

Trustee's Annual Report and Annual Financial Report

For the year ended 31st December 2024



The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Nicolas Itchingfield

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St Nicolas' Church, Fulfords Hill, Itchingfield, West Sussex, RH13 0NX

Registered Charity no. 1208703

www.stnicolasitchingfield.org.uk

Parochial Church Council of St Nicolas Itchingfield

Trustees' Annual Report for 2024

St Nicolas' is the parish church for the villages of Barns Green and Itchingfield and is part of the Horsham Deanery and the Diocese of Chichester. It is joined in a benefice with St Peter's Church in Slinfold.

Our Rector Rev'd Sandra Hall retired at the end of January 2024, so with effect from 31st January 2024 St Nicolas' Church went into interregnum, officially known as "vacancy". A notice was received from the Diocese that the start date of the appointment process for a new incumbent was 1st April 2024, by which time the PCC's preparations of the necessary documentation were already under way. However, in the autumn a formal notice signed by the Bishop of Chichester was received stating that the parish was to be "suspended" from November 2024. This meant that the appointment process changed, and matters rest with the Bishop and Diocese to decide.

The most common reason for suspension is as a step towards possible pastoral reorganisation. We have not been given any indication as to how long suspension will continue, it could be relatively brief or for a number of years according to circumstances (e.g. number & location of parishes in interregnum, number of priests seeking a post, financial considerations). "Pastoral reorganisation" could mean being taken into a larger benefice, or into a group ministry. We need to be patient, and very thankful for the retired clergy who support us so well and enable a normal pattern of services to continue.

Structure, Governance & Management

The trustee is the Parochial Church Council (PCC), which is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission as required by the Charities Act 2011. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules [Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 (No. 2)].

Members from January 2024 until the date this report was approved:

Ex Officio Members:

Rev'd Sandra Hall (Chair) (until Jan'24)

Mrs Margaret Thayre

Mr Geoff Chamberlin

Mr Martin Hennock

Mrs Miriam Coghill

Incumbent

Churchwarden (Vice Chair from Jan'24 to Apr'24)

Churchwarden (until Aug'24)

Deanery Synod

Deanery Synod

Elected Members:

Mrs Phillipa McBean

Mrs Chris Hennock

Mrs Julia Huson

Mrs Anne Jennings

Mrs Judith Nesbitt

Mr Roger Pitts

Mr Bryan Southon (from May'24)

Vice Chair (from Apr'24)

Secretary

Treasurer

Co-opted Members:

Mr Geoff Chamberlin (from Sep'24)

The appointment of PCC members is governed by the Church Representation Rules. Membership consists of certain ex-officio members (clergy, churchwardens and members of the Deanery Synod) and up to nine members (whose names must be on the church electoral roll) who are elected at Annual Parochial Church Meetings. The PCC may co-opt up to two more members, whose term ends at the end of the next APCM. Parishioners are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

Additional Management Arrangements (continued)

Standing Committee - This committee has power to transact business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. The rector and churchwardens are members ex-officio, and other members appointed by the PCC at its meeting in May 2024 were Mrs Chris Hennock, Mrs Julia Huson and Mrs Phillipa McBean. Mrs Miriam Coghill was appointed in September 2024 as Mr Geoff Chamberlin stepped down as Churchwarden.

Other Officers appointed by the PCC:

Sacristan
Electoral Roll Officer
Safeguarding Officer
Fundraising Committee Chair
Fabric Committee Chair
Churchyard Manager

Mrs Wendy Dorkings
Mrs Chris Hennock
Mr Bryan Southon
Mrs Phillipa McBean
Mr David Pickard
Mrs Phillipa McBean

The **Fabric Committee** meets to consider the repair and maintenance of the church buildings and reports back to the PCC.

Most other church post-holders for the parish are appointed by the PCC.

Objectives and Activities of the Parochial Church Council

Main Objectives

The primary objective of the PCC is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

It is the duty of the PCC, in cooperation with the minister when there is one, to promote in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for St Nicolas' Church and associated property. An important part of this is being responsible for taking care of the church's financial affairs.

Beautiful historic church, superbly maintained. Well done in keeping it open.

EF, London

Activities Undertaken

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and adults.

What a charming church with a beautiful graveyard. Like stepping back in time.

C&O, Haywards Heath

*Enjoying the birds and bluebells.
Beautiful and peaceful as always.*

A&S, Broadbridge Heath

We planned our objectives and activities to fulfil the following aims:

- To encourage as many people as possible to worship at St Nicolas' Church and in other locations around the parish;
 - To encourage as many people as possible to become part of the parish community at St Nicolas'.
 - To maintain the lovely churchyard as a rich and varied habitat for the local flora and fauna and a picturesque place for people to meet and for walkers on the public footpaths to sit and rest.
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- To provide regular services in a familiar format for all members of the public who wish to attend. Visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary come by personal choice, and we welcome them in a peaceful and friendly atmosphere.

Objectives and Activities of the Parochial Church Council (continued)

Activities Undertaken (continued)

- To allow opportunities for all to encounter God and to learn more of Him by regular teaching on the word of God both in and out of the church building and to reach out to our local community who may not come to church.
- To provide a safe place for people to worship, spend reflective time and be at peace by keeping the church building open for services and private prayer and keeping it clean, warm and comfortable.
- To bring pastoral care to those in need: the sick; the bereaved; the lost, by visiting their homes or by telephone calls and e-mails.
- To help address the needs of the local community by allowing the church building to be a receiving area for the donation of food for local food banks.
- To provide a welcoming venue for our community to celebrate and thank God at milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing, and through funeral services family and friends express their grief and give thanks for the life which is complete in this world and commend the person into God's keeping.
- To provide additional celebration and to acknowledge the sacrifice of others, with dedicated bell ringers being willing to ring on such occasions, using well-maintained bells.
- To provide education, nurturing all ages by maintaining buildings of historical interest and by supporting the local primary school and youth organisations.
- To support other charities by allowing occasional church collections to be taken for other good causes; working to assist people in need.

What a marvellous opportunity to be invited to view the bell ringers, have a go and experience the movement of the Bell Tower! Wonderful experience and a beautiful church.

JR & MM, Australia

Electoral Roll

The church electoral roll was renewed in April 2024, with a resultant total of 66 names, 40 of whom live within the Parish.

Achievements and Performance

Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

The PCC held eight meetings during 2024, with attendance averaging 94%.

Along with its routine yet important administrative tasks, the PCC's focus was on several major matters which concerned church life, buildings and equipment.

- The continued well-running of church life during the vacancy
- Consideration of whether to investigate becoming a joint parish with Slinfold
- Working through the aspects of work outlined in the architect's November 2021 quinquennial inspection report
- Possible replacement of the oil-fired heating with an electrical system (until this is concluded the Toilet and Tea Point project is on hold)
- Investigation of structural defects in the Priest's House
- Planning the year of celebration for St Nicolas 900
- Investigating possible alternative car parking

For further details please see the reports on pages 5 to 9.

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Ministry and running of the Church during the vacancy

As a result of the vacancy it has been necessary to arrange ministerial cover for all services. This task has been undertaken by Margaret Thayre, as churchwarden, who has done an amazing job finding retired ministers and other clergy to ensure all of the services could continue as normal throughout the year.

Our gratitude is due to:

Visiting Clergy – Rev'd Jack Mulder, Rev'd Sally Mitchell, Rev'd Yvonne Adam, Rev'd Brian New, Rev'd David Beal, the Ven Lionel Whatley and Father Matthew Austen who have kindly taken services for us throughout the vacancy.

Assistants at Services - our sidesmen and women, readers, intercession leaders, Communion servers, together with sacristan Wendy Dorkings and vergers Phillipa McBean.

Lay Reader - Martin Hennock who is a licensed Lay Reader takes some of our Family Services, Wednesday Evening Prayer and Bible Study Group. He divides his ministry time between St Nicolas' and St Mark's in Horsham. Kate Wydra, a licensed Lay Reader from West Grinstead, has also kindly stepped in to cover Family Services.

Honorary Associate Priest - Rev'd Rosemary Cattell, who retired in 2021 after six years' service to this church but who has continued to give fantastic support by leading regular Sunday services and most of the funerals.

Former Rector Sandra Hall – whom we miss since she retired at the end of January 2024 and who worked hard to make the commencement of the vacancy as smooth as possible.

Services and attendances during 2024

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

During 2024 there were two baptisms, four weddings, one thanksgiving, no funerals and three interments of ashes.

Regular Services

Sunday Services - Holy Communion held in church at 11am on 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays, and at 8am on 2nd & 4th Sundays. Average attendance at these services (not including Easter & Christmas) was 25.

Family Worship - held at 10am on 4th Sundays usually in Barns Green Village Hall, had an average attendance of 16 adults and three children.

Festivals

Easter 2024 - Communion was held on Maundy Thursday, and a Vigil on Good Friday. Rev'd Jack Mulder led the service on Easter Day, for which total attendance was 47, including children.

Christmas 2024 - Communion was celebrated at the Midnight Service and at the Christmas Day Family Service. Total attendance was 70, with a good proportion of children on Christmas Day. However the most popular service was the Christmas Eve Crib Service, with a congregation of 108, most of whom were young children. Children from the family service and Messy Church were involved in readings and prayers.

Remembrance Sunday 2024 – Rev'd Sally Mitchell led the annual service of remembrance, held in the village hall (with a link to the Cenotaph) to which all villagers were welcomed. Congregation was 74 including children, and the collection was given to the Royal British Legion.

Harvest Festival 2024 - The collection and gifts of food were donated to Horsham Matters Food Bank.

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Services and attendances during 2024 (continued)

'Outreach' - Services and Other Events in the Community

Messy Church - each month in term time we hold Messy Church in the Barns Green School community room, to which children from 0-11 years are welcomed with an accompanying adult. In 2024 we had between 11 and 24 people attending. The children enjoy doing at least five crafts, hearing a Bible story, prayers and a song, all based on a Christian theme and ending with a meal together. Our Messy Church group also entered a tree at the Barns Green inaugural Christmas Tree Festival. Families from Messy Church decorated the tree with ornaments they had made in the December session. The tree was then taken to St Nicolas' for the Christmas services.

Home Communion - is taken every month to four people who are now unable to attend services.

Care Home - Communion is also taken once every month to our local care home Wellcross Grange. There are additional services to celebrate Easter, Summer, Harvest and Christmas to which several members of St Nicolas' add support with music and singing. Up to 20 residents attend these services which they seem to appreciate.

Christmas Lunch - in December, all those living on their own in Barns Green or part of the church family were invited to a Christmas lunch and entertainment in the school community room. There were 23 guests.

Special Services and Events

It was the turn of Itchingfield to host the annual benefice Harvest Supper and a good time was had by all, guests were aged from four to over eighty.

The church was visited by two groups of primary school children, a Ladies History Group and some bell ringers.

Other Church Activities

Church Groups

Choir and Music - We have very much enjoyed another choral year together. There are now fourteen members on the St Nicolas' choir list, which is very exciting when working on harmony anthems and songs for various special services.

Pat Enticott, Margaret Watson and Mags Fisher continue to rotate playing the organ throughout the year. John Wickenden kindly plays for the more demanding occasions and always helps the choir to find the lost chord.

The St Nicolas' Music Group plays on the fourth Sunday of each month - normally in Barns Green Village Hall, or the church if the hall is unavailable. Members are Chris Hennock on cello, Nicola & Gary Moore on clarinet and cajon drum, Margaret Watson on harp and Mags Fisher on keyboard. Please do get in touch if you are interested in joining the choir and/or the music group!

Bellringing - the bells were rung before the great majority of mid-morning Sunday services, for four weddings, and practices were held on most Friday evenings. Through the distinctive and usually joyful sound of the bells, St Nicolas' ringers help to maintain this singular English tradition.

Church Flowers - we are very lucky to have a number of wonderful church flower arrangers that work as a team to produce fresh sustainable flowers following new guidelines of the Church Sustainable Flowers Group to help the environment. The Team produce arrangements all year except Lent and Advent. We also now request that any florists working with us on Weddings/Funerals do not use Oasis and try to abide by advice from Church Sustainable Flowers Group.

Church Cleaners - we would particularly wish to mention that unseen band of heroes who carry out the vital job of keeping the church dusted and polished, making it a place which is obviously cherished and is welcoming to visitors.

Achievements and Performance (continued)

Other Church Activities (continued)

Church Maintenance – we are so very grateful to Bob Dorkings and David Pickard for all the work they do on the enormous task of looking after an historic building dating back to the 12th century. This can mean being called out at short notice for urgent matters.

Local Fundraising - our thanks are due to Mags Fisher and her team, who with the 'Table Top Shop' have raised a remarkable sum of money over the years through hard work and spirited enterprises.

Joint Parish

A proposal to form a joint parish with Slinfold was first raised towards the end of 2023, after our becoming aware of Rev'd Sandra's retirement. The main argument for it was that having a single larger parish rather than two smaller ones might make the post of rector more attractive to prospective candidates. However some PCC members had serious reservations about the idea.

A detailed assessment was carried out over a period of several months, and special PCC meetings were convened so that focus could be concentrated on this key subject. Eventually a resolution to proceed with further investigations was lost by a majority vote, so we shall remain as at present, separate parishes within a joint benefice.

St Nicolas 900

In 2025 we shall be marking the continuity of worship at St Nicolas' Church across nine centuries with a number of events and concerts planned to celebrate the occasion.

Safeguarding

Four DBS checks have been completed this year including the Diocese's safeguarding awareness training. Annual safe checks have been completed. Thankfully no safeguarding incidents have been reported. The Diocese of Chichester has had an independent safeguarding audit which recognises improvements have been made along with recommendations for the future. We should all be aware that safeguarding is equally important for vulnerable adults, not only children and we need to stay vigilant.

Deanery Synod

The church can have up to three members of the PCC sitting on the Deanery Synod (at present there are two members). This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of Chichester diocese. One of St Nicolas' representatives is also the lay chair of the Deanery Synod.

The Synod met twice in 2024. In March, at Broadbridge Heath, Bishop Ruth spoke about her observations on the Horsham area and her role as Bishop. She emphasised the need for discipleship and on items that were influential in developing discipleship within the church. The second meeting for the year was in October in Rudgwick where the Synod debated its role, with a proposal that this house should abolish deanery synods. There was a lively debate on both the issues and benefits of the role of the deanery synod.

There is still a vacancy for a Deanery Synod secretary and the treasurer is planning to retire after this Synod, so a new treasurer will be needed in a year or so.

Goods & Ornaments

There has been one amendment to the church inventory, with two quilted green and white pulpit falls given to St Nicolas' Church. There have been no other changes to the goods and ornaments of the church during the year.

Carbon Footprint

A target has been set by General Synod for all parts of the Church of England, including parishes, to reach net zero emissions by 2030. This is something to which the PCC will pay close attention in the coming years, utilising the guidance provided by the C of E Environment Working Group and the Diocese. Nearly all of the lights within the church have now been changed to LED to help with our carbon footprint and investigations are ongoing into the church heating. A submission has also been made to the Church of England Energy Footprint Tool regarding St Nicolas' energy use.

Churchyard

This year we have achieved more wildflowers than in the last few years due to the areas being cut back lower and at slightly different times. Our contractor has made a fantastic start on re-generating the overgrown lower west side burial area and we will be doing more to that area in the coming months to bring it in line with the whole conservation area and wild areas of the Churchyard.

A dead tree was removed from the lower west area. We have used the wood to create an insect hotel and all the chippings will be used to create better paths within the churchyard.

Julian Francis kindly repaired one of our oldest donated seats to its full glory for our churchyard visitors to continue to sit on. We also replaced a seat on our green area where many walkers stop and have their lunch.

This year it seems we have had a lot more people in the churchyard doing research on graves and headstones, and we have answered lots of enquiries by email about the churchyard for family histories.

Priest's House

Whilst the Priest's House is not included within the architect's quinquennial inspection, substantial defects of the structure have become apparent. The western end of the south wall is bowed; this is thought to be largely due to the huge weight of the Horsham Stone roof bearing down on it for many years, the building having originally been constructed about 500 years ago. The east door has also become difficult to open and close.

Over the course of the year we have had plans and a specification of works produced by Hockley & Dawson and our Inspecting Church Architect. These were sent out to various companies to tender for the required repair work.

Work on ancient buildings must be carried out sympathetically by competent contractors using appropriate materials, so comes at a substantial cost. We are working with the Senior Church Buildings and Pastoral Reorganisation Officer at the Diocese to identify if any grants might be available to help us repair this precious historic building and hope to be able to commence repair work in the first half of 2025.

Church Building

Members of the Fabric Committee have continued to ensure that the maintenance plan is being followed and kept up to date. The priority works identified within the November 2021 quinquennial inspection report are gradually being addressed. An inspection of the bells and the bell frames was carried out by a specialist company in October 2024. No issues were identified in the report and very useful information and advice on the ongoing maintenance was imparted to the current steeple keeping team.

Toilet & Tea Making Facilities

The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) have been kept updated regarding progress on this long running project by the architect. Following receipt of formal support from Historic England in January 2023 supporting Option 3 (locating the new facilities in an extension on the northern side of the church, accessed via a door towards the rear of the nave) the Pre-Application Advice documentation was submitted to the various designated consultees. We received responses from the last of the designated consultees on 31st August 2023. Unfortunately, the investigation of an alternative heating system(s) for the church has implications for this project and hence progress on this project has been delayed until these investigations have been fully concluded.

Church Building (continued)

Church Heating

The current church heating system is an oil fired hot water system and in response to the wishes of the Church of England for us to move away from the use of fossil fuels by 2030 a Heating Sub-Committee was formed to investigate the possible alternatives. Visits were made by members of the sub-committee between August and November 2023 to both inspect and to experience the various electric heating systems currently being used in churches. During these visits it became clear that the existing single phase 100 amp electricity supply to the church would limit the type of heating system that could be considered. The local electricity network provider (SSEN) was approached in December 2023 to ascertain if it was possible to increase the load capacity of the existing supply to the church. SSEN were contacted again in September 2024 regarding the upgrade to a three phase supply but the potential costs and practical implications make this unfeasible. We have currently engaged a specialist consultant to carry out a site survey, review all the available information and prepare a feasibility report for submission to the DAC.

Other Property Matters

Church Lane

Following receipt of guidance notes from Church House we are unlikely to pursue the registration of Church Lane at this point. It is suggested that we just continue to repair the lane as and when necessary in cooperation with residents of the three properties.

New Car Park

The possibility of establishing a new car park in the Glebe Field to the south of the churchyard was investigated with the Diocese. However, in light of the associated costs and potential local opposition this has been progressed no further. Discussions have now been had with the Parish Council, and it is very much hoped that they will seriously consider the provision of a community car park in Itchingfield which would benefit both the local population, walkers and the church.

Financial Review

A detailed breakdown of the income and expenditure for 2024 can be found in the Statement of Receipts and Payments.

Income

- Overall donation income for the year decreased by £1,778, or 5%, with Planned Giving, Collections, Contactless Donations and Other Donations all seeing a reduction.
- Statutory fee income is also down 28%, with the number of weddings, funerals and burials being held at St Nicolas' appearing to be impacted by the interregnum.
- Grant income decreased by £731 in total, with fewer building repairs this year driving a lower VAT reclaim through the Listed Places of Worship Scheme. This has been offset by a £200 increase in the Churchyard Fund where we continue to benefit from a grant from Itchingfield Parish Council towards the upkeep of the churchyard, for which we were very grateful to see the amount of the grant increasing from £2,000 to £2,200 as costs continue to rise.
- In February 2024, the PCC gratefully received a donation of £3,500 in memory of a deceased parishioner, which has been allocated to the Churchyard Fund in line with the donor's wishes. In addition an amount of £150 was kindly donated towards a new bench for the churchyard.
- From a fundraising perspective, income of £6,160 has been raised through the Table Top Shop, which will be used towards the forthcoming project to provide toilet and tea making facilities at the church. In addition, we were able to raise £300 for our support at the Run Barns Green event and £54 through EasyFundraising.
- Interest received increased significantly in 2024 by £4,765 due to higher interest rates. Following a change in policy investment income is now allocated to both the General Fund and the Fabric Fund, as further detailed below.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure

- The largest expenditure of the PCC is the parish share of £30,540 paid to the Diocese, which continues to be due during a vacancy. This amount covers the housing, stipend and pension costs of the clergy, an allocation for diocesan central costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. The amount paid by Ickingfield PCC in 2024 increased by £992, the total representing 75% of the amount required to cover full ministry costs.
- Ministry expenses were £2,063 lower this year due to the vacancy, with a credit position of £37 being recorded for 2024 as a result of a small council tax refund on the rectory.
- Church running expenses increased by £2,109 overall, or 31%, mostly due to the churchyard where expenses were £1,530 higher than the prior year. This was driven by a number of items, including £624 for the removal of a dead willow tree, £372 for the clearance of brambles, £224 for a new bench and a £280 increase in regular maintenance costs. Given the donations received in 2024, it was possible for more of these expenses to be covered by the Churchyard Fund than usual. Church running expenses for the prior year also benefitted from a £450 one-off compensation payment from Southern Water, which was not repeated in 2024.
- Major building repairs in 2024 includes internal decoration and hole repairs to the north elevation at a cost of £1,320, professional fees on the repairs to the chancel and chimney £1,250, professional fees on the repairs required to the Priest's House £437 and a pew heating electrical survey £360.
- Whilst there was expected variation in expense types due to the normal maintenance cycles, building and maintenance costs overall remained at a similar level. Accordingly, the £2,146 surplus remaining from the £4,000 building and maintenance budget for the year, which is transferred to the Fabric Fund in accordance with our reserves policy, was at a similar level to the prior year.

Result

- Payments from the General Fund for 2023 exceeded receipts with an initial deficit of £5,270 being recorded for the year.
- However in July 2024 the PCC resolved that, from the financial year ending 31st December 2024, if the General Fund is in a deficit position at the end of the year, income generated from investments will be allocated to the General Fund until a breakeven position is achieved. Any remaining investment income will be allocated to the Fabric Fund.
- For the financial year ended 31st December 2024, deposit fund income of £5,270 has therefore been allocated to the General Fund to return it to a breakeven position, with the remaining investment income of £7,350 being allocated to the Fabric Fund.
- Whilst sufficient investment income was available in 2024 to offset the General Fund deficit, it is not a sustainable position given the cash reserves that will need to be used on building projects in the near future and declining interest rates. Expenses are continuing to rise which, against a trend of declining giving, leaves the PCC in a challenging financial position. The PCC remains focused on trying to grow the congregation and promote increased levels of giving, but this is made all the more difficult by the extended period of interregnum. General Fund reserves of £27,094 are available to cover any losses in the short-term.



Reserves Policy

- It's the policy of the PCC not to hold any money in reserve in the General Unrestricted Fund while the PCC are unable to pay their full parish share. Sufficient funds will be maintained in the current account to meet known liabilities, which includes all known expenses for the next 2-3 month period, together with provision for costs in respect of forthcoming projects (which includes repairs arising from the quinquennial inspection, the replacement of the church heating system, repairs to the Priest's House and the project to provide toilet and tea making facilities at the church). Any current year surplus over budget will be considered by the PCC towards year end, and is likely to be used to enhance the parish share payment to the Diocese the following year, with the exception of legacies and significant gifts received for general purposes, which will be tracked separately and the most appropriate use of the gift determined.
- The Churchyard Fund is a restricted fund which can only be spent on the upkeep of the churchyard, including routine maintenance and any tree surgery required. It is the policy of the PCC not to hold any money in reserve in the Churchyard Fund. Any amount remaining in this fund at the end of the year is due to timing only and will be utilised at the beginning of the following year.
- The Fabric Fund is a restricted fund which can only be spent on the fabric of the church. Consequently the Fabric Fund will build up in reserve to pay for future improvements and repairs.
- In July 2024 the PCC resolved that, from the financial year ending 31st December 2024, if the General Fund is in a deficit position at the end of the year, income generated from investments will be allocated to the General Fund until a breakeven position is achieved. Any remaining investment income will be allocated to the Fabric Fund.
- Other funds (designated by the PCC or restricted) may be set up for a specific purpose (for example to improve facilities at the church). Fundraising may be required, and so until a target figure is achieved and work commences, funds will be kept in reserve and invested.
- Reserves are currently invested through CCLA Investment Management Ltd in the CBF Church of England funds, either in the Deposit Fund (which provides interest, and is available for immediate withdrawal without penalty), or in the Investment Fund (which is equity based, and provides share income as well as long term growth). The Treasurer, in conjunction with the PCC, will determine the split between funds on an ongoing basis.
- It is the policy of the PCC that any money not spent by year end in the Building and Maintenance budget of the General Fund be designated to the Fabric Fund.

This Trustees' Annual Report was approved by the PCC
and signed on its behalf by Phillipa McBean, Vice Chair



Date: 10th March 2025

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2024

Receipts	<i>Unrestricted</i> General Funds £	<i>Unrestricted</i> Designated Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Churchyard Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Fabric Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Donations & Legacies						
Planned Giving	15,142	120	500		15,762	17,275
Other Tax Efficient Giving	815		3,500		4,315	565
Collections at Services	5,679				5,679	6,000
Contactless Donations	160				160	289
Wall Safe	243				243	177
Other Donations	4,399		150		4,549	5,542
Gift Aid Recovered	6,856				6,856	6,124
Legacies Received					0	46,394
Grants			2,200	1,555	3,755	4,486
	33,294	120	6,350	1,555	41,319	86,852
Charitable Activities						
Fees paid to PCC	1,820				1,820	2,542
Messy Church	103				103	145
Fundraising	354				354	63
	2,277	0	0	0	2,277	2,750
Other Trading Activities						
Table Top Shop				6,160	6,160	3,818
Other Fundraising Events					0	647
	0	0	0	6,160	6,160	4,465
Investment Income						
CBF Deposit Fund Interest (Note 7)	5,270			7,280	12,550	8,078
CBF Investment Fund Dividends				70	70	69
Current Account Interest	350				350	58
	5,620	0	0	7,350	12,970	8,205
Total	41,191	120	6,350	15,065	62,726	102,272
Building & Maintenance transfer from General Fund (Note 5)				2,146	2,146	2,062
Total Receipts	41,191	120	6,350	17,211	64,872	104,334

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2024

Payments	<i>Unrestricted</i> General Funds £	<i>Unrestricted</i> Designated Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Churchyard Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Fabric Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Church Activities						
Missionary & Charitable Giving (Note 1)	752				752	722
Parish Share to Diocese	30,540				30,540	29,548
Ministry Expenses (Note 2)	(37)				(37)	2,026
Messy Church	147				147	214
Other Church Expenses						
Church Running Expenses (Note 3)	4,064	240	4,640		8,944	6,835
Cost of Services (Note 4)	1,040				1,040	692
Building and Maintenance (Note 5)	1,854				1,854	1,938
Major Building Repairs (Note 6)				3,367	3,367	26,209
Registration Fees and Subscriptions	624				624	450
Bank Charges	61				61	60
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	39,045	240	4,640	3,367	47,292	68,694
Expenditure on Raising Funds				238	238	81
Expenditure on Trading Activities						
Hire of Village Hall					0	0
Total	39,045	240	4,640	3,605	47,530	68,775
Building & Maintenance transfer to Fabric Fund (Note 5)	2,146				2,146	2,062
Total Payments	41,191	240	4,640	3,605	49,676	70,837

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2024

Notes to Payments	<i>Unrestricted</i> General Funds £	<i>Unrestricted</i> Designated Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Churchyard Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Fabric Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
1. Missionary & Charitable Giving						
- Royal British Legion	340				340	395
- Horsham Matters Foodbank	192				192	180
- Harvest Supper	52				52	0
- Elderly Residents Christmas Lunch	168				168	147
	752				752	722
2. Ministry Expenses						
(Half share with Slinfold Parish)						
- General Expenses	112				112	642
- Council Tax	(149)				(149)	1,318
- Associate Priest Expenses						66
- Visiting Ministers Fees and Sundries						0
	(37)				(37)	2,026
3. Church Running Expenses						
- Insurance	1,736				1,736	1,707
- Electricity	611				611	712
- Water	117				117	(373)
- Heating Oil	1,270				1,270	1,109
- Maintenance of Churchyard	330		4,032		4,362	3,680
- Tree Surgery		240	384		624	0
- New Bench			224		224	0
	4,064	240	4,640		8,944	6,835
4. Cost of Services						
- Hire of Village Hall	349				349	301
- Organists Fees	50				50	50
- Consumables	538				538	243
- Stationery and Printing	24				24	36
- Refreshments	79				79	62
	1,040				1,040	692

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2024

Notes to Payments	Unrestricted General Funds £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Churchyard Funds £	Restricted Fabric Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
5. Building & Maintenance						
- Organ and PA System					0	1,345
- Heating & Boiler	155				155	0
- Tower & Roof	204				204	0
- Electrical Equipment	816				816	0
- Lightning Conductor					0	231
- Fire Equipment	120				120	362
- Carpentry	497				497	0
- Architect/Engineer Fees					0	0
- New Portaloo	62				62	0
Sub-total	1,854				1,854	1,938
Balance Transfer to Fabric Fund	2,146				2,146	2,062
Budget	4,000				4,000	4,000

The PCC resolved that any unspent amount in the Building & Maintenance budget remaining at year end, be transferred to the Fabric Fund towards future repair costs.

6. Major Building Repairs

- Architect and other professional fees			2,047	2,047	3,825
- Repair work			1,320	1,320	22,384
			3,367	3,367	26,209

7. Investment Income

In July 2024 the PCC resolved that, from the financial year ending 31st December 2024, if the General Fund is in a deficit position at the end of the year, income generated from investments will be allocated to the General Fund until a breakeven position is achieved. Any remaining investment income will be allocated to the Fabric Fund.

For the financial year ended 31st December 2024, the General Fund was in deficit by £5,270 and accordingly this amount of investment income has been allocated to the General Fund to return it to a breakeven position.

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	<i>Unrestricted</i> General Funds £	<i>Unrestricted</i> Designated Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Churchyard Funds £	<i>Restricted</i> Fabric Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Assets:						
B/fwd at 1 st January 2024	27,094	161,514	0	72,096	260,704	227,013
Receipts	41,191	120	6,350	17,211	64,872	104,334
Payments	41,191	240	4,640	3,605	49,676	70,837
Excess of receipts over payments	0	(120)	1,710	13,606	15,196	33,497
Increase in market value of investments				52	52	194
Balance as at 31 st December 2024	27,094	161,394	1,710	85,754	275,952	260,704
<u>Represented by:</u>						
Investments				2,312	2,312	2,260
Deposits	17,000	159,000		63,000	239,000	245,000
Current Account	9,657	2,394	1,710	20,442	34,203	13,444
Clergy expenses repayable by Diocese	437				437	0
PCC Owned Assets	27,094	161,394	1,710	85,754	275,952	260,704
Diocesan assigned fees received	193				193	236
Total Assets	27,287	161,394	1,710	85,754	276,145	260,940
Debtors						
Gift Aid recoverable	1,936				1,936	2,224
Prepaid RSCM subscription	137				137	0
Listed Places of Worship VAT grant					0	1,347
Contactless donations					0	84
Total	2,073				2,073	3,655
Total Assets	29,360	161,394	1,710	85,754	278,218	264,595
Liabilities:						
Creditors						
Chichester Diocese (fees)	193				193	236
Utilities	58				58	166
Ministry expenses					0	86
Total Liabilities	251	0	0	0	251	488

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf by:

Phillipa McBean..... Vice Chair

Date: 10th March 2025

Julia Huson..... Treasurer

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL REPORT

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and current Church Accounting Regulations, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
2. Gift Aid is recoverable on donations received up to year end, since the last claim was submitted on 29th April 2024 covering donations to 5th April 2024.
3. No payments were made to PCC members in the year other than for reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the PCC.
4. Fund Types:

Restricted Funds represents money given by donors for a specific purpose, and can only be used for that purpose. Restricted funds are not invested permanently but are to be spent within reasonable timescales.

Unrestricted (General) Funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the PCC decides. Funds that are set aside for a particular purpose by the PCC are **Designated Funds**, with the designation having an administrative purpose only which does not restrict the PCC's discretion to apply the funds.

ST NICOLAS' CHURCH, ITCHINGFIELD INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Nicolas' Church Itchingfield on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2024, as set out on pages 12 to 17.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The PCC members consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- 1) examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- 2) to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 3) to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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



Mr Patrick Casey FCA

Date 14/4/2025

61 Hampstead Road
Dorking
Surrey
RH4 3AH