

The ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024
(& FINANCIAL STATEMENT for 2023)

**of the Parish of
Ordsall and Retford, St Michael's**



**Ordsall & West Retford
Churches**

LOVE + WELCOME FOR ALL

2023-24

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Parochial Church Council Membership 2023 - 2024

CLERGY	WARDENS	DEANERY SYNOD 2023-25	EX-OFFICIO
Alex Shiells David Bean	Pat Bloodworth Niger Bower Barbara Burrows Michael Storey		Chris Trend
UNTIL 2024	UNTIL 2025	UNTIL 2026	CO-OPTED
Paul Richards Rachel Waby	Joan Henderson Janet Lewis Amanda Old Peter Thomas	Pam Phillips Isabelle Richards Tessa Rolph Alison Thorpe	Martin Bloomfield Don Phillips

PCC Officers and Representatives:

Role	Name
Chair	<i>Alex Shiells</i>
PCC Secretary	<i>Alison Thorpe</i>
Lay Chair	<i>Isabelle Richards</i>
Treasurer - All Hallows and Retford, St Michael	<i>Martin Bloomfield</i>
Planned Giving Secretary - All Hallows	<i>Malcom McDonald</i>
Planned Giving Secretary - St Michael	<i>Martin Bloomfield</i>
Electoral Roll Officer	<i>Alison Thorpe</i>
Safeguarding Officer - All Hallows and Retford St Michael	<i>Don Phillips</i>
DBS Safe Recruiter	<i>Rachel Waby</i>
Health and Safety - All Hallows	<i>John Pashley</i>
Health and Safety - St Michael	<i>Rachel Waby</i>
Church Property	<i>Peter Thomas</i>
CTiR Representatives	
Christian Aid	<i>Pat Bloodworth</i>
Children's Society	<i>Sally Hardman</i>
Women's World Day of Prayer	<i>Margaret Green, Margaret Akerman</i>

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 28th May 2023 in All Hallows Church

1. Attendance:

Revd. Alex Shiells	Revd. David Bean	Christopher Trend	Isabelle Richards
Peter Thomas	Shirley Thomas	Jean Morris	Lavinia Swannack
Kathryn Biggs	Pam Phillips	Don Phillips	Nigel Bower
Malcom Mc Donald	Michael Storey	Janet Lewis	Rita Donohue
Ann Jones	Joan Henderson	Tessa Rolph	Barbara Burrows
Alison Thorpe			

Apologies:

Amanda Old	Julia Morton	Richard Morton	Collin Nicholson
Pat Bloodworth	Russell Bloodworth	Helen Richards	Paul Richards
Paul Hardman	Sally Hardman	Liz Thomas	Martin Bloomfield
Anthony Partridge			

2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Palm Sunday 10th April 2022 in St Michael's Chapter House. *Proposed:* Lavinia Swannack
Seconded: Joan Henderson *Agreed:* 19 *Abstentions:* 2

3. Electoral Roll: The total number of names on the Electoral Roll 113. Many thanks to Helen Richards our Electoral Roll Secretary.

4. Nominations for Churchwardens *4 vacancies*

<i>Nomination</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconded</i>
Barbara Burrows	Alison Thorpe	Malcolm McDonald
Nigel Bower	Janet Lewis	Pam Phillips
Pat Bloodworth	Janet Lewis	Pam Phillips
Michael Storey	Alison Thorpe	Amanda Old

5. Appointment of tellers: *Not necessary*

6. Election of Churchwardens: Barbara Burrows, Nigel Bower, Pat Bloodworth and Michael Storey, were duly elected. Revd. Alex welcomed

7. Election of PCC members: *4 x three year vacancies*

<i>Nomination</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconded</i>
Isabelle Richards	Alison Thorpe	Barbara Burrows
Alison Thorpe	Rita Donohue	Pam Storey
Tessa Rolph	Alison Thorpe	John Palmer
Pam Phillips	Pat Bloodworth	Joan Henderson

8. Appointment of tellers: *Not necessary*

9. Election of PCC Members for three years: Isabelle Richards, Alison Thorpe. Tessa Rolph and Pam Phillips were duly elected.

10. Nominations for PCC Membership for one year - Three Vacancies for one year - no nominations.

11. Deanery Synod Elections - No Nominations Isabelle Richards urged members of the congregation to consider standing as Deanery Synod members.

13. Election of Co-opted Members for one year:

Martin Bloomfield - our Treasurer

Don Phillips - our Safeguarding Officer

Proposed by: Revd Alex Shiells *Seconded by:* Tessa Rolph *Unanimous*

Revd. Alex thanked all those standing for office.

Revd. Alex also encouraged those present who were not members, to think about standing as Deanery Synod Members or joining the PCC.

1) Statutory Reports:

a) Safeguarding Report: Don Phillips has only been our Safeguarding Officer for three months. However he has worked as a Social Worker for 40 years, working in the West Midlands Social Services department, so we could not have anyone more qualified to do this very important job.

Don made it clear that we all have a role to play in safeguarding in our Parish.

Question - Tessa Rolph re Safeguarding Training. This can be done online, but on 14th June at 7.00pm there will help with training in All Hallows Church.

b) Electoral Roll: Janet Lewis thanked Helen for her work as Electoral Roll Officer.

c) Audited Accounts: Martin Bloomfield our Treasurer, has submitted the accounts. However there have been problems with the Auditor. Due to the long term illness of the person dealing with our accounts they have not as yet been audited. When they have been audited we will need a short meeting to agree the final audited accounts.

Martin Bloomfield has taken over the role of Treasurer from Rachel Reeves. We are struggling to pay our Parish Share. We have had a Funding Campaign and are indebted to those involved with events such as Live and Local. Shirley and Peter Thomas have been joined by Tessa Rolph in the organisation of these events.

As regards the accounts we have a much improved situation with detailed accounts for each church. It has been a difficult year but we are seeing improvements.

Peter Thomas thanked Martin Bloomfield for his hard work and detailed accounts. Russell Bloodworth was also thank for the work that he has done.

d) PCC Secretary: No questions or answers.

e) Deanery Synod: Revd. Alex again encouraged those present who were not members, to think about standing as Deanery Synod Members.

f) Fabric: At All Hallows the pointing has been completed on the church, the Lych Gate is now in place and new technology has been installed.

At St Michael's there is new signage and sound systems have been set up. However there have been continuing problems with the Community Hall roof.

g) Vicar: This year's Parish Vision Day will be led by Sarah Patten. Chris Trend will be leading a walk from 9am to 10.am before the start of the meeting.

Revd. Alex thanked all of those who keep our churches going, for all the seen and unseen work.

He also thanked Revd. David Bean and Chris Trend our Licensed Lay Minister, and hopes that they will contribute to the report next year.

Barbara Burrows thanked Revd. Alex for everything that he has done over the past year.

2) Property belonging to Ordsall and Retford, St Michael's Parish

- h) Ordsall Parish Hall:** We need to encourage more groups to use the Hall. Rates for use of the Hall have been raised slightly. Many thanks for the hard work done by Debbie Aston and Peter and Shirley Thomas.
- i) St Michael's Community Hall:** The Community Hall has a new sign - thanks to Don Phillips and Russell Bloodworth. Again we need to encourage more people to use the Hall. Many thanks to Prue Lamb for handling the bookings.
- j) Croft Cottage, Glebe Cottage, 19, Grange Road:** The property at Grange Road is now vacant. Newton and Fallowell have taken over responsibility for this property.
- k) All Hallows Allotment:** The allotments are flourishing even on the sloping side. Thanks to Martin Kennedy for making sure that the carboy is full of water.

3) Church Activities throughout the year

- l) Health and Safety:** Thanks to John Pashley and Pat Bloodworth for checking and dealing with Health and Safety issues in our Parish. Thank you to Janet Lewis for looking into accessibility issues at St Michaels. Thank you to Rachel Waby who has volunteered to take over the Health and Safety role at St Michaels.
- m) Craft Circle:** Many thanks to Catherine for her work with the Parish Craft Circles.
- n) Bell Ringers:** The bell ringers would like more members. Janet Lewis very much appreciates hearing the bells.
- o) Places of Welcome:** Tessa Rolph mentioned that a variety of people attend at Wednesdays at All Hallows. Janet Lewis thought that the need was there and encouraged others to come to St Michaels on Tuesdays. Some people who attend on Tuesdays are now coming on Sundays.

Isabelle Richards thanked all the volunteers who keep Places of Welcome open.
- p) After Service Coffee:** Thanks were given for everyone who volunteered. More volunteers would be welcomed. It is a significant ministry for the church. All Hallows now has a new coffee machine - the fresh coffee is very much appreciated!
- q) Mother's Union/Contact centre:** Tessa Rolph thanked Rita Donahue for her work at the Contact Centre.
- r) Merry Ladies:** Thanks to all concerned.
- s) Churchyard Group:** Again it would be good to get more people involved. It is hoped to create a wildlife area. The ground needs to be carefully prepared before wild flower seed can be sown.

t) Events Committee: There have been very full programmes at both church meetings. Again, there can be a shortage of volunteers.

4) PCC Links and Representatives

u) Christian Aid: Thanks to Paul Hardman.

v) Rakitova Self Sufficiency Fund: Thanks to Pam Phillips. The address given in the report is not accurate at the moment, but so far there isn't an updated address.

Margaret Akerman asked if there were volunteers who could take people to events such as the Memorial Services.

Suggested date for next Annual Parochial Church Meeting: to be confirmed

Revd. Alex thanked everyone for coming to the meeting

The meeting finished with the Grace

Minutes of the meeting of the PCC held on Sunday 28th May 2023

Attendance:

Revd. Alex Shiells	Revd. David Bean	Chris Trend	Michael Storey
Peter Thomas	Isabelle Richards	Joan Henderson	Barbara Burrows
Don Phillips	Pam Phillips	Janet Lewis	Alison Thorpe

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Secretary	Alison Thorpe	Joan Henderson	Isabelle Richards
Lay Chair	Isabelle Richards	Alex Shiells	Pam Phillips
Treasurer	Martin Bloomfield	Alex Shiells	David Bean
Plan Giving Secretary - All H	Malcolm McDonald	Tessa Rolph	Chris Trend
Plan Giving Secretary - St M	Martin Bloomfield	Tessa Rolph	Chris Trend
Electoral Roll Officer	Alison Thorpe	Joan Henderson	Janet Lewis
Safeguarding	Don Phillips	Alex Shiells	Tessa Rolph

Revd. Alex thanked all Officers for standing.

1. Statutory Reports

a. Safeguarding:

There have not been any reports of Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations referred to me during the year.

Safeguarding has been an Agenda item at all PCC meetings throughout the year.

The PCC has agreed to restart use of the 'Parish Dashboard' which generates an Action Plan to monitor progress in keeping up to date with local and national safeguarding requirements. A progress report on the Action Plan has been reported to the PCC at every other meeting throughout the year.

As a further aid to compliance with national guidance particularly in relation to Safer Recruitment and People Management the PCC has recently approved the use of the Safeguarding Hub.

The PCC continues to work towards full compliance and has 'due regard' to the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance and further guidance as issued and as stated above is adopting systems to more accurately monitor and evidence its progress.

Thank you to everybody who has undertaken Safeguarding training during the year and assisted me in many ways in my role.

Don Phillips Parish Safeguarding Officer

b. Electoral Roll:

At the point at which the Roll closed on Sunday 7th April, the total number of names enrolled was 119. This reflects one name being removed from the Roll, with eight additional names enrolled during the year.

Alison Thorpe, Electoral Roll Officer

c. Financial Review:

Opening remarks -

2023 was the first full year that I completed as your Parish Treasurer, and in terms of keeping me busy, it did not disappoint! It was also the first full year after the funding campaigns held in 2022, and which were seen to produce a positive result. The Parish Hall moved from previously making a loss, to making a small income return, demonstrating the potential of becoming a viable source of future revenue. A new Common fund into which each church made monthly contributions was implemented, resulting in tighter controls of our overall income and expenditure. This in turn ensured a greater level of Parish Share contribution, whilst maintaining the required level of solvency at each church.

All Hallows Ordsall -

Planned Giving - An overall increase of around £4.3k (23.3%) was in evidence, testament to the funding campaign held last year! The resulting Gift Aid & GASDS recovered was in excess of £6.5k

Casual giving & donations - Several baptisms were held during the year, receiving £1100, much of which was donated to charitable causes chosen by the baptism parties. Plate collections were also strong at £3.6k, demonstrating a willingness to support the church financially. A further £2400 was received for ongoing projects, like the long-awaited refurbishment of the Lych gate, and for charitable causes such as the TEAR fund, and Macmillan nurses.

Grants & legacies - A variety of grants were in evidence for use by both the church and hall, with significant support for the pointing undertaken during the year. A small legacy was received from the estate of the late Cyril John Newton in support of wildlife surrounding the churchyard.

Fund raising & events - Live & Local continues to go from strength to strength, and the £3.5k it raised augmented well the further £4.6k received from other lettings. The annual Scarecrow festival also attracted a goodly number of visitors, resulting in overall fund raising receipts of £12.1k, £840 (7.4%) increase on 2022!

Other income - Management of our cottages was handed to agencies for the first time, and JS Lettings in particular are to be commended in their timely communications and rent collection. Several weddings &

funerals contributed around £5.8k to our new COMMON fund, and VAT was recovered for fabric repair work carried out during the year.

Charitable Giving - As mentioned above, a variety of chosen charities received over £400 from baptism donations, whilst the Childrens Society benefited from the annual Christingle service.

Ministry costs - The new Common fund was established to finance costs attributable to both churches, and a concerted effort was made to pay an amount towards parish Share, which was both reasonable and affordable. Whilst we were not in a position to hand over 100% in that regard, we contributed more than double that of the previous year. At the time of compiling this report, we believe we are in a position to achieve 100% of the requested figure for 2024.

Running costs - Insurance for both churches was also to be paid from the new fund, and we benefited from the new contracts diligently negotiated by Alex last year. Other running costs were within acceptable levels.

Utilities - Gas and electricity expenditure was in line with expectations, and the contracts ensured similar levels to the previous year. Heating grants were made available to offset these costs, and it is to be hoped that future grants may also be available.

Parish hall - Gas, electricity and insurance met budgeted targets, whilst the cost of the annual alcohol licence more than doubled, after the hall rateable value had been reassessed in April 2023. A modest 1% expenditure increase was experienced overall.

Trading - Whilst fund-raising and event costs were reasonable, an unexpected set of invoices were received in respect of unpaid Live & Local events relating to 2022. Consequently, an extraordinary one-off total of over £1250 contributed to a disappointing 22.5% increase in these costs, though this gives rise to a potentially higher surplus in 2024!

Repairs & maintenance - The main obstacle of the year proved to be the troublesome office photocopier. Despite a number of engineer visits and subsequent assurances, we found ourselves in dispute with the leasing company over the non-effectiveness of the supplied machine. This resulted in the company providing a refurbished machine, and a return to the original contract, paving the way for a significant reduction in similar

costs in the future. We remain locked in to this contract for a few months yet, so it is hoped that the reliability of the copier will remain effective.

Control costs – We continue to apply a salary increase to our employees, opting to pay the living wage each year. These contracts are now subject to PAYE, and a monthly payroll routine has been implemented to ensure compliance with HMRC regulations.

Letting fees have now been introduced to cover the management of our cottages, but we consider these to be fair and appropriate. Quinquennial inspections were undertaken for both the church and hall, the cost of which had been budgeted for at the start of the year. We continue to have our end of year accounts examined by Wright Vigar, the cost of which is borne by the Common fund for both churches, and a set of required consolidated accounts for provision to both the Diocese and Charities Commission.

Account balances – A modest percentage increase was applied to the value of the hall and cottages, representing a fair asset price in line with similar properties. Our shares increased in value by a single digit percentage, meaning our capital holdings increased by 1.93%. The balances held in our bank accounts meanwhile, saw a reduction of around £10.3k (25.1%). This had been calculated at the start of the year, and was agreed in order to offset the Parish Share shortfall of the previous year.

St Michaels -

Planned giving - increased by £2.6k (16.2%), with Gift Aid & GASDS providing an additional £714 income.

Casual giving & donations - Plate collections remained stable, and a similar regime of offering baptism donations was implemented.

Grants & legacies - Grants were received to support rising energy costs, as well as to assist with offering a “Warm Space” to those who wish to welcome the opportunity to do so. No legacies were received during the year.

Fund raising & events - An organ recital was given in October, whilst an entertaining Quiz night was held in April. Refreshments continue to be served regularly in the newly named “Community Hall”, and the Michaelmas Fayre exceeded expectations raising in excess of £1000.

Charitable giving - St Michaels continues to support RAKITOVO, as well as a number of local and wider charitable causes. The Deacon fund provided by Revd David Bean has now been rebranded as a Charity fund, in order to render further support in this regard.

Running costs - as previously reported, Insurance is now paid for out of the Common fund, and a monthly contribution is made to finance this and other identified common expenditure. The historic honorarium offered to a resident organist is no longer applicable, and services are now covered by a combination of multimedia, and occasional volunteer organists who request no remuneration!

Utilities - These costs were in line with budgeted targets, though a new 12 month contract has just been established which will see the cost of gas increase by just under £1k, and which continues to be an area of concern.

Repairs & maintenance - The lightning conductor was checked and received remedial work in the Spring at a cost of just under £2k, but it is hoped that this one-off cost will be superceded by regular less expensive future regular checks.

Control costs - A quinquennial check was also carried out at St Michaels costing £720. All other similar borne costs were at expected levels.

Development fund - This fund was put to good use, paving the way for new multimedia facilities, and new signage to make the church and hall appear more welcoming. Splendid new curtains have been hung in the hall, which have the effect of making evening PCC meetings more cosy!

Overall balances - The TSB account ended the year £8.2k (21.9%) lower than the previous year. Like Ordsall, this had been calculated at the start of the year, and was agreed in order to offset the Parish Share shortfall of the previous year.

In conclusion -

Church life continues to throw up challenges, some of which happen to be financial! My role as Treasurer is primarily to provide accurate and timely information to assist the PCC in its decision making. Arguably the major challenge each year, is to work out how to attempt to pay the Parish Share in full, whilst maintaining solvency in order to carry out daily church life! In that regard, it will be obvious that the reduction in overall balances at each church is significant. It equally follows that such a rate of future

reduction is unsustainable, and so the task is to ensure a balance of controls and best practices are put in place, to provide an early warning system for when the alarm bells will begin to sound.

It is important to stress however, that church finance should be seen as an exercise carried out in partnership, in which the Diocese undoubtedly plays its part. If we continue to optimise our income, by organising regular giving campaigns and submitting regular Gift Aid claims, minimise our cost base by ensuring no wastage and exorbitant contracts, adopt a policy of annual budgeting to fairly assess what is realistically affordable, then it can be demonstrated that all attempts have been made to ensure a level of financial control. In those circumstances, it will be difficult for anyone to reproach us for our efforts.

My role therefore carries a myriad array of tasks, from maintaining the ledger, submitting regular claims to HMRC, reclaiming VAT on repair work carried out, ensuring compliance with both HMRC and the Charities Commission, issuing invoices to clients who use our facilities, reconciling PCC fees and submitting monthly Diocesan payments to name but a few!

It is also fair to say, that I could not attempt to do any of these tasks without the support and co-operation of my friends and colleagues across both churches! I would like to take this opportunity therefore, to thank each and every one of you who helps me in any way, and be assured that your assistance is greatly appreciated!

I look forward to my future involvement with both churches, and the challenges that will continue to present themselves.

Martin Bloomfield, Parish Treasurer

d. PCC Secretary:

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is made up of representatives from our two congregations and in partnership with our clergy share in decision about the life and work of the church. The PCC's main function is to co-operate with the Vicar in promoting the ministry of this church. PCC members are in effect the trustees of a charity, they have a legal responsibility for the church's finances, its buildings, movable property, employees and safeguarding.

The PCC has dealt with a wide range of issues and concerns during the year. The full PCC has met five times since our last APCM meeting with an average attendance of 14 out of a membership of 19. Our meetings take place on Wednesdays at 7.00pm, alternating between St Michael's in the Community Hall and All Hallows Church.

Taking place in the months between PCC meetings are our Working Group meetings for both All Hallows and St Michael's. These groups have been working well. However, during the year it was felt that their purpose should be more clearly defined and that their role should be concerned with Fabric and Finance. These are areas which would free up time in our full PCC meetings. They are useful discussion groups generating good ideas but not formal decision making groups. Any decisions needed have to be discussed and voted on by the full PCC. Anyone who is interested in joining these groups would be most welcome to do so.

Joan Henderson, a faithful and very longstanding member of the PCC, has resigned this year. We are extremely grateful for her always pertinent contributions to our PCC meetings.

Our Parish Away Day took place on 3rd June 2023 at Idle Valley Nature Reserve to further consider our Parish Vision. The provisional date for this year's Parish Away Day is Saturday 8th June. Do join us if you can.

I would like to express my thanks to Revd. Alex for his support and also for his excellent chairing of the meetings throughout the year.

We always welcome new members to the PCC and we hope that some of you will consider joining us.

Alison Thorpe, PCC Secretary

e. Deanery Synod:

Bassetlaw & Bawtry Deanery Synod Review for 2023

The Bassetlaw and Bawtry Deanery Synod met three times during 2023, 29th March, 6th July and 16th November at St Anne's in Worksop. Thank you to St Anne's and the Area Dean for hosting us each time.

Meetings

The meetings during 2023 gave opportunities to gather, support each other and share about the good news happening in the churches. There were discussions on Parish Share, a chance to pray for each other, Updates on the vacancies in the Deanery, Diocesan Synod and General Synod. Living in Love and Faith was a major item on the agenda at General Synod and this filtered down to the Deanery Synod through out the year. Parish share was calculated differently for 2024, following a review by the Diocese, acknowledging it is a huge struggle to give when costs are going up. We are thankful for the contribution all the churches make during the year.

In March we invited Robert Cleaves, the Diocesan Environment Officer to share with us the Eco project to help the Diocese work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Giving us ideas and introducing the Rocha Eco Church project for all churches to become involved with.

In July, Zoe Ball from 100 Homes shared with us the work they are doing to help foster children in the County. Looking to pray for, encourage and support foster carers and hold meetings in your locality to engage and recruit foster carers. We were also joined by some of the Deanery's Churchwardens, when Revd Dave Gough Admitted them with a short Visitation Service.

At the November meeting, Bryony Wood shared her book 'The Sound of Musings' and how it can be an engaging read for everyone, based around the film of the 'Sound of Music'. It is arranged in 52 chapters for weekly meditation and there is a free 6 week course on her website for people to use in home groups or small groups.

Clergy Chapter

Revd Luiz Lima moved to the Diocese of Portsmouth as Priest in charge of St John's, Locks Heath.

Isabelle Richards, stepped down as Lay Chair in May, our thanks to her for all the time and energy over the last three years as Lay Chair.

In September we welcomed three curates Liz Mack, Nigel Stones and Edith Onovo, Liz is serving her curacy with Revd Becky Hancock in the River Idle Benefice and Nigel and Edith are serving their curacy with Revd David Gough at Worksop St Annes and Norton Cuckney.

Stephanie Baker became the new Deanery Treasurer in July; we welcome her to working in the deanery.

Vacancy

The churches in Vacancy- Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill, Idle and Sands Benefice, Oswaldbeck Benefice, The Rivers, Retford Benefice. Christ Church Worksop & Shireoaks Benefice came into vacancy in the summer, following Revd Luiz moving on.

Our thanks go to the Churchwardens, PCCs and the wonderful Retired Clergy and PTOs who faithfully continue to serve the churches, congregations and parishes during the sometimes long vacancies. The Lay Chair post is vacant.

Our thanks go to: The Deanery Synod Members for all their time they give to serve their Benefices and Churches. To the Deanery Standing Committee Members for their time and energy to help lead the Deanery. To the Deanery Treasurer, Deanery Administrator for their work and the Area Dean who helps to hold everything together.

f. Fabric Report:

i) All Hallows'

Many reports leave thanking people to the end - and folk don't always get that far so let us do it first!

There are many more people deserving thanks than we could name but we say special thanks to all who volunteer and help in whatever way you can. We are fortunate that you continue contributing positively to All Hallows Church and our community whether it be refreshments, flower arranging, grass cutting, painting, cleaning, children's activities,

supporting others in need and in the many other ways we aren't always aware of. This is giving and giving isn't just about money. Everyone has a talent to offer (and here you do so). A couple of people must be named though; with thanks are once again to Peter Thomas who often spots building work needing attention and actions any work necessary. This church community remains very thankful and grateful to Peter and also to John Pashley who has continued as our Health & Safety officer.

We were privileged to be elected as your Churchwardens at the APCM and in June were both able to attend the Archdeacons Visitation at Southwell to be officially admitted as Churchwardens. Training courses had to be undertaken (and passed!) - including Basic Awareness, Safeguarding Foundation, Safeguarding Leadership. Other administration tasks continue - a risk assessment is being completed, we have checked the terrier is up to date and that the photographs of church plate are still relevant.

Maintenance of the church building is a constant issue and we try to keep our building in a good condition. Our Quinquennial inspection last year is of great help in this. The recently repaired roof was unfortunately not completed before heavy rain penetrated the building resulting in a large amount of paint falling leaving a mess but no damage. Some pointing of stonework took place removing inappropriate mortar and replacing it with appropriate mortar. A light needs repair but as it is high up and to reach it will require safety equipment it may be better to consider lighting and electricity as a whole. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) has not been done by a professional electrician but rules allow us to examine appliances ourselves for obvious issues such as bare wires which we look for regularly and ask that if anyone has concerns please tell us.

We now have regular meetings with Rev Alex and our fellow wardens at St Michaels to share concerns (few!) but mainly to share how we are doing and what we can progress together. We know there will be challenges and difficulties as we move forward but we also know there will be success and celebrations.

'So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today'

Matthew 6.34

Barbara Burrows & Michael Storey Churchwardens

ii) St Michael's

We have had no major projects this year.

We have completed all necessary servicing, to the heating boilers, in the Church and Community Hall the repair work to the boiler outlet has been completed and we are in the process of engaging Durhams Heating on a contract basis to service both boilers.

The high gutters have been cleaned as have the low rain drains, we may have to look further into the drainage as it has been found that there are tree roots growing into the underground drainage.

Some roof tiles on the south porch have been replaced, and the breather strip on the ramp to the Community hall has been replaced.

The fire extinguishers have been serviced, both internal and external intruder alarms have been serviced.

PAT Testing has been done.

We still have an ongoing problem with the Chapter House roof leaking.

The Quinquennial inspection has been carried out. There were no major concerns.

At the recommendation of the Architect, and to aid us in further work on the church, a ground survey has been undertaken.

Thank you to the dedicated team who continue to help clean and maintain the church, Community Hall and grounds and for Ivy who continues to clean the chapter house.

Nigel Bower & Pat Bloodworth – Churchwarden

g. Vicar's Report:

It's amazing to think that this is my third vicar's report, the first having come within two weeks of my arrival in 2022. Catherine and I have recently celebrated 2 years of ministry in the parish and Easter for the third time here. During this last 2 years the landscape of our ministry has changed significantly and it's only in 2024 that we're beginning to experience what life after the pandemic truly looks like.

As I write this report on Holy Saturday, we've had a truly remarkable Easter so far. Our Good Friday children's activities at All Hallows' welcomed 34 children and adults, with many expected to join us for our Easter Day celebrations. This work has built on the attendance of over 100 children at our most recent Spooky Spectacular, as well as a packed Crib Service at Christmas. At All Hallows' our children's ministry is growing and we are engaging with families on a more regular basis, with the planned appointment of a children's worker and regular children's groups planned for the spring and summer of 2024. Church attendance is on the rise, with numbers at our 11am service beginning to move into the 50's. This takes us back towards pre-covid numbers, with many new faces as well as those who have returned.

A similar picture is emerging at St Michael's, where on Good Friday we had 28 people at Stations of the Cross, an unprecedented increase in attendance on previous years. Our Sunday attendance is also showing signs of growth, with numbers regularly in the 30's and many people joining us during the week for Open Tuesdays – our community space comprising coffee morning, lunch club and arts and crafts café every week. At both churches there is a welcoming midweek space for members of the community to experience refreshment, fellowship, and advice, and this has been the engine room for our growth.

While it's important that we celebrate these areas of numerical growth, we're aware that there are so many other things we can give thanks for. In this past year we've seen new people join our ministry team, new volunteers get involved, confirmations, and countless other steps forward in faith. The measurable signs of growth are an indicator of the depth that many are finding in Christ in our churches.

Rev'd Alex Shiells

2. Property Belonging to the Parish of Ordsall & Retford, St Michael

h. Ordsall Parish Hall

Regular Hall bookings are filling up the week now with the addition of an extra Diddy Explorers session and, more recently, a 'Sew & sew' group of like minded ladies who join together with their sewing machines.

Party bookings and enquiries have increased, and the £15 per hour move has been readily accepted as it is inline with other booking venues.

The blinds are looking better now they have been repaired and, along with the newly sanded and varnished floor, the hall looks vastly better and has been much appreciated by all the groups but particularly by the Diddy Explorers group which sits on the floor along with their young children and babies.

The restoration of the hall was supported by the following;

- Notts CC Community Fund £1000
- BDC £500
- Retford Rotary £900
- Voluntary donations £800

Thank you to Peter and Shirley for your tireless work and support over the last year.

Deb Aston, Booking Secretary

i. St Michael's Community Hall formerly Chapter House

As usual very little activity from St Michaels community hall to report. Tuesdays warm welcome day continues to thrive, which is a bonus (but not in a financial way!)

Retford Civic society use the space on a monthly basis. U3A cycle group hold occasional meetings , and there is an occasional booking for a private party.

The hall is always kept clean and warm by willing and much appreciated volunteers. I understand internal refurbishment is on the horizon.

Prue Lamb

j. Cottages, Grange Rd

Glebe Cottage and Croft Cottage have been managed by JS Lettings Ltd since November 2023

Inspection reports were completed on both properties.

Croft Cottage revealed some non-urgent issues which included a sticking front door, and small cracks in the bathroom plaster work. There was also some moisture around one of the bedroom windows which could indicate a broken seal. The kitchen is dated and if the current tenants moved out, may need some investment to maximise rental potential.

Two fence panels blew down for this property and were replaced including concrete poles. Photographic evidence provided as proof of work.

Glebe Cottage inspection identified issues with the gable end with a gap between the fascia board and brick work. The work was completed with photographic evidence.

There was no smoke detector or CO2 detector in the property, both of which are legal requirements, so this was rectified immediately.

The cottage has been kept to a very high standard by the tenants, however again the kitchen is dated and although functional has issues with the sink and drainer. Consideration should be given to investment in the kitchen before it becomes a more significant issue.

Grange Road is still being managed by Newton Fallowell until May 2024, when it will subsequently be managed by JS Lettings. Once we have received the report from JS, we will have a better understanding of possible future investment requirements.

There is still an issue regarding the deposit from a previous tenant who managed to put it in a state of limbo, with the church unable to retrieve it to pay for the damage that this tenant did on the property before vacating. There is a hope that this may be retrieved in May before Newton Fallowell finish the management agreement.

Rachel Waby

k. All Hallows Allotment

There have been several changes of tenants during 2023 but most allotments were kept in good cultivation. Only one tenant had to be given notice due to non cultivation of their plot. Two new plots were created on an area previously not in cultivation. The water carboy was kept topped up from the church supply by Martin Kennedy. Its supporting platform collapsed and had to be rebuilt with timber supplied by one of the tenants. The Annual Allotment Holders Meeting and Social was held in January 2023 and was well attended. In March several tenants met together to sort out the compost bins which had been filled with unsuitable material. Plot rents have made a contribution to church income.

Peter Thomas

3. Church Activities throughout the year

I. Health & Safety

i) Ordsall

It is pleasing to report that there are no major accidents to report in the last year, however we should not become complacent so please take care not only in church but also in the churchyard and the church hall. Please remember that we are not only responsible for our own safety but the safety of other people's safety around us.

All of our statutory checks for the church and the church hall are up to date.

A new Risk Assessment is being done at the moment. I don't know how that's going but I am sure I will find out in due course, Big thank you to Helen for all your help again this year.

John Pashley.

ii) West Retford

A risk assessment was completed on St Michaels church on the 19th of May 2023 and will require to be reviewed in May 2024.

Areas to be addressed were:

- the sacristy back door raised mat area,
- the slate flooring has become detached in a small area to the left of the alter,
- carpet area around the alter uneven, stuck down where possible but trip hazard requires addressing.

The carpet around the alter has been discussed and quotes received for new carpet and the old heating plumbing pipe grates to be recovered, however action has not been taken due to concerns over whether the work will be permitted in removing the old grates. Still pending awaiting decision. As a significantly used area of the church it is recommended that this is addressed.

Rachel Waby

m. Craft Circle

Craft Circle has now been running in both churches for the past two years: in St Michael's Community Hall on Tuesday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm, and in All Hallows' Church on Wednesdays at the same time. Each group has continued to run each week and has taken on a life of its own, with those who attend appreciating the conversation and crafts. At St. Michael's it has continued as part of 'Open Tuesdays', which started as a warm space but has continued throughout the year. This means that there is a fluid group of people who come for coffee or lunch and stay for as long as they like, as well as a core group who come to work on projects each week. At All Hallows' the group has grown and we now welcome as many as 16 people who join us, the majority of which are members of the community not connected to church. We have once again received a grant of £200 from Councillor Carolyn Troop, who we are grateful to for her kind support.

Over the next year, we would like to welcome new people to join us each week. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age or ability, and can bring their own craft projects or come and ask for suggestions. Some people just come along for a drink and a chat! To help spread the word we plan to produce some new leaflets and change the name of the groups to 'Arts and Crafts Circle' at All Hallows', and 'Arts and Crafts Café' at St Michael's. Thank you to everyone who has supported the groups and we look forward to the year ahead.

Catherine Shiells

n. Bell Ringers

There remains a shortage of bellringers in Retford, and we are reduced to 5 regular ringers following the departure of two of our younger members to pursue careers and training in other parts of the world. With this small group we have managed to keep all the bells ringing on Sunday mornings at both churches most weeks.

Our thanks go to these ringers as without their continued willingness to be flexible we would be unable to ring for as many services as we do.

We currently have six keen trainee ringers attending regularly on practice nights, it would be fantastic if all of these can go on to become fully trained ringers.

Paul Richards – All Hallows Tower Captain

o. Places of Welcome

i) Ordsall

The weekly Wednesday morning opening of church to the wider community continues to be appreciated by those who come alone or to rendezvous with friends. We have weekly regulars as well as those who pop in only from time to time. Walkers (both two and for legged) regularly call in and a number of jigsaws have been completed. Some attendees have said that they value us as an opportunity for relaxed companionship without the need to make formal arrangements, especially between those of different genders.

The Bassetlaw Connect service no longer use us as a satellite venue but others agencies occasionally attend. Tessa keeps us well supplied with information leaflets and guidance on a variety of topics and, in order to comply with the requirements of a successful Grant Funding application from late last year, we are now keeping a tally of the types of guidance/support we sign post people towards. Our average attendance is 18, of whom nearly half are not members of the weekly worshipping

congregation. So far this year, we have served 242 hot drinks to our community.

Helen Richards

ii) West Retford

Tuesdays start with a celebration of Holy Communion at 9.30am in church and then from 10.00am until 4.00pm the community hall is open to anyone.

We serve coffee, tea, toast, biscuits and sometimes cake until lunchtime, when from around 12 noon we offer soup and rolls as well. During Lent we were delighted to enjoy Nigel's very special home-made soups.

As well as general friendly chatting, we have had visitors from the CAB advising on the best way to save energy, and other people telling of health initiatives and what the local council has to offer in the way of support.

We have a variety of games which some of us enjoy: dominoes, ludo, cards and even snakes and ladders!

During Lent Alex led a course based on Rev. Briony Wood's book about The Sound of Music, which was attended by some of our visitors.

Around 2.00pm the group changes and becomes more craft-orientated, led by Catherine.

There are 6 regulars with others joining from time to time.

Since New Year we have served over 280 drinks, 130 soups, given out 10 free coats from our rail, and made lots of new friends. We have between 25-30 visitors each week and of those around 20 are 'regulars'.

Thank you to all the volunteers who help to make our Tuesdays welcoming and enjoyable.

Janet Lewis

p. After Service Coffees - All Hallows

Refreshments have been served after most of the Sunday services this year provided by a small but dedicated team of volunteers, we thank them so much for their time. Thanks also go to Richard and Julia for all their work organising the rota, kitchen and buying the supplies.

Since June 2023 I have taken on the role of buying supplies and now organise the rota each month. New storage boxes have been purchased from the donations and these have been labelled to try and keep the kitchen organised when various groups of people use the facilities throughout the week.

We currently have 10 people who regularly help to serve the coffee and we are so pleased to welcome our new volunteers this year. We know that the congregation appreciate the opportunity to meet and talk after the service and enjoy the refreshments that we can provide.

If you feel that you could join the rota to serve the coffee, please contact me.

Amanda Old

q. Mothers Union Contact Centre

There is no local branch MU here at the moment, although a few church members are Diocesan Mothers Union. However, this year the Contact Centre (and its volunteers) has enabled several children to start meeting with their non-resident parent in a safe and neutral venue, as a stepping stone to more permanent arrangements being put in place for continuing contact. The running of the Centre has recently had to transfer to Children's Links due to the need for a paid member of staff but many of the existing volunteers will continue to help parents and children at the Centre.

Tessa Rolph

r. Merrie Ladies

The Merry Ladies continue to meet every Wednesday at 10am at The Glass House. Our numbers vary between 6 & 12 and we have welcomed new members this year. We extend a warm welcome to any lady who wishes to come along and have an hours company.

Merriment, though not obligatory is favoured and much appreciated.

Irene Haw

s. Ordsall Churchyard Group

A small team of 5/6 volunteers has continued to maintain the top part of the churchyard on a Monday morning throughout the year, having a short break at Christmas. The lower section of the churchyard is maintained by Bassetlaw District Council. Following advice from Notts Wildlife the section nearer the church was untouched. This made management easier and it was thus possible to keep the furthest part more under control. Clumps of bramble will be left for the birds as food. A donation of wild flower seeds was made by Derek Swinton and areas prepared but due to lack of people power the seeds were not sown. They will be sown in 2024. I was nominated for a BCVS annual award and was surprised and honoured to be awarded BCVS Outdoor Volunteer of the Year 2023.

The Pollarded Lime tree opposite the tower was inspected in November 2023 and was found to be in a satisfactory state. The hollow trunk did not seem to have deteriorated further. It will continue to be inspected periodically.

In the lower part a bench was installed in memory of Mr Bircumshaw by his family. The long awaited new Lych Gates were installed and dedicated to the memory of Paul and Pauline Partridge in a small ceremony attended by family members and others. The gates will need annual maintenance. Flooding in the lower part of the churchyard resulted in the sinking of two graves. One has since been filled in.

Peter Thomas

t. Events Committee

Various events have been arranged during the year for fundraising and other purposes, including quizzes, a Christmas Fair, social games evenings, a tabletop sale and coffee morning. Additionally, there have been five very successful gigs and dance events held in the Parish Hall, many under the Live & Local banner. We are very grateful to the many volunteers who have cheerfully helped with all these.

Tessa Rolph

4. PCC Links and Representatives

u. Christian Aid No report received

v. Rakitovo

St Michaels Church continues to sponsor a teenager, in Rakitovo, Bulgaria, through the Rakitovo Self Sufficiency Fund. We donate a regular monthly amount and give extra money at her birthday, Christmas and a return to school grant in September.

The fund was set up by Martin and Julie Peniston-Bird to provide hope and assistance to the Roma population in Rakitovo. The fund assists impoverished families to become self-sufficient through 'Project Potato' and provides training schemes for young adults which has successfully given them employment and hopes for the future.

The children have returned to full time education at school and in the summer the families travelled to the mountains to pick mushrooms and herbs which are sold to provide much needed extra income.

Our sponsored child writes to us throughout the year and always expresses gratitude for our support and enjoys the extra little treats received through our sponsorship. In the next year she will have completed her education and has let us know she is already applying for the training schemes on offer to further her employment and future opportunities.

If anyone wishes to sponsor a child or to donate to this worthwhile fund, please contact Martin at The Rakitovo Self Sufficiency Fund. The e mail address is martin@peniston-bird.co.uk.

Pam Phillips

5. APCM Agenda

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

12.30pm in All Hallows Church, Ordsall on Sunday 28th April 2024

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the meetings of 28th May 2023
3. Electoral Roll
4. Nominations for Churchwardens for 2023-2024 (4 *vacancies*)
5. Appointment of tellers – *if necessary*
6. Election of Church Wardens
7. Nomination for membership of PCC
4 vacancies for 3yrs
8. Appointment of tellers – *if necessary*
9. Election of PCC members (3yrs)
10. Nomination for membership of PCC
1 vacancy for 1yr
11. Appointment of tellers – *if necessary*
12. Election of PCC members (1yr)
13. Nomination for Deanery Synod Rep.
3 vacancies for 2yrs
14. Appointment of tellers – *if necessary*
15. Election of Synod Rep.
16. Receive the following Reports;

Statutory Reports:

- a Safeguarding
- b Electoral Roll
- c Financial Review & Audited Accounts
- d PCC Secretary
- e Deanery Synod
- f Fabric
- g Vicar

Parish Property:

- h Ordsall Parish Hall
- i St Michael's Chapter House
- j Cottages, Grange Rd
- k All Hallows Allotment

Church Activities:

- l Health & Safety
- m Craft Circle
- n Bell Ringers
- o Places of Welcome
- p After Service Coffees
- q Mothers Union Contact Centre
- r Merrie Ladies
- s Ordsall Churchyard Group
- t Events Committee

Parochial Church Council

Links & Representatives:

- u Christian Aid
- v Rakitovo

Invitation

You are invited to attend the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
of the
Parish of Ordsall & Retford, St Michael
on
Sunday 28th April 2024
at 12.30pm
In All Hallows Church, Ordsall