

Trustees' Annual Report for the Parochial Church Council of St Mary's Church, Olveston 2023

1. Aim and purposes

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, Rev David Moss, in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

2. Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at Olveston. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services and activities can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith in to practice through prayer, scripture, music and sacrament.

In March 2018 after considering the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit, and in particular the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion, the PCC adopted the following objectives to help people to live out their faith as part of a parish community.

- Worshipping God
- Growing in Faith
- Serving Others



To facilitate this work it is important that we both maintain the fabric of St Mary's Church and consider any adaptations to the interior of the church which might better support the increasingly wide range of activities being undertaken in fulfilment of these objectives.

The objectives for St Mary's are the same as those for the other four parishes within the North Severnside Benefice and it follows that some of the activities are undertaken on a shared basis.

3. Achievements and performance

During the year we endeavour to demonstrate our commitment to the community and to the Church through a number of activities and services..

3a Worshipping God

Our vision for 2023 was :

3a 1 To recruit a Family Worker/Growing in Faith Chaplain and to advertise for the position in Q1.

After advertisements, two candidates were interviewed and Becky Cox was appointed to commence 20 hours per week from September 2023 with Rev David Moss as her Line Manager. At St Mary's she worked with Refresh and in Assemblies at both Olveston School and Tockington Manor. She also has duties at St Helen's.

Vision for 2024: to continue as above and introduce a monthly Messy Church.

3a2 (Our vision for 2023 was):Emphasis on our stewardship of God's Creation and working to meet the challenge of being carbon neutral by 2030 and to aim to achieve the Silver Award from Rocha:-

The PCC thanks the GreenForce group for their support in this objective through: managing the specialist Recycling Collections in the Churchyard, regular articles in Meeting Point, a presentation to the Annual Parish Council Assembly on 20 April 2023, joining 5 other churches in an awareness event organised by Sustainable Thornbury on 20 May, liaising with Olveston School to create an outside display – an Underwater Scene with Plastic Pollution in September and the collection of milk bottle tops.

At the Creationtide Service on 3 September a Questionnaire on environmental issues was distributed. In the light of the responses some policy adjustments enabled the application to A Rocha to be submitted and the Silver Award was received on 8 December 2023.

The PCC thanks the Buildings Team for progress towards the carbon neutral target.

Vision for 2024: to continue the emphasis as above.

3a3 (To widen the variety of services, including Taize, Celtic and to trial “Messy Church” (family friendly)

Choral Services alternate between 6 p.m. and 10 a.m. and usually a Eucharist is held each Sunday. Services of the Book of Common Prayer are usually held at 6 p.m.

The Service on Sunday 7 May to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III was attended by around 90 people who appreciated the music of the Choir and trumpeters, and was followed by fizz and canapés.

Festival Services at All Souls, Remembrance, and Christmas attract wide support.

A Joint Service is held with Olveston and Tockington Methodists during the Week of Prayer for Christian unity. We have been kept informed and supported them in their decisions needed about their buildings.

There is a planned “Messy Church” to commence at the Methodist Chapel in Olveston in Q1 2024

Vision for 2024: Introduce Messy Church when possible. Monitor and assist decisions about Olveston Methodist Church buildings and promote exchange and sharing of services.

Monitor numbers at 6 p.m. services.

Electoral Roll, Attendance, Baptisms, Confirmations, Funerals and Weddings

Statistic	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. on Electoral Roll	199	202	191	125	145	145	141	139
Sunday Adult Attendance	94	85	85	65			59	40

Sunday Under 16 Attendance	17	2	6	1			0	0
No. of Baptisms	10	3	5	4	2	1	9	13
No. of Confirmations	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No. of Funerals	23	9	11	17	10	8	13	10
No. of Weddings	4	7	3	2	1	4	5	3

Planned Giving

Statistic	2016 (£)	2017 (£)	2018 (£)	2019 (£)	2020 (£)	2021 (£)	2022 (£)	2023 (£)
Planned Giving	57,111	56,812	54,324	51,133	47,874	46,136	43,071	41,431
Loose Change	7,214	7,235	7,879	6,644	2,355	2,760	4,750	4,879

3b Growing in Faith

Our vision for 2023

To continue to encourage higher attendance to Bible Study and other small group activities

3b1. Encourage Small Group attendance

Wednesday 10 a.m. Holy Communion has a loyal following of up to a dozen.

Vision for 2024: *To continue to encourage higher attendance to Bible Study and other small group activities*

3b 2 (Our vision for 2023 was): **Adopt the “Embracing Justice” guidance with booklet as a focus of groups meeting to study during Lent**

All ministers received a copy of this book and were encouraged to make reference to it in Services. About 50 copies of the booklet were distributed free of charge to the congregation and the Weekly Sheet highlighted the theme of the week.

A Study group met during Lent in church following the Wednesday 10 a.m. service.

About 11 regularly used this booklet at CHAT group on Tuesday evenings.

£557.40 was raised and divided equally between Amnesty International and Bristol NorthWest Food bank as our Lent Good Causes.

Vision for 2024: *To use Book 1 of the Pilgrim Course in small groups and in public worship during Lent*

3b3 (Our vision for 2023 was): **To integrate and support a new family worker into the ministry team**

Having commenced working in with ministry team in September 2023, Becky has worked with the worship group and the incumbent. She also led part of the 10.am Sunday morning worship.

Benefice Daily Prayer takes place Monday to Friday on Zoom at 8.30 a.m.

Around 8 lay persons lead Intercessions in Sunday services on a rota basis.

Lay Minister Paul Harrod continues his ordination training.

The Rev David Moss is the only Stipendiary Minister in the Benefice. All other trained ministers, Rev David Bone, Rev Ann Lloyd, Janet McBride, Trevor Cook are volunteers and also carry out duties in other parts of the Benefice. Consequently the workload is heavy.

Vision for 2024: *To enlarge the Ministry Team*

3c Serving Others

Our vision for 2023 was

3.c.1. Continue to develop strong links with local schools and hold some assemblies in St Mary's Church.

The Rev David Moss and the Rev Ann Lloyd regularly deliver assembly services for both Olveston CEVC Primary School and Tockington Manor School, and both schools held Carol Services in St. Mary's. The Choir of St. Mary's sang carols at Olveston School on 1 December.

'Open the Book' delivering dramatised Bible stories continue to be well received by staff and pupils.

During Re-cycling Week in September we encouraged Olveston School in displaying a sculpture in re-cycled materials - an Underwater Scene with Plastic Pollution. A collection of milk bottle tops for recycling was promoted successfully.

Vision for 2024: *To continue the work outlined above*

3.c 2_(Our vision for 2023 was):_To be able to react quickly when needs and natural disasters occur to provide as much support with money or materials as is possible to charities.

Funds raised and distributed are set out in Para 3a on page 6 of the annexed Accounts Notes

Vision for 2024: *To continue to be able to react quickly when needs and natural disasters occur in order to provide as much support with money or materials as is possible.*

3.c 3_(Our vision for 2023 was):_To continue to provide as much support as the Saturday young families group ('Refresh').

'Refresh' continued weekly on Saturday afternoons in Term, with around 10 adults and 16 -20 children. Becky Cox, (Growing in Faith Chaplain) and her children attended.

On 16 December informal carol singing at some local homes was a joyful event and much appreciated by those visited.

Vision for 2024: *To continue to provide as much support as the Refresh group need in order to flourish.*

3.c 4 (Our vision for 2023 was):_To continue Pastoral/ Support Care Group

During 2023 the 5 members of the ecumenical (with 2 Olveston Methodist members and 3 St Mary's) support group have regularly visited parishioners. At Easter and Christmas they also delivered gifts to 25 parishioners.

Section 4. The Church Building

4.1 Vision for 2023 was: Complete the reparation and upgrading of the church organ.

During the summer months the church organ was dismantled, cleaned and moving parts repaired. Obsolete electromechanical components were replaced with readily available electronic parts by Organ builders J.W.Walker Ltd. Re-assembly and re-tuning followed.

Work was completed for the Advent and Christmas season.

Cost was £47,500. This was met by a donation of £16,000 from the Britton Family Trust.

Also a fund-raising programme by the church choir that was matched by from the church's Fabric Fund.

Completion of the work will be celebrated at a concert in January 2024 including a short performance by an organ scholar from St Mary Redcliff.

4.2 Chancel Roof Cross

The stone gable cross had collapsed and was removed, restored and replaced by Centreline Ltd of Painswick. Cost was £2,106.

4.3 Roof Repair work described in latest Architect's Quinquennial Survey Report

A new roofing contractor was employed who completed the bird exclusion guard repairs, nesting rubbish removal and roof tile repairs set out in the QQSR.

An external and internal inspection of the chancel roof revealed a felted structure in sound, but fragile condition. The recommendation to do no further work except essential repairs was accepted.

Vision for 2024: To carry out trials for full insulation of the Nave and side aisles roofspace including necessary electrical re-wiring.

4.4 Tower project final retention payment

12 months after completion of the tower refurbishment project the final retention payment of £4,302 was paid to Centreline Ltd of Painswick.

4.5 Churchyard tree management

There was an on-going programme of tree reduction and necessary removal following statutory permissions. The voluntary churchyard workgroup continued their splendid work keeping the grounds in excellent condition including areas allocated to wildflowers.

4.6. Disability access is regularly reviewed.

4.7. Churchyard: Chris Smart is leader of our churchyard team of around 12 volunteers who include several who do not regularly attend worship services. They keep this much visited space in excellent condition. GreenForce advises and monitors areas of biodiversity and good environmental practice.

. Building Projects, Repairs and Maintenance Expenditure

Work Undertaken	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
Minor Repairs and Maintenance	1,258	5,182	917	1,052	1,583	4,460	3,516	1,997

Major Repairs and Projects	25,235	7,077	18,064	9,342	483	167,039	37,716	54,067

5. Safeguarding

The parish of St Mary's is committed to safeguarding young people and adults at risk.

Our Safeguarding Officer is Debbie Harries.

The policies were reviewed in 2023 and are up to date.

Activities

The PCC oversees the following activities for children and adults, The choir, Coffee shop, Refresh, all social events and services.

Safer Recruitment and DBS

The PCC is responsible for the safe recruitment of people wanting to work with people working in these areas.

DBS Checks

As part of the safer recruitment process, volunteers working with vulnerable groups have been DBS checked at the level appropriate to the role.

PCC members are also all eligible for an enhanced DBS check, which have all been completed and up to date.

Training

Safeguarding training at different levels is a requirement for all roles. The Trustees have completed a safeguarding course on Domestic Violence delivered by Bristol Diocese courses over the last year online or face to face.

Action Plan for 2024

The safeguarding officer has an action plan created by the Parish Dashboard. This is updated regularly. Progress is reported to the PCC at each PCC meeting. Also PCC members will be encouraged to attend a training seminar on Mental Health, again delivered by Bristol Diocese...in April 2024.

6. Financial review

Total income in 2023 was £158,416, of which £113,671 was unrestricted. This includes £11,209 as Gift Aid and £1,368 in top-ups under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme. Total expenditure was £137,433, of which £75,383 was unrestricted.

Unrestricted general purposes income was £75,307 in 2023, a reduction of £708 (1%) compared with 2022. More specifically, there were reductions of £1,840 (3.4%) in planned giving by standing order or the weekly envelope scheme, and £1,048 (10%) in income from church activities. The former was mainly as a consequence of a net reduction of 3 (5 lost, 2 gained) in the number of planned givers in 2023; the latter being associated with parochial fees and Monday Movies, reflecting the fact that films are now being shown just once a month rather than twice a month as was the case previously. There was, however, an increase of £1,210 (51%) in one-off donations (largely associated with the response to the Advent Sunday Gift Appeal), whilst income from investments (£2,191) was over 3 times that in 2022, due to much higher interest rates.

Unrestricted general purposes expenditure was £69,127 which is £9,301 lower than in 2022. This was due mainly to a reduction of £12,728 (25%) in our Parish Share commitment to enable the funding of the part time appointments of a

Family Worker and Administrator within the Benefice, in September 2023. The St Mary's contribution to the cost of these two appointments covering the period September - December 2023 amounted to £4,015. In addition, there was increased expenditure in 2023 of £1,050 for utilities (reflecting the full year effect of new gas and electricity contracts during 2022) and £407 for insurance.

General purposes expenditure exceeded income in 2023 by £6,180, due mainly to the Family Worker and Administrator appointments not being made until September. Additionally, £5,000 was transferred from the Friends of St Mary's, resulting in the general purposes fund displaying an in-year surplus of £10,280 in 2023.

As far as the Fabric Fund is concerned, expenditure of £54,067 was incurred in 2023, mainly comprising £47,500 for the overhaul of the church organ, £4,302 as the retention payment for the Tower Project and £2,106 for the replacement stone gable cross. Income of £33,927 was received in 2023, including a grant of £16,000 from the Britton Trust towards the organ overhaul, and the final instalment of £5,000 of the grant from Olveston Church Lands towards the Tower Project.

Outward giving donations totalling £7,213 were made in 2023 to 10 different causes (see Note 3a of Annual Accounts for details). These included £3,520 to the Aanandit Charity in Nepal, from the proceeds of a Murder Mystery fundraising event.

Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain (where possible) a balance on unrestricted general purposes funds (free reserves) equating to approximately 6 months' unrestricted general purposes payments. This is equivalent to around £40,000, and is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow, and to meet emergencies.

At 31 December 2023 the balance of the free reserves was £46,835, which exceeds the 6 month target. However, this is related to the fact that in 2023 Family Worker and Administrator expenditure commitments related to just 4 months of the year. More generally, St Mary's faces some significant financial challenges in the future, given the age profile of our congregation and regular givers, and it should be noted that annual income

from planned giving has reduced by 20% (£13,000) over the last 5 years, at time when utility costs have increased by 9% and insurance by 24%.

The Vision Fund is an unrestricted fund, designated by PCC for projects and purchases relating to the vision of the church, and is sourced predominantly by legacies. At 31 December 2023, following receipt of a legacy of £25,000 in 2023 from the estate of the late Joan Hawkins, there was a balance of £71,658, of which £5,000 has been earmarked by PCC for projects aimed at engaging younger generations. PCC is currently considering other projects relating to St Mary's vision for the future to which funds could be allocated.

The Church Fabric Fund is the main restricted fund held by St Mary's. At 31 December 2023 there was a balance of £110,208.

It is PCC policy to invest the short-term investment fund balances with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

For a number of years, St Mary's has held restricted funds on behalf of the Severnside Group of Churches. These funds represented donations originally made towards the costs of employing a youth worker. However, this project has since been abandoned and it was agreed that 50% of the funds should be re-designated towards supporting Youth Choirs within the North Severnside Benefice. At 31 December 2023 the total balance was £1,533, with £1,270 remaining assigned to the Severnside Group of Churches, and £263 available for supporting the Youth Choirs.

Going Concern

The trustees have considered the impact of the Covid pandemic on the charity's current and future financial position. Although the impact is expected to be much less over the next 12 months, the charity will continue to take the following steps:

- Regularly monitoring its financial position;
 - Providing our congregation with a range of alternative methods of giving (e.g. by standing order, donations using online banking, online giving page, contactless payment device);
 - Critically examining all areas of expenditure and identifying where savings can be made.
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- The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:
 - The charity holds unrestricted general reserves of £46,835 and designated reserves that can be drawn down if necessary, of £71,658.

- Income (including Gift Aid) from **planned** giving accounts for 70% of our total income. We are confident that the vast majority of this income will continue to be received as 93% is by standing order.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of preparation of the accounts, as detailed in Note 1(g) to the financial statements.

7. Volunteers

We are very grateful and would like to thank all those who give their valuable time to enrich our services and our Church. St Mary's Olveston is very fortunate in having a large number of volunteers to ensure all activities undertaken by the Church are successful and we would like to thank all them. Under normal circumstances, people help in many ways including:

- the daily cleaning of the Church
- regular maintenance of the Churchyard and Graveyard
- provision and arranging of flowers in the Church
- moving chairs and erecting staging for events
- catering after weekly services and at large events
- safety inspections
- manning the equipment for Movie Club
- and many more small jobs to numerous to mention.

Friends of St Mary's

We are very grateful for the work of Friends of St Mary's, who have supported the church through fundraising activities for over 25 years. Over £100,000 has been donated in that time

In 2023 we were especially grateful that once again they donated £5,000 into Church funds. They also funded the Christmas tree for the church. In addition they provided new cleaning machinery.

8 Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England, which includes the Diocese of Bristol. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, the reader and representatives elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

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. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The full PCC met 5 times during the year with an average level of attendance of 80%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees, which include worship, mission and outreach and fabric and finance, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly with minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

9. Vicar's message for 2023 and looking forward to 2024

Thanking God for 2023

I would like to take a moment to thank God for all your love and support. I appreciate the time you dedicate to supporting the work of the churches across the Benefice. I am grateful for the Parish Share that you donate, which helps to pay my salary.

Thank-you too, for your generosity goes beyond our churches and blesses the surrounding community and the world at large. Through our various activities such as worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals, choirs, charity coffee mornings, fetes, film nights, flower festivals, concerts, and classic car shows, we have been able to raise funds to help the poorest and neediest.

I am grateful for your willingness to take risks and try new things. For St. Mary's it has been through Refresh and greater collaboration with the local school and at St. Helen's it has been the start of Messy Church. Sadly, not everything we try is successful straight away. As churches together we appointed a Growing Faith Chaplain, Becky has now moved on. I think it is important not to let go of that spiritual energy that led to her appointment.

This year I have been reminded of my age with several emails from the Diocese entitled "Planning for your Retirement". As we all grow older there is a need for us to plan and pray for the future and to hand our work to others. Whilst I have no immediate plans to retire, I would encourage the PCCs to work together in beginning to think about the type of person they would like to lead the Benefice in the future.

I am fortunate to have five wonderful congregations committed to loving each other and doing God's work in the world.

Rev David Moss (Vicar)

8 Administrative information

St Mary's Church is situated at 2, Church Hill, Olveston, South Gloucestershire, BS35 4BX. It is part of the Diocese of Bristol within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The PCC Secretary, 16 Ley Lane, Olveston BS35 4DG.

The Vicarage is in Alveston, and the contact details are:

St Helen's Vicarage, Gloucester Road, Alveston, Bristol BS35 3QT,

Tel. 01454 415190, Mob. 0789 0262 334 or email: mossds@gmail.com.

The website: <https://www.sthensalvs.co.uk/stmarys/about/> and the recently established North Severnside Facebook are important means through which the church communicates its activities with the community.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission:- number: 1134397.

PCC members who have served during 2023 and until the date report was approved are:

Role on PCC	Name	Date of Election
Priest in Charge	Rev David Moss	2nd November 2017

Wardens

Churchwarden	Mrs Debbie Harries	24th May 2023
Churchwarden	Mrs Sue Farr	24th May 2023

Deanery Synod

Deanery Synod Rep	Mrs Sue Farr	24th May 2023
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Elected Members

PCC Treasurer	Dr David Prothero	4th October 2023
PCC Secretary	Mr Bernard Amos	24th May 2022
PCC representative	Dr Michael Wright	4th October 2023
PCC representative	Mrs Stephanie Fairhead	4th October 2023
PCC representative	Dr David Shaw	4th October 2023
PCC Representative	Mr Phil Savage	4th October 2023
PCC Representative	Mrs Janet McBride LLM (co-opted)	3rd February 2021
PCC Representative	Mr Lindsey Henniker-Heaton	4th October 2023

Ex Officio Members

Rev Ann Lloyd
Rev Lady Helen Webb
Rev David Bone

Approved by the PCC on 28 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend David Moss (PCC Chairman)

