
ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, BRANDESTON

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

Priest-in-charge:

(Rural dean: Revd Chris Davey up to 26th July)

Revd Ann Kember: Commencing 26th July

01473 791505

Bank:

HSBC Bank plc

20 High Street, Saxmundham IP17 1DB

Independent Examiner:

Mrs Persephone C. Booth ATT(Fellow)

Timbers Church Rd, Kettleburgh,

Woodbridge, IP13 7LE

01728 723502

Safeguarding Officer

Lesley Bensley

07901 882464

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ALL SAINTS' CHURCH – ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

All Saints' PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest-in-Charge, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. [PCC (powers) Measure 1956 Section 2]. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for the Cemetery Chapel and graveyard.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL:

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following people served as members of the PCC. Their term of office, excluding the priest-in-charge, ends at the APCM in 2023.

Priest-in-Charge:	the Revd Ann Kember Ex officio (from July 2023)
Churchwardens:	Mr Christopher McArthur Ex officio (from April 2022) Mrs Mary Baker (Elder) Ex officio
Deanery Synod Rep:	Mrs Alison Molyneux Ex officio Mr Paul Baker Ex officio

1. Election of PCC with 6 elected members.

Mr Chris McArthur (Vice-Chair/Tower Captain) Co-opted

Mrs Lydia Freeman (from 2014)

Mrs Ruth Garratt (from 2013)

Mrs Kelly Jeffery

Mrs Marion Kirton from the 2016

Mrs Janet Weston (to January 2023)

Mrs Maida Campbell (from April 2019)

Mr Martine Crane (co-opted October 2023)

6 elected members

COMMITTEES

The PCC operates one official committee which meets between full meetings of the PCC. This is the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact business of the PCC between meetings, subject only to directions given by the Council. The standing committee in our parish comprises: Clergy, P Baker, M Baker, A Molyneux C McArthur and K Jeffery. A meeting was held on 27th May to discuss grant applications for repairs. They also agreed to have the ash tree in the cemetery chapel pollarded.

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Following the upheaval of the Covid years, the church year for 2023 was looking much more like normal, although for the first part of the year we were still without our own priest. During this time, we were extremely thankful to Revd Deirdre Parmenter and Revd John Hare who took on many of the duties of a priest in charge, supported by the Rural Dean. In July, we were delighted to welcome Revd Ann Kember as our priest in charge along with her husband Mick. Ann is working on a part time (0.5) arrangement and she has already made a huge and positive impact in the Orebeck Benefice.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

There were: 0 baptisms, 1 weddings and 1 funeral services in the church during the year.

Average attendance at Sunday services in church was 12 adults and 0 children.

Zoom services for the Orebeck Benefice had an average of 8-10 participants. As agreed, the Zoom numbers were included in the Kettleburgh Diocesan Statistics.

The service on Easter Sunday was attended by 28 people.

The Christmas Eve service at Brandeston was held this year. Numbers attending were significantly higher than the dip of the previous year. There were 65 worshippers with regular worshippers, along with family guests making up the numbers.

The number on the revised electoral roll in December was 36.

WORSHIP

Services followed the normal pattern throughout the year with Revd Deirdre Parmenter and the Revd John Hare giving us significant support up to the arrival of Revd Kember. The elders continued to lead morning worship and other non-communion services. Friday afternoon prayer services were moved to Mondays, giving the elders and clergy an opportunity to meet and plan as well as to pray.



We were happy to hold an Easter Sunday service this year, as well as our usual Good Friday family service which was well attended, with all the members of the congregation taking part in the activities.

A special service was held to mark the coronation of King Charles III Brandeston, along with Kettleburgh Church, on 7th May 2023.

This year's Remembrance Sunday service was held at Brandeston, with members of the Deben Valley Scout Group attending with their families.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Framlingham College Prep School continue to use the church for services every week. We are very grateful to the college chaplain, Revd Brynn Baymann, for all that he does. The Christingle service is always a lovely occasion and it demonstrates the cooperation between the church community and the school community.

HOLIDAY CLUB

REPAIR SQUAD!



Holiday club continued to be held at Brandeston Village Hall, an excellent venue. The theme was “Repair Squad”, and we talked about repairing minds and bodies and also the environment. Many of our children came from places away from Brandeston, as they were visiting local grandparents, so it gave our local children an opportunity to make new friends and brought an extra dimension to our focus on building relationships. The children really do support each other well. The large team of adults included clergy from our benefice and the Earl Soham benefice, as well as the all-important helpers, to provide snacks and keep everybody busy with activities.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Report on actions discussed and approved by PCC/Standing Committee during 2023

The meeting in January started on a sad note as our opening prayers remembered Ruth Risk and Janet Weston who both died in January. Janet was our organist and Ruth a long-standing member of the church and village community. Both had been members of the PCC.

We welcomed our benefice safeguarding officer. Lesley Bensley has been a safeguarding officer before and has completed the diocesan training. We need to keep our training and any necessary DBS checks up to date and keep her informed. We agreed that we would keep £10,000 as our target for paying the parish share and that we would pay £500 per month and top it up at the end of the year. Progress with the recruitment of a new priest was slow, but the elders and retired clergy were keeping services going. Progress with the work following the Quinquennial report was also slow with Mr McArthur having to contact the architect to find out what was happening.

The March meeting approved the report and accounts for 2022. It was reported that Charsfield house (former property of Graham Ledger) was being purchased by the diocese for our new vicar.

Plans were made for the Celebration of the Coronation with a Church service at 10am and a Village tea party on Sunday May 7th. The day of the party was wet but we still had a chance to dress up, eat good food and have fun!

In July the main topic for discussions was planning for quinquennial work. The Standing Committee decided unanimously at its meeting on 27th May to aim to raise the full amount of £52,185 and to do as much of the quinquennial work as possible.

The PCC accepted the recommendations of the standing committee, having heard that we now had £19,700 in our reserves to pay towards restoration. The PCC endorsed the decision of the standing committee and agreed that we had a very good starting point for grant applications.

Revd Ann Kember was welcomed to the Orebeck Benefice and was licensed to serve by the Bishop at a service in Brandeston church on Weds 26th July. This was followed by a reception in the village hall.



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We heard that The Friends of the Chapel were doing some minor works on the chapel building as well as caring for the grounds. The Standing committee agreed to have the ash tree topped. Our contractor, Kindlewood, obtained permission for this work to be done. The district council approved this. Mrs Baker, with a friend, counted 70 + species of flowers in the Churchyard and there were 150 orchids of 3 varieties at the chapel, mostly pyramidal.



We also made plans for the July 29th art exhibition held at the village hall, and chapel and the church. The church was responsible for providing refreshments in the hall. On display in the church were Nancy Demetriadi's altar frontal, and stoles and communion cup covers, Hector and Mary Moore's metal candle holders, kneelers, old Bibles, Nansambo gifts, Christmas figures, the World War 1 display by the school, flower arrangements, vicar photos, grave maps, and a bell ringing display.



In October we held a joint PCC meeting with the other PCCs from the benefice where we discussed safeguarding matters and ideas for working together as a benefice. It was a very successful meeting and we followed it with our own meeting which focussed on fund-raising events. The fête in September was a great success, raising a total of £3500 which was divided equally between the village hall and the church. The Horkey was an enjoyable evening for everyone and raised money to ensure it can continue into the future. Our thanks go to all who helped with either of these events as well as those who supported them. We also discussed plans for the Christmas Fair on 9th December.

FOOD BANK

The church has organised a monthly food bank collection which is delivered to the Salvation Army in Woodbridge. Donations are still buoyant and our contributions are gratefully received. The donations go to people throughout the East Suffolk area. Our initial intention to carry out this scheme for a few months, was extended thanks to the generosity of the people of Brandeston and as a result of the growing need for this service.



DEANERY SYNOD REPORT.

The meetings have heard a talk about vocations, ranging from ministry training to roles within the church community. We are still entitled to 2 deanery synod reps. At a meeting at Wickham Market Revd Canon Brynn Bayman talked about life of a school Chaplain. It was a very interesting talk about his work including mental health, sport and taking 4 services every Friday for congregations ranging from 5 to 90 years old.

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At the autumn meeting Gary Peverley, the Diocesan secretary spoke about the diocese's work for clergy and parishioners; about the challenges that it faces due to older and reduced congregations and fewer clergy. The diocese raises money by renting out property and through parish giving. It finances, among other things, safeguarding work, grants, websites, HR work, media contacts and giving platforms. It also works alongside the NHS, local councils, voluntary organisations, schools and social care settings to build up faith in these areas.

PARISH MAGAZINE

The Orebeck Benefice magazine, a Slice of Suffolk, has brought together everything that is happening in the seven churches and villages. Jan Baldwin has done the editing during this time with Nan Waterfall organising publication, distribution and advertising. Sadly, Jan is no longer able to carry on with this task and we have not found a replacement. Temporary arrangements have been made in some of the villages, but we would love to hear about anyone who could offer their help with the benefice magazine. Thank you to Nan and to Jan for their hard work.

VILLAGE CAROLS

After last year's freezing weather, we held the carols indoors this year. A team of helpers ran the bar and sold soup, and everyone sang with enthusiasm. The event was once again enhanced by the band. Thank you to them and to all the helpers. Father Christmas toured the village on his illuminated tractor and we had a good number of children with us for the carol singing. Altogether, we raised £330 for St Elizabeth's Hospice.



ALL SAINTS CHURCH – FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS

During the year we have not had repairs or works undertaken on the church as we await final details on the specification, grant outcomes and final cost for the quinquennial repairs. Our architect Ruth Blackman does a very good job but because of her single person business is often delayed in dealing with matters. 2024 will be the year when these repairs work start. The financial policy of the PCC has enabled us to grow our fabric fund, ready for this significant expenditure, likely to be more than £50K., but a lower option for repairs at £22K is an alternative. The church remains in very good condition including the churchyard. A boiler breakdown was repaired at considerable cost and all other matters are satisfactory.

SAFEGUARDING

The PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. There have been no reported incidents and safeguarding is an element on the agenda at all PCC meetings. Our benefice safeguarding officer is Lesley Benson.

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BRANDESTON BELLRINGERS

We continue to ring for the important occasions and services thanks to our local group of ringers and this included ringing for the Coronation of our new king Charles the Third. We have been active via village publications/social media in trying to recruit new ringers but currently that was unsuccessful. This trend is however common in similar rural parishes these days and we continue to work hard to find younger ringers. Thanks particularly to our village ringers who are great at finding ringing time, they include four members of the Oswald family, Richard Baldwin, Persephone / Rob Booth and Ruth Darton, plus the Tower Captain Christopher McArthur. Other local ringers support us on request. The bells remain in good order and ring well.

MORTUARY CHAPEL

The chapel building is consecrated church property and was included in the quinquennial report for the first time; some repairs are planned by the church and the Friends of the Chapel jointly, who kindly look after the building on our behalf. It remains in good condition however and the "Friends" raise money for the upkeep occasionally. In the churchyard we thank Ivor and Barry for the splendid way the churchyard is regularly mowed in the West half, and the East section is managed by our churchwarden's tractor/cutter. As a result, the spring wildflowers continue to be a fantastic display particularly the orchids. A large overgrown yew tree was pollarded last February on the advice of our architect, in view of the proximity to the chapel, other overgrown large yews particularly in the southern hedge will be trimmed when permission has been obtained. Burials continue and internment of ashes. Other villagers have helped with the chapel grounds in various ways and the hedges are cut annually. Many thanks to everyone.

CHARITABLE GIVING.

£329 from village carols to St Elizabeth's Hospice:

£120 from the bike ride to Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

£25 to Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

Donations from the harvest festivals for the parish and school to FIND and Mills Meadow Care Home

TREASURER'S REPORT-YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2023

The Receipt have seen an increase of £3604.56 on 2022. Thus has been achieved with increases in Planned Giving, Collections, Other Giving and Fundraising.

We have also received grants totalling £4000 towards the restoration work to be carried out in 2024/25.

Payments have also increased on 2022 by £3287.04. this was mainly due to work carried out on the heating system and maintenance in the cemetery chapel grounds.

2024 will be a difficult year with the restoration work that needs to be carried out.

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	£			£		
	2023			2022		
<u>Receipts</u>	General	Restricted	Total	General	Restricted	Total
Planned Giving	10295.00		10295.00	7560.00		7560.00
Collections	2808.79	321.02	3129.81	1955.34	458.00	2413.34
Wall Safe	83.00		83.00	63.57		63.57
Donations	542.00		542.00	2056.68		2056.68
Tax recovered	2310.00		2310.00	1790.28		1790.28
Fundraising	4065.72	825.00	4890.72	3570.06	695.29	4265.35
Holiday Club		147.65	147.65		218.87	218.87
Fees	1628.00	532.40	2160.40	1160.00		1160.00
Services	27.98		27.98			
Cemetery Fund		20.00	20.00		20.00	20.00
Fabric Fund		4000.00	4000.00		658.20	658.20
TOTAL	21760.49	5858.07	27618.56	18155.93	2050.36	20206.29
<u>Payments</u>						
Grants - Overseas			0.00	200.00		200.00
Grants - Home	25.00		25.00	25.00	303.00	328.00
Centenary Share	10000.00		10000.00	10000.00		10000.00
Church Expenses	2808.54		2808.54	1875.04		1875.04
Clergy Expenses	167.86		167.86	71.08		71.08
Collections		321.02	321.02		290.00	290.00
Fete and Fair	40.00		40.00	20.00	445.49	465.49
Other Fundraising		629.00	629.00			0.00
Maintenance	2843.86		2843.86	668.15		668.15
Holiday Club		100.00	100.00			0.00
Fabric Fund		3480.55	3480.55		700.00	700.00
Services Expenses	392.54		392.54	157.48		157.48
Fees		532.40	532.40			0.00
TOTAL	16277.80	5062.97	21340.77	13016.75	1738.49	14755.24

Surplus Of Receipts over Payments 2023: General fund - £5454.71, Restricted Funds - £783.10

Surplus Of Receipts over Payments 2022: General fund - £5139.18, Restricted Funds - £311.87

Opening Balance: 01.01.2023	20811.84	Opening Balance: 01.01.2022	15360.79
General Fund Surplus:	5454.71	General Fund Surplus:	5139.18
Restricted Funds Surplus:	<u>783.10</u>	Restricted Funds Surplus	<u>311.87</u>
Closing Balance: 31.12.2023	<u>27049.65</u>	Closing Balance: 31.12.2022	<u>20811.84</u>

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<u>Movement on Funds</u>	2023		2022
<u>General Reserve- Unrestricted</u>		<u>General Reserve- Unrestricted</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	11658.11	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	6518.93
Excess of Receipts over Payments	5454.71	Excess of Receipts over Payments	5139.18
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	17112.82	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	11658.11
<u>Fabric Fund – Designated</u>		<u>Fabric Fund – Designated</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	8335.55	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	8377.35
Architect's Fees	3480.55	Scaffolding costs	700.00
Grants and Legacies	4000.00	Receipts	658.20
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	8855.00	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	8335.55
<u>Cemetery Fund – Restricted</u>		<u>Cemetery Fund – Restricted</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	100.37	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	80.37
Commonwealth War Graves	20.00	Commonwealth War Graves	20.00
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	120.37	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	100.37
<u>Caring Fund – Restricted</u>		<u>Caring Fund – Restricted</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	384.14	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	384.14
Transfer to Holiday Club	62.40		
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	321.74	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	384.14
<u>Holiday Club - Restricted</u>		<u>Holiday Club - Restricted</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	218.87	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	0.00
Transfer from Caring Fund	62.40	Donations	218.87
Donations	147.65		
Village Hall Hire	100.00		
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	328.92	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	218.87
<u>Brandeston Horkey - Restricted</u>		<u>Brandeston Horkey - Restricted</u>	
Opening Balance -01/01/2023	114.80	Opening Balance -01/01/2022	0.00
Receipts	196.00	Receipts	114.80
Closing Balance – 31/12 2023	310.80	Closing Balance – 31/12 2022	114.80
TOTALS	27049.65	TOTALS	20811.84

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH,
BRANDESTON, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 11-12, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act").

Respective Responsibilities of PGC and Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the Financial statements. You consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7Xb) of the Act and to be found in the Church Guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and

to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Dated 18 March 2024

Signed

Mrs Persephone C Booth, ATT (Fellow) The Timbers, Church Road Kettleburgh Nr Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 7LE

THANK YOU

Following our period of interregnum, we were delighted to welcome Ann and Mick in July. We give special thanks to Revd John Hare and, especially, Revd Deirdre Parmenter who has supported us so well during the interregnum. The normal life of the Church has continued and the PCC would like to thank everyone who has helped in any way with services, pastoral work, charitable giving and all the people from the village who are enthusiastic with their support of our fundraising events. We thank Mrs Baldwin who has worked so hard on the parish magazine; the flower arrangers whose work is admired by everybody; the organists and bellringers, the maintenance and cleaning team; those who prepare the church and welcome us to services; Mr Risk who keeps the Electoral Roll up to date, and the volunteers who care for the Cemetery and chapel in Mill Lane.

The chaplain and staff at Brandeston Hall have ensured that the church is used on a regular basis and the groundstaff have worked hard to keep the grounds of the Church neat and tidy as well as allowing us to use their facilities when we need them and letting us use their photocopier for orders of service. We thank them all for their cooperation and tolerance.

MESSAGE FROM REV'D ANN

It seems hardly possible that Mick and I have been here for just over six months already! The time has flown past, but in a good way! We have felt very welcomed in all seven churches of our Benefice and it has been lovely getting to know you all.

I am particularly grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Elders and they all bring different gifts and skills to our ministry team.

We continue with our usual pattern of services which is only possible because of the hard work of our Elders. As we go forward, it will be important to work together as a Benefice, and even more importantly, worship together. We will continue to worship together on the first Sunday of the month, and where there is a fifth Sunday. However, over the coming year I will be looking to build us up as a Benefice and find ways of bringing our churches together more often.

Advent Sunday was a very well attended Benefice service and many people remarked how much they enjoyed worshipping with a larger group of people. Being together as a Benefice can be a way of feeling uplifted and encouraged.

I have enjoyed our coffee mornings at the Station House in Campsea Ashe and it has been lovely to have people from across the Benefice attending and chatting together.

I enjoyed all our Christmas services, and it was good to meet many people from the local community who came into church at that time.

All seven of our PCCs met together in October and are meeting together again this month and we will continue to meet on a regular basis.

As small rural churches we all struggle with the same issues, falling attendance, falling income and buildings that often cost a great deal to keep up. We also sometimes struggle to find a place within our communities. However, I am not disheartened, because we have a core of people who are willing workers in God's vineyard.

Recently, I came across this post on Facebook, and it is so relevant for us as a small rural Benefice:

Let's stop worrying about getting bigger. Let's get better. We need to stop idealising the glory days of our church's past. But let's not make the equal mistake of obsessing over what people are looking for in a church today. What people need from church hasn't changed. They need Jesus. In us.

So, let's discover what God has in mind for our Benefice right now as we are. Maybe if we let go of what we're not called to be, we can start to see who we are called to be. I look forward to discovering this with you.

Every blessing

Ann