



# Christ Church Bath

## ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

**Sunday 12 May 2024  
11:30am, Christ Church,  
Julian Road, Bath BA1 2RH**

### Agenda

1. Appointment of Chair for ACM and Opening prayers
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the previous ACM (Sunday 14 May 2023)
4. Matters Arising
5. Reports
  - (i) Electoral Roll – changes in membership
  - (ii) Chair of Trustees
  - (iii) Financial Report for 2023
  - (iv) Deanery Synod
6. Elections and appointments
  - (i) Election of Churchwardens
  - (ii) Elections to Church Council – to elect 3 members
  - (iii) Appointment of independent financial examiner
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of the next Annual Church Meeting
9. Closing prayers

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# Minutes of the Christ Church Annual Meeting held on Sunday 14 May 2023 at 11:30 am

**Present:** 41 Members signed the attendance sheet (kept in the Minutes Book), 43 persons were counted by Jude Bishop.

**In attendance:** The Reverend Kara Maylor (Curate); Ben Elliott (not eligible to join Electoral Roll until 16 May).

**Chair:** The Reverend Lore Chumbley (Priest-in-Charge).

**Clerk:** Canon Simon Tatton-Brown.

**1. Opening Prayers:** The Priest-in-Charge welcomed everyone to the meeting, which she then opened with prayer.

Before moving on, she asked the meeting for permission to record the meeting to assist the secretary, and this was given.

**2. Apologies for absence** were received from the Reverends Peter and Beryl Bowes, Richard Gabe, Morny Davison and Margaret White.

**3. The Minutes of the 2022 Annual Church Meeting** had been previously circulated and were taken as read. Robin Kerr proposed and Sylvia Ayers seconded that the Minutes be approved. This was done on a show of hands, *nem con*.

**4. Matters Arising:** With reference to item 8(ii) in the Minutes, the Priest-in-Charge reported that provisional approval for the donor board and west end reorganisation had been recommended subject to any objections. The plans were on display at the back of church, and the deadline for any objections was the end of this month.

**5. Remarks from the Priest-in-Charge:** The Reverend Lore Chumbley referred to her words in the Annual Report. She said that this is the 225th anniversary of Christ Church's consecration and referred to the events and activities that have been arranged to celebrate it.

She added appreciation for how the congregation had pulled together after the Covid epidemic, with particular thanks to the Reverend Kara Maylor for nurturing us; to the choir and Mark Elliott and for the new

members who have joined; to Sarah Jones, Sarah Cade and Emma Elliott and the Junior Church and the new members; to Jude Bishop and her team who have welcomed the growing number of external events being hosted here; to the flower arrangers; and to everyone who makes Christ Church a place of welcome.

## **6. Reports:**

**6.1 Electoral Roll:** Judith Anderson reported that the Roll had stood at 93 in 2022, and today stands at 98. The Reverend Lore Chumbley thanked her for continuing in her role as Electoral Roll Officer.

**6.2 Safeguarding Procedures:** As an item of extra business, the Reverend Lore Chumbley asked the Meeting to amend the Trustees' annual report, to record that Christ Church has complied with Safeguarding Procedures with regard to our responsibilities to children in the previous year, and that this be minuted. She explained that this is a requirement, and the statement had been omitted from the Annual Report, and that this amendment had been agreed by the Chair of Trustees and Christ Church's Safeguarding Officer.

**6.3 Chair of Trustees:** The Chair of Trustees, Nick Wells, asked if there were any questions about the Trustees' written report and there were none. He then expressed the Trustees' thanks to the Reverends Lore Chumbley and Kara Maylor; to Janet Mahto and Jane Nicholson (churchwardens); to Angela Soboslay (verger); to the Trustees and especially David Bishop as Treasurer; to Robin Kerr for his work on the estate (which has saved much money in costs); and to Clive Tilling, who is stepping down as a Trustee after 30 years. He welcomed Zoe Bushell, who has been elected as a Trustee. The Reverend Lore Chumbley expressed her thanks to the Trustees.

**6.4 Financial Report:** The Reverend Lore Chumbley referred to the summary of the accounts in the Annual Report; there were no questions.

David Bishop explained to the meeting that he will be standing down as Treasurer after 13 years and commended Zoe Bushell, who has agreed to succeed him. He will continue as a Trustee. The meeting expressed its appreciation with applause.

**6.5 Deanery Synod Report:** This was taken as read and there were no questions.

## 7. Elections:

**7.1 Churchwardens:** The Reverend Lore Chumbley explained that Janet Mahto is stepping down, and the meeting expressed its thanks with applause.

The following written nominations had been received:

Jane Nicholson, proposed by Judith Bishop, seconded by Brenda Wall; and Jonathan Stead, proposed by Jane Nicholson and seconded by Janet Mahto. There being no other nominations, they were returned unopposed.

The Reverend Lore Chumbley thanked Janet Mahto and Jane Nicholson for their work, particularly their ministry of welcome, and welcomed Jonathan Stead as Warden.

**7.2 Deanery Synod:** There was confusion as whether the representatives' term of service expired in 2024 or 2023 and this item was deferred until the end of the elections (see item 8 below).

**7.3 Election to Church Council:** The Reverend Lore Chumbley explained that David Rawlings is eligible for re-election and is standing; Zoe Bushell and Richard Gabe are eligible for re-election but are standing down; Zi Ling and Isaac Elliott are standing down; and Jonathan Stead stands down as he is now Churchwarden.

She went on to explain that when more than a third of council members are to be re-elected, the Church Representation Rules require a ballot to be taken to determine the length of service for the new councillors. The following had been nominated in writing, and there being no further nominations they were declared as returned and lots were drawn for the five newly-elected members. (The numbers in brackets refer to the year when their terms will end.)

David Rawlings (until 2026), proposed by Jonathan Stead, seconded by Lucy Humbert;

Morny Davison (until 2026); proposed by Brenda Wall, seconded by Jane Nicholson,

Sarah Jones (until 2026), proposed by Georgina Bowman, seconded by William Willans

Emma Elliott (until 2025); proposed by David Bishop, seconded by Abbi Crichton,

Carol Hussey (until 2025), proposed by Peter Ellis, Seconded by William Willans

Maggie Willans (until 2024), proposed by Janet Mahto, Seconded by Jenny Hesketh.

**7.4 Independent Examiner:** David Rawlings proposed, and Robin Kerr seconded, that The Waldron Partnership be appointed Independent Examiner for the financial year ending 31 December 2023. The meeting approved this *nem con*.

**8. Deanery Synod election (resumed):** It having been established that the representatives' term of office has expired, Brenda Wall was proposed by Emma Elliott and seconded by Judith Bishop, and Pauline Swaby-Wallace was proposed Oosman Tegally and seconded by Mark Elliott. They were returned unopposed.

**9. Any other business:**

**9.1 Vote of thanks:** Jonathan Stead added his thanks to the following: to Virginia Knight for her work as Safeguarding Officer and FaceBook; to Zoe Bushell for updating the Christ Church website; to Jude Bishop for the weekly notice sheet; and to Alex Soboslay for editing the Christ Church Link.

**9.2 Annual Reports:** David Rawlings drew attention to the need to have paper copies of the Annual Report available a week before the meeting, as well as being emailed and available online. Simon Tatton-Brown pointed out that they had been placed in church for the previous Sunday.

**10. Next meeting:** Sunday 12 May 2024.

**11. Closing prayer:** Before closing prayer, Simon Tatton-Brown proposed that the meeting express its thanks to the Reverend Lore Chumbley for all her hard work, and the meeting gave her a round of applause. The Chair then closed the meeting with the Prayer for Grace.

SCTB  
21.05.2023

# REPORTS for 2023

## 1. Administrative Reports

### 1.1 Electoral Roll

The number on the electoral roll as at April 2023 was 98.

Since then, two people have been removed from the register and five added to it.

The count for 2024 is therefore 101.

If anyone else would like to be added to the roll, please ask one of the churchwardens for an application form.

Current members of the electoral roll whose address has changed since April 2023 should inform the electoral roll officer of their updated details.

I have been the electoral roll officer for at least fifteen years and would now like to pass the role on to someone else. This seems like an appropriate time, as the roll will have to be completely revised in 2025, thus giving the new incumbent a clean slate to begin with.

Data correct at time of writing (April 2024).

*Judith Anderson*

### 1.2 Report from the Curate

Christ Church has been a rich and wonderful environment in which to serve my Curacy. Together we have seen our Cedar Tree and Student community thrive and flourish.

Celebrating 225 years of Christ Church was fun and energising. In all the Time and Talent challenges particularly we have seen from what was on offer – from harp lessons to gardening skills to top IT skills – what a truly diverse and talented community we are.

It was particularly difficult saying goodbye to Lore as she retired but the way Christ Church has operated in the vacancy is to be celebrated. There is an incredible team of people who work together giving their time, energy and love to ensure that everyone continues to be supported and no one person is left with all the duties.

It will be hard to leave Christ Church in a couple of months. Though I am excited to see what God has in store in the next stage of my

ministry, I will be forever thankful for the wonderful 3 years at Christ Church where I have been supported, loved and encouraged.

*Revd Kara Maylor*

## **1.3 Trustees**

**Christ Church, Bath**

**Charity No: 1055275**

**Trustees' Annual Report 2023-2024**

### **List of Trustees**

**Chair:** Nick Wells (from 27.06.21, appointed 18.07.18)

**Secretary:** Canon Simon Tatton-Brown (appointed 01.01.19)

**Treasurer:** David Bishop (re-appointed 23.07.19)

Treasurer until 15.06.2023

Zoe Bushell (appointed 27.04.2023)

Treasurer from 15.06.2023

The Ven Adrian Youings (ex officio, Archdeacon of Bath)

The Revd Timothy Gleghorn (ex officio, Rector of Walcot)

Jenny Hesketh (appointed 28.11.19)

Sarah Sheppard (re-appointed 23.07.19)

Oosman Tegally (appointed 25.11.21)

Clive Tilling (re-appointed 23.07.19) – resigned 27.04.2023

Hilary Wild (appointed 25.03.21) – resigned 07.03.2024

Christ Church is governed by a Trust Deed dated 6 May 1801. The operation of the Deed is regulated by Standing Orders adopted by the Trustees on 23 June 2020, drawn up in the light of Charity Commission guidelines. Appointment to the position of trustee at Christ Church is for a six-year term in accordance with the Policy for the Appointment of a New Trustee, with option to renew subject to the agreement of the other trustees. Trustees are responsible for appointing new Trustees in event of vacancies. The Standing Orders also require that the trustees shall invite the Priest-in-Charge and Churchwardens of Christ Church to attend meetings of the trustees. They may participate fully in the trustees' meetings but without the power to vote.



**Public Benefit:** The trustees exercise their duties as the owners and custodians of the buildings forming part of the Christ Church Bath estate. The day-to-day responsibility for ordering the worship of Christ Church is exercised by the Priest-in-Charge with the Church Council. It is the view of the Trustees that the Charity complies with the guidance on public benefit as published by the Charity Commission, by providing buildings and open spaces for religious activities, facilities and services for the general public/mankind.

**Policies:** The Trustees have adopted the following policies: For the Appointment of New Trustees (reviewed 08.03.24); Conflict of Interest (reviewed 21.09.23); Processing Personal Data (reviewed 26.10.23); Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Procedures (revised 08.03.24) Protection of Electronic and Written Data (08.09.22\*); Risk Policy and Register (13.09.22\*); Health & Safety (19.01.23\*); Investment Policy (Oct 23\*); Standing Orders (reviewed 15.06.23). Reserves policy: It is the policy of the trustees to hold a cash reserve of at least £15,000. [\*Policies currently being reviewed by working parties.]

*Simon Tatton-Brown*

## **1.4 Chair of Trustees**

Trustees have continued to meet regularly throughout the year. Their focus remains the effective management of Christ Church's finances and to maintain the fabric of its buildings to support the ministry of the church. In addition, over the past few months, since Lore announced that she was to resign, much time has been spent on preparing for her departure, in managing the vacancy and preparing to advertise for a new Priest.

The Quinquennial inspection, the report commissioned every five years from the church's Architect, was undertaken in April 2023 and the report was received in August. The church was found to be "in good condition" notwithstanding some important repair work identified principally to the roof, external masonry and gallery windows. Much of the urgent work on the roof and masonry has been completed using Ellis & Co and Dawsons (in early 2024); with Dawsons, our steeplejacks, continuing to work, at time of writing, on the ventilators on the roof, the eastern one of which is in a poor state. This is an example of unglamorous but important work to keep the building safe and sound. A church working party organised by the Wardens to clear plant growth

around the church, completed another action deemed urgent by the Architect.

Under our Architect's advice we continue to monitor the masonry crack beneath the Gallery North West window and to date, the movement appears historic. We have previously reported that we had consulted a stained glass window specialist regarding refurbishment of the main Gallery windows and he advised that limited repair is unlikely to be effective. Wholesale repair of these windows will require external scaffolding, significantly increasing the cost. The Quinquennial inspection, as we expected, identified work is required on these windows, but not immediately. Trustees will prioritise works according to urgency; to date, the matters referred to above have been considered of greater urgency.

Our plans for putting safety rails on the church roof were not approved by the Diocese. An alternative approach has been discussed with a Diocesan advisor and we have recently received drawings from our Architect which will enable us to start the process of seeking Listed Building Consent and a Faculty. In the meantime, access to the roof is prohibited for all but two of our number, and we highlight the risks to all contractors before they go on the roof. Contractors are required to undertake their own risk appraisal before so doing.

We have had tenancy changes in all three of our rental properties during the year. We were delighted to welcome Emily Mander Hair Ltd to the premises in Upper Mews, previously occupied by the Bath Academy of Media Make-Up. A replacement flat roof has been put onto part of the Upper Mews and the main roof has been patch-repaired following a series of worrying water leaks. The roof on Cottage 1 has been patch-repaired in several places (in early 2024), and internally that cottage has been redecorated throughout, with new carpets and a new kitchen installed. The opportunity has been taken when negotiating with new tenants to raise rents to reflect current market rates.

The Quinquennial report together with the work of Ellis & Co and Dawsons have given us greater confidence that the church roof should last for the foreseeable future, as long as regular maintenance is undertaken. The Upper Mews main roof, however, may well need to be replaced within a couple of years.

We are extremely grateful for a substantial legacy received during the year from a previous long-standing member of Christ Church.

David Bishop and Robin Kerr have again undertaken a host of minor

and not so minor repairs across the estate, for which we are very grateful. Had they not, we would have needed to employ and manage local tradesmen. Over the years, they will have jointly saved the church many hundreds if not thousands of pounds. The Trustees are grateful to them for their hard work and commitment.

Zoe Bushell, our new Treasurer, has made an immediate mark. She has moved our accounting records from a large spreadsheet onto Xero accounting software, no simple task. Going forward this makes it easier for her to produce the Accounts, and for the Independent Examiners to do their work. It also enables ready analysis so we can see where we are making money and where the main expenditure is.

Simon Tatton Brown, as Secretary, has again been central to the work of the Trust, very efficiently producing agendas and minutes, keeping our Charity Commission records up to date and ensuring we maintain tight governance. All the Trust's policies remain subject to annual review and this typically leads to some updating and revision.

After many years of service, Clive Tilling resigned as a Trustee in April 2023; Zoe Bushell was appointed in his place. Hilary Wild resigned as a Trustee in March 2024, after three years' service. I thank them both for their service to the Trust.

Our focus is currently on navigating the Vacancy. We are fortunate to have Kara (until June) and our retired clergy to preside at services and so many involved in ensuring the church continues to function inside and outside the building. I also record my thanks to the hard-working Wardens and to the Vacancy Management Group who are doing so much behind the scenes to recruit a new Priest.

I pray that our recruitment is successful and that we can report on further growth in all our activities in next year's Report.

*Nick Wells, Chair, Trustees of Christ Church Bath*

## **1.5 Church Council**

Council met seven times during the year under review.

At the Annual Church Meeting on 14 May 2023 Jane Nicholson was re-elected Church warden and Jonathan Stead was elected Church warden following Janet Mahto's decision not to stand for re-election. Our deanery Synod representatives, Pauline Swaby-Wallace and Brenda Wall, were also re-elected. Zoe Bushell and Richard Gabe stood down from Council and the congregation elected Morny Davison, David Rawlings and Sarah Jones on to the Council until 2026. Jonathan Stead's

election as Church warden left a space in Council until 2024 and Maggie Willans was duly elected to serve for the remainder of his tenure. Isaac Elliott decided to stand down and Carol Hussey was elected in his place to serve the remainder of Isaac's tenure until 2025. In addition, Emma Elliott was elected to serve on Council until 2025 filling the vacancy left by Ling Zi. All were warmly welcomed.

At the first meeting the new Council elected Judith Bishop as Lay Chair and Emma Elliott as Secretary. A vote of appreciation was passed to former members Richard Gabe, Zoe Bushell, Isaac Elliott, Jonathan Stead and Ling Zi.

Council discussed the following topics:

1. Worship
2. Pastoral Care
3. West End reorganisation including the positioning of the new notice boards
4. The painting of external doors bringing them back to the original colour
5. Possible refurbishment of the Lower Mews
6. "Opting in" to same sex relationship prayers as approved by the House of Bishops
7. Charities of the month – changing from 1 per month to 1 for 2 months
8. 225th anniversary of the consecration of Christ Church and all the events associated with this as mentioned in the previous ACM booklet
9. General Fundraising including Time and Talent project

During the year Zoe Bushell stepped up to be a Trustee and took on the role of Treasurer for both Trustees and Council. She has provided Council with regular Financial Statements and latterly worked alongside a Council sub-committee towards a realistic budget for the coming year.

It was an enormous shock when our Priest-in-Charge, Lore Chumbley, took the decision to retire and would leave us in February 2024.

Nevertheless, we must thank her for working tirelessly right up to the moment she left along with all the others who continue to work so hard to make Christ Church a diverse and welcoming church, leaving us in a "good" place to manage the Vacancy that Lore left us with. The Church Council thanks you all for your support.

*Jude Bishop*

## 1.6 Safeguarding

I am happy to record that there have been no significant new incidents regarding safeguarding since my 2023 AGM report and there are no outstanding safeguarding-related cases.

At the time of writing I am preparing to populate a dedicated area on our new noticeboards with safeguarding-related information, where there will be an unobstructed view of it.

Because of the need to renew DBS checks every 3 years (rather than every 5 as before) there has been a large number of such checks in the last year, and the Trustees have agreed that I should not be the main person responsible for this task. In other churches in Bath and elsewhere where there is a significantly heavy workload of DBS checking the safeguarding role is split in this way.

We are fortunate in having a safeguarding team in Wells which is adequately staffed with people having appropriate work experience. (This may in future be replaced by a national team if the recommendations of the Jay Review are implemented.) I will shortly start using the new dashboard system for recording DBS checks and other admin; this has been introduced to facilitate auditing of safeguarding work in the Diocese. I have participated in online diocesan forums but in practice these are more useful for novice safeguarding officers and I have not seen any others from Bath churches taking part. I would like there to be ways of having contact and fellowship with my counterparts in other local churches.

By the time of the AGM it is planned that we will have held our first “Safeguarding Sunday” with a specially themed liturgy. Similar services have been held at a number of other churches in the Diocese. I hope that this will reinforce the message that safeguarding is everyone’s concern, and not an isolated role given to one person in the congregation.

*Virginia Knight, Safeguarding Officer*

## 1.7 Treasurer’s Report on the Financial Year to Dec 2023

This year has seen a change of Treasurer, with David Bishop retiring from the role after 13 years of service. There has been an extended handover period during which David effectively continued in an assistant Treasurer capacity while we navigated the arduous process of changing signatories and online banking access with NatWest. Since the end of the reporting period, this seems to have finally been

resolved successfully to allow a full handover of all duties. I would like to thank David for all the work he has put in over the years and for his invaluable ongoing support on finance matters using his extensive knowledge built up over more than a decade.

## **Review of Income and Expenditure**

Income for the year ended 31st December 2023 was £238,451 and expenditure was £172,035, resulting in a surplus of £66,416 before net gains / losses on investments. This compares to income of £131,838 and expenditure of £116,703 in 2022, with a resultant surplus of £15,135, again before net gains / losses on investments.

Income from donations and legacies increased significantly to £144,735 (2022: £71,784). Within this total the main increases were in legacy income, thanks to a generous legacy from the estate of a church member, and in donations, which included the results of the successful Time and Talents fundraising activities as well as some other major donations. There was a modest increase of 2% in planned giving to £54,486 (2022: £53,197).

Events continued to generate a useful income stream, as well as bring new people into the building. The income from events stood at £14,416 (2022: £5,909), which included ticket sales from the successful Saltlines and Leveret gigs, as well as continued hires of the church by Toppings and other local groups.

Running costs for church activities, incorporating everything other than the costs of maintaining the investment properties and direct costs of putting on events (e.g. performer fees), increased by about 10% to £109,829 (2022: £100,872).

Wages form the largest component of these costs at £40,018 (2022: £33,066). This encompasses the employed staff as well as the freelance cleaner and other occasional freelancers such as organists to deputise when needed. The increase in cost relates in part to Will Beech joining as Organ Scholar late in 2022, coupled with inflationary pay increases.

The contribution to the Diocese was increased from £15,000 in 2022 to £16,500 in 2023 and was paid in full during the year.

Utility expenditure saw a small increase from £7,526 in 2022 to £8,077 in 2023. The electricity moved to a new contract in November 2023 after the previous three-year fixed deal ended. Due to the energy prices rises triggered by global events over recent years, the new contract has unit rates 75% higher than under the previous contract. The current gas contract ends in the summer of 2024, and the new

contract which has been signed to replace that will see unit rates increase by 85%. The full impact of these new contracts will be felt going into the winter of 2024/25.

The only area of expenditure which saw a significant decrease was repairs and maintenance of the church building, which fell by 26% to £15,801 (2022: £21,480). Expenditure in this area is highly variable depending on if/when significant works are required. The quinquennial inspection during 2023 produced a list of recommended maintenance in order of priority, so this will guide expenditure in this area over the next five years. Of the £15,801 expenditure during 2023, £9,370 related to works carried out by Ellis & Co towards the end of the year to tackle the highest priority quinquennial works, including some re-roofing and masonry repairs. The rest of the expenditure was on minor day-to-day running repairs to the church building, fixtures & fittings.

The investment properties generated rental income of £68,586, an increase of 41% on the previous year (2022: £48,636). There are several factors driving this increase. The Upper Mews was vacant from June 2023 until April 2024, so there were 6 months during 2022 when it was not earning rental income compared to 3 months in 2023. It has also been possible to increase the rental charges for all premises in line with market rates.

The associated cost of managing the investment properties was £48,289 (2022: £5,692), leading to a net income of £20,297 (2022: £42,994). The decrease in net income for 2023 relates to one-off legal and professional costs incurred on setting up the lease for the new Upper Mews tenant and substantial repairs being required to the roof and kitchen floor of Cottage 1.

### **Financial Position**

As at 31st December 2023 the charity had net assets of £2,109,229 (2022: £2,039,725) and net current assets of £174,809 (2022: £101,604). This is all held in unrestricted general funds. The charity has sufficient funds to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

*Zoë Bushell*

*(see table, next page)*

<b>SUMMARY FIGURES FOR 2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>Donations and legacies</b>		
Legacies	76,218	6,002
Planned Giving	54,486	53,197
Donations	14,031	4,006
Grants	–	8,579
	<u>144,735</u>	<u>71,784</u>
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Cedar Tree café sales	1,735	1,200
Service fees	4,997	2,528
Other	90	–
	<u>6,822</u>	<u>3,728</u>
<b>Other trading activities</b>		
Venue hire	4,689	5,530
Events	9,727	379
	<u>14,416</u>	<u>5,909</u>
<b>Investments</b>		
Rental	68,568	48,636
Dividends and interest	3,892	1,781
	<u>72,478</u>	<u>50,417</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>238,451</u>	<u>131,838</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Raising funds</b>		
Events costs	7,127	3,137
Rental property costs	48,289	5,692
	<u>55,416</u>	<u>8,829</u>
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Wages and staff costs	40,018	33,066
Church groups and activities	11,393	6,578
Diocesan contribution	16,515	15,000
Utilities	8,077	7,526
Repairs and maintenance	15,801	21,480
Administration	16,669	11,421
Professional fees	1,356	5,801
	<u>109,829</u>	<u>100,872</u>
<b>Other - Depreciation</b>	<u>6,790</u>	<u>7,029</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>172,035</u>	<u>116,730</u>
<b>NET GAINS ON INVESTMENTS</b>	<u>3,088</u>	<u>-4,410</u>
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</b>	<u>69,504</u>	<u>10,698</u>



## 1.8 Deanery Synod

Christ Church considers it very necessary to remain active in the Deanery and also the Diocese. Although we are a “peculiar” we are very much part of the network of churches throughout Bath and Wells and see it as our duty and our pleasure to support other, less well-off churches (in particular “magnificat” parishes) with funds and especially our prayers. I was elected to Deanery synod and then Diocesan synod some years ago and have found them both supportive and important. Personally, I find it uplifting to go to meetings of fellow Anglican Christians I may not know, to worship together and discuss the work of the church in our areas.

Since the pandemic two main areas of concern have been on our agendas: finance and LLF. It is heartbreaking to hear the plight of many parishes, severely strapped for cash, with ageing congregations, but encouraging to know that Christ Church has been able to share with other parishes.

The Deanery Synod meets around the deanery and each meeting (about four a year) begins with an act of worship. What contrasting styles of prayers, hymns, songs and buildings I have encountered! What a pleasure it was to return hospitality at Christ Church. (Yes, our choir is by far the most outstanding!)

The programme “Living in Love and Faith” has proved to be controversial at both levels. After the Diocese put together a video and document for discussion in all parishes, it was a shock to find that some had not heard of the programme (in some places communication somehow hadn’t made it to the PCC), some had not met to discuss it, some had rejected it. Christ Church had a very pleasing up-take of the meeting to discuss LLF and the Church Council voted to adopt its content. Christ Church is officially open and inclusive!

Diocese finances continue to give concern, but along with our inspiring Bishop, we prayerfully support the finance team.

I have discovered interesting, prayerful, compassionate and committed people both at Deanery and Diocese level. We can have hope for the future in Bath and Wells.

*Brenda Wall*

## 2 Reports on Church Activities

### 2.1 Bell ringing

To start on a high note – we rang for every Sunday morning Eucharist in 2023; on other occasions as required; and, of course, there was the Coronation, with a record attendance that Saturday afternoon, including many new ringers in the “Ring For The King” campaign.

Our practices have continued – with varying support; and I fully accept that not everyone can afford to give up Saturday mornings. However, with the more usual evening practice not available under current restrictions, we do the best we can.

Also on Saturdays, the only way to have visiting bands on a weekend is to give up part of our own practice time; but we do it, because I’m very keen to welcome visiting bands.

We rang two quarter peals – which also had to be in the practice “window” – and there was a try for a full peal, to celebrate the 225th anniversary, on the actual day; this, however, was unsuccessful, to the regret of all. (The same band succeeded on a second try in January this year.)

There was one half-day outing of our own, to Nempnett Thrubwell – famous in song and story – and Winford. A planned weekday expedition to the premises of Matthew Higby & Co, in connection with work on the ropes, unluckily coincided with our own private Covid outbreak, and will have to wait for another day.

In February, Matthew himself responded at very short notice to a call-out, when difficulties arose with one of the bells. More work is planned when circumstances permit.

At our AGM last year, Dave Kelly announced his intention of stepping down as steeple-keeper, after an association with Christ Church that began more than forty years ago, with putting the old ring in some sort of order after decades of neglect. His successor is David Guy, elected at this year’s AGM.

Maggie’s teaching programme continues, with the simulator in constant use, especially for the “Open Sessions” on Thursday evenings, for new ringers and improvers. So for anyone thinking of learning – the opportunity is there.

I cannot finish without paying tribute to the encouragement and appreciation we have enjoyed from all levels of the community at Christ

Church; and to thank the Revd Lore for her unstinting support during her time as Priest-in-charge.

*William Willans, Tower Master*

## **2.2 Cedar Tree Café**

We welcome everyone to the Cedar Tree Café on Fridays. Folk visiting the church can enjoy a light lunch or a simple cuppa and homemade cake. Our regular customers love the chance to chat, share worries or celebrations and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere in the church. Some will tussle with a crossword together or engage in tabletop Jenga games. Others will help make gift cards for sale in the church. There is a real family feel to the sessions on the part of the volunteers and those who come to share meals.

*Jenny Hesketh*

## **2.3 Charitable giving**

During 2023 we adopted the policy, agreed by Council, that “Charity of the Month” would support only six charities a year, thus giving more time, over two months, to raise funds for each charity. Giving in the plate picked up slightly during the year after the pandemic had greatly reduced previous donation levels. In some cases people gave online directly to the charity or via JustGiving, so the amounts below are not the final tally of funds raised.

The charities were:

January/February: Burlington House - £110.10

March/April: Spafford Center in Jerusalem - £513.15

(This charity was selected by the Junior Church and has a very personal connection as the Center was founded nearly 100 years ago by the family of Lady Cope, a member of our congregation. The Junior Church raised this excellent amount through their own creative fundraising efforts.)

May/June: Bath Ethnic Minorities Senior Citizens Association (BEMSCA) - £126.00

July/August: USPG - £195.50

September/October: Bath City Farm - £619.35

(This large sum was a result of both plate giving and the proceeds from a very successful series of recitals organised by Dr David Winters, our Organist and Assistant Director of Music.)

November/December: Genesis/Julian House - £294.93 each

Many thanks to the congregation for supporting these charities so generously and to those who championed their various charities. We continue to welcome suggestions and comments from the congregation as to local charities to support.

Christ Church embarked on two major fundraising activities during 2023, namely Time and Talent, and the Julian Road Celebration Fete.

It was the third Time and Talent project that the church has embarked upon and this one proved to be the most successful with 39 participants taking part, and with the whole congregation supporting it enthusiastically. Participants offered a range of goods and services, and it culminated in a MiniFete held in the Lower Mews to which the local community was invited. Council decided that the proceeds of this year's project would be split between Christ Church and Mentoring Plus, a local charity that works with young people facing emotional and learning issues. It was coincidental that as Christ Church celebrated its 225th anniversary in 2023, Mentoring Plus turned 25. The project raised an amazing £5,500 and Mentoring Plus was delighted to receive half.

In conjunction with our neighbours, St Mary's Catholic Church and the Museum of Bath at Work, we organised a very festive Julian Road Celebration in the form of a fete. In spite of heavy rain, it was a great success and we were blessed by the close working relationship that it developed with our neighbours. The proceeds were split between the Museum and BEMSCA (a social organisation based at Fairfield House that provides a range of support services for the city's ethnic minority senior citizens.)

Not only has the congregation been able to support the charities mentioned in this report, but the various fundraising activities have developed stronger bonds of fellowship among the Christ Church congregation.

*Jonathan Stead*

## **2.4 Choir & Music**

I think it's worth noting that this is, remarkably, the first time since Covid I'm writing a report with the choir having had a full year of "normal" singing! It's a delight, therefore, to be able to say that the choir is in very good shape, with new members joining, including new junior choir members, and with a high standard of singing being

maintained. There have been the usual highlights around Christmas and Easter, of course, and all those services went extremely well, but I'd also like to mention the 225 Celebration Service. Inspired by the words of the Te Deum being written around the walls of Christ Church, the choir sang the "Collegium Regale" setting of that text by Herbert Howells. This is a hard piece of music! It came off brilliantly, and it's always a great pleasure to see the choir rise to the challenge of being set stretching pieces like that to sing.

Outside of the liturgical music we've also continued to hold concerts during the year across a wide range of genres from folk to choral to orchestral to opera. The flexibility of the east end of the church really does make it a very attractive venue for all types of musical performance, and we are steadily building up Christ Church's profile as a concert venue. (I'm delighted that Bath Festival will be using us this year for silent movie with organ improvisation, for example.)

I continue to be supremely grateful to everyone who puts in so much effort to make the music at Christ Church what it is. To Emma for her work with the Junior Choir, to David and Will for their organ playing, and to the whole choir for their continued commitment to enhancing the worshipping life of Christ Church.

I say something similar in every report, but I think it's worth repeating each time – having a congregation who want and value the liturgical music we provide is vital, and it's a privilege to serve in a church where the music is so obviously appreciated.

I will finish by mentioning how grateful I am to Lore for the huge support she showed for the music at Christ Church over her time as Priest-in-charge. Relationships between vicars and church musicians can, notoriously, be quite fraught! But there was never a hint of that with Lore. Our working relationship was one of mutual respect and constructive, creative discussion. I will miss working with her a lot.

*Mark Elliott*

## **2.5 Concerts and Events**

Last year's report promised a year of diversity for 2023 and I think we have achieved that.

The Lower Mews was used for the following:

- Local authority polling station
- Bath Councillor surgery on Saturday mornings

- Film location base for a film crew who were filming a TV series in and around the Queensberry Hotel
- Mindful exhibition of Daphne Radenhurst's creative arts
- Talks associated with the Time & Talent project, in archaeology and tips on public speaking

The church has been even busier with:

- Topping Book shop – 11 events held over the year from February through to November including personalities such as Clive Myrie, Justine Picardy on Coco Chanel, Revd Richard Coles and James Comey, who gave us a very interesting talk into the workings of the FBI
- 2 Folk gigs – Leveret in March and Saltlines in July
- Party in the City – Bath Festival asked Christ Church if they would host amateur groups during the opening night of the Festival
- Various choirs and orchestras – Ramshackle and the Bath Tub Orchestras both individually and together
- Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) used Christ Church for their end of summer weekend in late August
- David Winters organised a short recital series with organ and chamber music through September and into October

Along with the Bath Museum at Work we organised another Julian Road Community outside event, which was a great success and raised funds for BEMSCA.

All these events would not be possible if it wasn't for the very generous help of a few people so thank you to everyone who puts aside some time to assist at these events.

*Jude Bishop*

## **2.6 Hospitality**

As ever, the past year has been full of opportunities to get the wine glasses out to complement sweet and savoury food, Christ the King and Christmas service to name but a few.

We continue our coffee after Sunday Eucharist, giving the congregation time to socialise and catch up with the local gossip.

I am always grateful to those who help, so thank you very much.

*Jude Bishop*

## 2.7 Junior Church



With an ever-changing cohort of children in church, we continue to do our best to support them and provide fun and inspiring learning opportunities about the Christian faith. We hope that we give them a chance to explore their own faith, and doubt, in a way that is meaningful to them. When we put together our own special version of the Bible for Lore's leaving gift, we were interested to see stories which have particular significance.

The Junior Church and leaders were incredibly sad to say goodbye to Lore. She has been a tremendous support to the children at Christ Church, their parents, and those who work with them in church. She was generous with books and beautiful toys for the creche area, but most importantly, she took the time to get to know the children individually, and to learn about their interests. We wish her and Colin well.

We are incredibly grateful to Fiona, who has joined the team this year, and the children love her sessions. Having fresh eyes is valuable and we hope that we can encourage others to consider giving their time to run session on a Sunday morning, on a rota basis. We continue to run two groups split by age. Although the older group covers a wide age range, this seems to best-serve the needs of our children, with the limitations that we have on space and leaders. We would also like to express our thanks to Kara, who is ever supportive, and is doing her best to bolster the team.

Highlights for us from this year have been:

- our Nativity play, which was well-received, as always. Thank you to Sarah J for her beautiful writing.
- a wonderful Christmas service (with a real donkey!), which was very well-attended, attracting lots of extra visitors.

- Apple picking day (even in the rain!) – and our thanks go to Janet for hosting this event.

Anyone interested in helping on an occasional or more regular basis should get in touch. We will be hosting a “Finding out” session soon, with coffee and cake, so you can find out more about what’s involved. Please continue to remember us in your prayers.

*Emma Elliott*

## **2.8 Pastoral Care Group**

We keep in touch with members of the church who no longer find it easy to attend in person or who worship online. We phone or visit where appropriate and invite them 3 or 4 times a year to a special afternoon service and tea party. There, they meet up with old friends and enjoy a chat over cream tea and homemade cakes. It is important that they can continue to feel part of the Church Family.

*Jenny Hesketh*

## **2.9 Pilgrim Group**

The Pilgrim Group, now ten years old, meeting every other Thursday, has become an important part of Christ Church life for the group of fifteen, who meet regularly in the Mews.

Over the last year we have been working on deepening our theological knowledge and faith, and widening our thinking. Originally it was intended to be a Bible study group, but having studied Genesis, Mark, Job and some of the Epistles of Paul, we have widened our reading into poets and theologians, suggested by members of the group and led by us all in turn. We have read the letters of Bonhoeffer from prison, the broadcasts of C.S. Lewis in the Second World War, we looked at Sanctuary with Christopher Jamison and the wide-ranging writing of Richard Carter. We’ve read some Thomas Merton, some Pope Francis, some Rowan Williams. During the last three summer breaks we have had a summer festival when guest speakers spoke about “Taking Christianity out of the Church”, “Spirituality” and “Spirituality on the Edge”. Sadly, there will be no summer festival this year.

Out of Pilgrim has emerged early morning Zoom devotions throughout Advent and Lent, and this year we had a Pilgrim Agape service.



We are a friendly, open and inclusive group and we always welcome new members. Please call Bren on 07968 201148 if you would like to know more!

*Brenda Wall*

## **2.10 St Andrew's School**

At St Andrew's School we have been experiencing considerable change. We lost our much loved Head Mrs Jayne Rochford-Smith when she took early retirement at New Year. Since then Mrs Victoria O'Brien, our interim Head, has been invaluable in keeping us all on track, for which we are most grateful.

In the last week we have appointed a new permanent Head, Mr Grant Swarbrooke, who comes to us in September. Grant is currently Head of Swainswick Church School, which like us is a member of the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust. So he already knows something of us.

St Andrew's was recently referred to as a "peach of a school", and I am proud to continue as one of the foundation governors. This "peach", it must be said, has its work cut out. As of today – and our numbers do keep changing somewhat – we have 239 children on our books. Including our nursery, we have 20% of children with Pupil Premium, 34% with EAL (English as an additional language) and 21% with SEND (special educational needs).

So, St Andrew's is an exciting place to be, in many senses of the word. And I know that it is very grateful for its link to Christ Church, and for your continuing interest and generosity.

*Sarah Sheppard, Foundation Governor, St Andrew's School*

# Christ Church Council 2023-24

## Ex officio

–	(Priest-in-charge)
Revd Kara Maylor	Curate
Jane Nicholson	Churchwarden
Jonathan Stead	Churchwarden
Pauline Swaby-Wallace	Deanery Synod rep
Brenda Wall	Deanery Synod rep

## Elected until 2024

Judith Bishop	Lay Chair
Malcolm Wall	
Maggie Willans	

## Elected until 2025

Lucy Humbert  
Emma Elliott  
Carol Hussey

## Elected until 2026

Morny Davison  
Sarah Jones  
David Rawlings

Three members to be elected at this ACM will serve until 2027.

# Office holders as at 12 May 2024

## Churchwardens

Jane Nicholson

Jonathan Stead

## Deanery Synod Representatives (*until 2026*)

Pauline Swaby-Wallace

Brenda Wall



Christ Church is a proprietary chapel consecrated in 1798 “for the free use of all such persons as might wish to attend divine service according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England.” (Christ Church Trust Deed 1801)

As part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, “In response to God’s immense love for us we seek to be God’s people living and telling the story of Jesus.”

As part of the Church of England, our mission is “To promote the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.”