	21,086	7,802	28,888	<i>100,410</i>
Net current assets		<u>58,337</u>	<u>100,312</u>	<u>158,649</u>	<i><u>184,015</u></i>
Total assets less current liabilities		58,337	124,209	182,546	<i>207,055</i>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	11	159,635	0	159,635	<i>200,000</i>
Net assets		<u>(101,298)</u>	<u>124,209</u>	<u>22,911</u>	<i><u>7,055</u></i>
Funds	12				
Unrestricted funds				(101,298)	<i>(119,546)</i>
Restricted funds				124,209	<i>126,601</i>
Total funds				<u>22,911</u>	<i><u>7,055</u></i>

The financial statements were approved by the PCC on 30 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:-

Rev A Beresford - Trustee

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis.

There are no material uncertainties over the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern due to the sufficient cash balance held as at 31st December 2024.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity.

Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in Note 14 of the financial statements.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Income and endowments from:

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	<i>Total 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Planned giving	5,103	2,940	8,043	4,448
Golden giving	783	0	783	0
Collections at services	5,970	0	5,970	7,059
Parish giving scheme	30,445	0	30,445	30,049
Gift aid recovered	12,140	3,249	15,389	10,622
Other donations (including contactless)	4,124	600	4,724	6,948
Flower donations	0	1,354	1,354	415
Grants:-				
National Lottery Heritage Fund	0	56,058	56,058	0
Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (VAT)	0	10,655	10,655	0
Portsmouth Guild of Bellringers	0	10,000	10,000	0
Friends of St Peter's Church, Ropley	0	6,010	6,010	0
Alresford Pigs Association	0	800	800	0
Alton and Petersfield Open Day	0	0	0	3,625
BP Energy	0	0	0	1,000
Winchester Bell Ringers	0	0	0	683
Guildford Bell Ringers	0	0	0	578
Commonwealth War Graves	50	0	50	50
Other income	280	0	280	1,196
	<u>58,895</u>	<u>91,666</u>	<u>150,561</u>	<u>66,673</u>

3 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	<i>Total 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Events	16,853	0	16,853	26,206
Lettings	4,433	0	4,433	3,350
PCC's share of fees for weddings, funerals etc	4,833	0	4,833	6,853
Sale of painting	0	0	0	9,000
Refund due to cancelled stained glass window	0	0	0	6,687
Other income	0	0	0	2,040
	<u>26,119</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>26,119</u>	<u>54,136</u>

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	<i>Total 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Deposit account interest	0	671	671	394
Dividends received	0	480	480	624
Other interest received	18	0	18	0
	<u>18</u>	<u>1,151</u>	<u>1,169</u>	<u>1,018</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Expenditure on:

5 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Common Mission Fund	26,246	0	26,246	29,623
Church running expenses:-				
Insurance	3,663	0	3,663	3,872
Electricity (less refund of £3,959)	2,310	0	2,310	8,400
Gas	5,363	0	5,363	7,660
Water	0	0	0	250
Telephone and broadband	575	0	575	0
Maintenance	8,908	850	9,758	4,620
Printing and stationery	253	0	253	641
Administrator	6,418	0	6,418	0
Upkeep of services	1,442	0	1,442	1,831
Kids church	598	0	598	0
Events costs	8,586	0	8,586	11,368
Miscellaneous expenses:	1,220	0	1,220	8,574
Cleaning	2,730	0	2,730	2,192
Garden costs:-				
Shed	0	9,582	9,582	0
Flowers	0	1,065	1,065	24
Maintenance	0	644	644	0
Petrol	0	282	282	0
Charitable giving:-				
Royal British Legion	489	0	489	441
The Ropley Fund	80	0	80	0
The Children's Society	0	0	0	348
Macmillan Cancer Support	0	0	0	105
The Bishop of Winchester's Ordination Fund	0	0	0	533
Trussell Trust	0	0	0	280
Jerusalem Trust refund (see note below)	0	0	0	7,000
Independent examiner's fees	100	0	100	2,310
Loan interest	4,841	0	4,841	0
Dividends reinvested	0	168	168	317
	73,822	12,591	86,413	90,389

The refund to the Jerusalem Trust in 2023 was due to the cancellation of the stained glass window, for which the grant was originally received.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

6 Church restorations

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	<i>Total 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Church restorations	0	1,002	1,002	38,378
Bells restoration	0	74,114	74,114	0
Footpaths	0	1,200	1,200	0
Car park expenses	0	0	0	10,460
Other church repairs and maintenance	0	121	121	7,275
	<u>0</u>	<u>76,437</u>	<u>76,437</u>	<u>56,113</u>

7 Transfer between funds

This represents £5,000 transferred from the Building Account as a contribution towards the WDBF loan repayment, £400 transferred from the Appeal Account to the Building Account as a contribution towards the cost of the footpaths, and £2,038 from the Appeal Account from Events that belong in the General Fund.

8 Fixed assets - Listed Investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	<i>Total 2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Market value				
At 1 January 2024	0	23,040	23,040	20,756
Dividends received	0	480	480	624
Dividends transferred to bank account	0	(312)	(312)	(307)
Dividends reinvested	0	(168)	(168)	(317)
Revaluations	0	857	857	2,284
	<u>0</u>	<u>23,897</u>	<u>23,897</u>	<u>23,040</u>

9 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	<i>2023</i>
	£	£	£	£
Grant receivable from WDBF	0	0	0	114,500
Grant recoverable (VAT)	0	4,135	4,135	16,941
Gift aid recoverable	178	125	303	0
Outstanding funeral fee	0	0	0	493
Prepayments and accrued income	1,500	12,783	14,283	158
	<u>1,678</u>	<u>17,043</u>	<u>18,721</u>	<u>132,092</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Trade creditors	916	1,000	1,916	97,637
Loan from WDBF (see note below)	20,070	0	20,070	0
Accruals and deferred income	100	6,802	6,902	2,773
	<u>21,086</u>	<u>7,802</u>	<u>28,888</u>	<u>100,410</u>

A loan of £200,000 was previously received from the Winchester Diocesan Board of Finance (WDBF) on which no interest was initially payable. Repayments began in July 2024 and it is repayable over 96 months at a variable interest rate currently of 4.7% per annum. The amount repayable over the next 12 months is shown here with the balance shown below in Note 11.

11 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Loan from WDBF (see Note 10)	159,635	0	159,635	200,000

12 Analysis of Funds - Current year

	Funds brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfers in/out £	Funds carried forward £
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	(119,546)	85,032	73,822	7,038	(101,298)
Restricted funds					
Appeal fund	32,210	3,916	850	(2,438)	32,838
Building fund	50,570	84,148	76,437	(4,600)	53,681
Church fabric fund	952	50	0	0	1,002
Music fund (previously Organ fund)	7,265	386	0	0	7,651
Rosemary Bray memorial fund	2,060	109	0	0	2,169
Garden society fund	33,544	5,065	11,741	0	26,868
	<u>126,601</u>	<u>93,674</u>	<u>89,028</u>	<u>(7,038)</u>	<u>124,209</u>
Total funds	7,055	178,706	162,850	0	22,911

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

13 Analysis of Funds - Previous year

	Funds brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfers in/out £	Funds carried forward £
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	95,423	74,364	76,819	(212,514)	(119,546)
Restricted funds					
Appeal fund	11,073	40,228	32,701	13,610	32,210
Building fund	(118,894)	5,052	33,933	198,345	50,570
Church fabric fund	922	30	0	0	952
Music fund (previously Organ fund)	7,040	225	0	0	7,265
Rosemary Bray memorial fund	1,996	64	0	0	2,060
Garden society fund	31,887	4,148	3,049	558	33,544
	(65,976)	49,747	69,683	212,513	126,601
Total funds	29,447	124,111	146,502	(1)	7,055

14 Purposes of funds

Appeal Fund: This represents monies received prior to 2023 which is ring-fenced for building related costs, and a small amount reserved for church music related costs, the total at the year end being £31,642. The remainder is income from donations and events which will be transferred to the General account to meet ongoing expenses.

Building fund: This represents funds for the restoration and rebuilding of the church.

Church fabric fund: This fund is for the maintenance and upkeep of the church building and income is normally received from donations or specific events raising monies for the fabric of the church and not just general funds.

Music fund (prev. Organ fund): This originated from fundraising many years ago to refurbish the organ. A surplus was achieved and was held to maintain the old organ. However, this was destroyed in the fire. It is now held towards the replacement of the current organ. In addition, in July 2023, the PCC decided to rename this as the Music fund, to incorporate costs of developing the music facilities of the church.

Rosemary Bray memorial fund: This represents monies raised and used to make kneelers for the church, from which a surplus remained after the work was completed. It is not expected that new kneelers will ever be made.

Garden society fund: The PCC is responsible for keeping the church grounds in good order. The funds for this activity are held in separate accounts and will be used solely for the original purposes of the society.

15 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration, other benefits or expenses paid for either of the two years.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST PETER, ROPLEY, WINCHESTER**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

16 Commitments

In July 2023, the PCC entered into a contract for the restoration of the bells, payable in three instalments. Two instalments have been paid in 2024 but the final payment of £23,885, excluding VAT which is recoverable, is due on completion of the work. This is anticipated in March 2025. Against this, the PCC has been promised a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund of £6,229, payable on completion of the work on the bells.

17 Statement of Financial Activities - Previous year

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	<i>Total 2022 £</i>
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	60,279	29,868	90,147	<i>415,920</i>
Charitable activities	14,085	16,884	30,969	<i>4,155</i>
Investment income	0	394	394	<i>159</i>
Total income and endowments	<u>74,364</u>	<u>47,146</u>	<u>121,510</u>	<u><i>420,234</i></u>
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	76,471	(15,002)	61,469	<i>30,668</i>
Church restorations	348	84,368	84,716	<i>843,839</i>
Total expenditure	<u>76,819</u>	<u>69,366</u>	<u>146,185</u>	<u><i>874,507</i></u>
Net gains on investments	0	2,284	2,284	<i>739</i>
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>(2,455)</u>	<u>(19,936)</u>	<u>(22,391)</u>	<u><i>(453,534)</i></u>
Transfers between funds	(212,514)	212,513	(1)	<i>0</i>
Net movement in funds	<u>(214,969)</u>	<u>192,577</u>	<u>(22,392)</u>	<u><i>(453,534)</i></u>
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2023	<u>95,423</u>	<u>(65,976)</u>	<u>29,447</u>	<u><i>482,981</i></u>
Funds carried forward at 31 December 2023	<u><u>(119,546)</u></u>	<u><u>126,601</u></u>	<u><u>7,055</u></u>	<u><u><i>29,447</i></u></u>