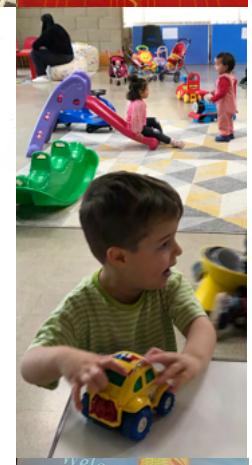
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND





St Mary's Peterborough





St Mary's Church Peterborough

ANNUAL REPORT & STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2023

















The Diocese of Peterborough

St Mary's Church is part of the Diocese of Peterborough within the Church of England.
The correspondence address is St Mary's Church, New Road, Peterborough PE1 1TT.
The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Peterborough St Mary is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and registered with the Charity Commission in September 2018. Its Registered Charity Number is 1180032.

PCC members who served at any time during 2023 are:

Ex-officio members:

- Incumbent: The Reverend Canon Michael Moore (Chair of PCC as Trustees of St Mary's)
- Associate Priest: The Reverend Carol Rowles
- Churchwardens: Mr Andrew Christie, Mr Michael Holborn
- Readers: Mrs Elizabeth Pedley, Mr Robert Robinson
- Licensed Lay Minister (Reader in training): Mr Stuart Pedley (from November)
- Lay Pastoral Ministers: Mrs Jayne Ellis, Mrs Sue Moore, Parish Evangelist: Mr Andrew Christie, elected on Deanery Synod (until March)
- Mrs Vicky Brett, PCC Secretary, elected General Synod member
- Mr David Dawson, representative on Deanery Synod
- Mrs Hilary Dawson, representative on Diocesan and Deanery Synods
- Mrs Fiona Elliot, representative on Deanery Synod (from March)
- Mr George Kirk, representative on Deanery Synod

Elected members:

- Mr Keith Brett
- Mrs Helen Brown
- Mr David Christie
- Mrs Gillian Christie
- Mr Victor Jones
- Jonathan Goodes (Until March)
- Mrs Mairwen Peasnell (Lay Chair for PCC meetings)
- Mr Richard Smith, Treasurer
- Mrs Angela Turner
- Mrs Elena Turner
- Mr Ian Cork (Elected then retired)
- Mr Christian Happy (Elected then retired)

Authorised Lay Pioneers:	Mr Keith Brett, Mrs Vicky Brett
Electoral Roll Officer:	Mrs Janette Jones-Pipe
Safeguarding Officer:	Mrs Jayne Ellis
Health & Safety Officer:	Mrs Cassandra Charles
Independent Examiner:	Mr N J Burroughs FCA, 45 Farleigh Fields, Orton Wistow, Peterborough
Banking details:	St Mary's Peterborough PCC General Account is at Barclays Bank, 1 Church Street, Peterborough PE1 1XB St Mary's Peterborough Restricted Accounts are held by the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance (Registered Charity no. 250569)

Our Vicar, Revd. Canon Michael Moore, summarises 2023 at St Mary's

GROWTH

2023 has been a good year for St Mary's for growth. In December, 17 people were confirmed by the bishop and we have two more planned for 2024. We ran an Alpha course with 17 participants and had our away day in Castor Cedar Centre. Many new people have joined us in 2023 and numbers are now back to pre-pandemic levels. We have seen greater amounts of children coming in to the church with some weeks attracting 30+.

We still have a big online presence, and it had been good that we can now stream funerals for those unable physically to get to the funeral service.

PRAYER

As well as focusing on God's Word at St Mary's, we continue to be an actively praying church. I am grateful to those who lead our 'Thursday Prayers online'; We have seen an increase of people using these prayers this year.

Our 'Prayer Link' continues to be a great support to those in need of urgent prayer throughout the local community and across the country and the world. Our Prayer board in Church continues to be well used too.

Monthly prayer evenings have been positive with people dropping in and out as they can. Some staying for a few minutes and some for a few hours.

EXPANDING THE TEAM

This year, many people have asked if they can help the church and more people are involved than ever before, taking on new roles and helping in new ways. The Social Team has planned and is putting on many new events. We have over sixty people reading on a Sunday and leading the prayers – young people, older people and in between. Stuart Pedley will finish his training next year to be a Licensed Reader. And volunteers for the Alpha team and the new monthly church house group have come forward to help.

REACHING OUT TO OUR COMMUNITY

St Mary's continues to be an outward-looking church. We raised a huge amount for our Summer Fundraiser in 2023 (£5,600). £2,800 of this went to the local charity 'Food for Nought' and the other half to St Mary's to put towards the replacement of lighting. This amazing amount is a testament to the huge generosity of our church members and their families and friends. With our other giving, it totalled over £15,000.

Our house-to-house collections and other events during Christian Aid Week raised £2,720. With the addition of almost £2,425 from the Red Bucket appeals we raised over £5,145 for Christian Aid this year. We also kept collecting for the Peterborough Food Bank each week. We had a hugely successful Fun Day in August for the community and fed and watered nearly 200 people.

The streaming of our church services also helped people to feel connected, and many who did not come to church before now regularly tune in. When meeting new people, it is helpful to point them to our online services, so they can see what we are like as a church before they try it. The services are proving to be a lifeline for those who cannot get to church because of illness, as they still feel part of the worshipping community.

FINANCES

We knew finances were going to be tough for us at St Mary's this year with lettings still down on pre-pandemic levels. We managed to make just a small surplus this year. God is good. However, we still need focus and to look at what we give this year and how we can all help to balance the books going forward. Together we can sort this.

We have reached out into the community with God's love through our online services and, through those, we have ourselves been blessed as a church. We have reached out to the community with our church magazine, telling people what is happening in the church. Spare copies were also delivered to the new estates in our parish.

There is a great need in our community, not just financially but also spiritually and I know that, as a church, we are helping in those areas. Together at St Mary's, we are making a difference in people's lives in this city. I pray that this will continue and that, as a church, we all will make a difference.

Our Parish of Peterborough St Mary's

The church of Peterborough St Mary was constituted on 27th August 1857 (as St Mary Boongate) to serve those living on the eastern side of Peterborough, principally the poor of the Boongate slums. Much of the parish was rural then, but the 20th century brought considerable residential, industrial and commercial development, particularly between 1970 and 1990 when Peterborough Development Corporation transformed the area. As part of that change, the mid-Victorian church building was demolished, and replaced with a modern building incorporating a church and chapel, with halls, meeting rooms, kitchens and toilets on two floors.

Our parish broadly equates to the civil Peterborough East Ward together with small parts of the neighbouring Central, Park and Dogsthorpe Wards. Covering an area of 3.6 square miles it forms a wedge, stretching out almost three miles north-eastwards from the city centre, from the Eastgate estates (which replaced the old Boongate slums in the 1970s), through the post-war suburb of Eastfield to the newer township of Parnwell. It also includes the extensive Eastern Industrial estates and part of the city's retail and commercial centre. The church building is situated in the south-western corner of the parish, close to the city centre.

The population is around 16,500, 65% white and 20% Asian. It is relatively young - 22% of those living in the parish in 2021 were under 15 years of age, slightly above the figure of 18% for England as a whole *(Church of England Research & Statistics Unit Parish data Jan. 2024).* It is one of the 10% most deprived parishes in the country (*based on the indicators of poverty used by the Church of England Research & Statistics Unit and the Church Urban Fund)*, for each of child, working-age and pensioner poverty.

The number of people living in the parish is expected to grow, and several housing developments are either planned or underway, including the large Northminster scheme on the former site of the City Market, close to the church.

Within our parish we have five primary schools *(Bishop Creighton Academy; Lime Academy Abbotsmede; Lime Academy Parnwell; Newark Hill Academy; St Thomas More RC Primary),* two Secondary Schools *(City of Peterborough Academy, St John Fisher RC High School)* and two Special Schools (*Medeshamstede Academy, NeneGate School)* and a Further Education College *(City College).* The new Peterborough campus of Anglia Ruskin University, which welcomed its first students in September 2022, is also in our parish.

The Primary Purpose of St Mary's Church

Our principal objective at St Mary's is to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. Like all churches, St Mary's attempts to look three ways at once in its mission, because at all times we strive to be open to and engage with our Living God, with our community neighbours and with our own 'church family'. These three fundamental functions underpin our mission as a church.

St Mary's Parochial Church Council is committed to growing our church – not just numerically, but to grow nearer to God through worship, to grow in faith and spiritual understanding, to grow out into our local community and to grow in fellowship with each other. To facilitate this growth we consider it important to maintain the fabric and contents of our church and centre building, and also to ensure that we have sufficient resources, human, technological and monetary.

As a church, our first priority at St Mary's is worship and prayer, and we are committed to holding regular public worship that is open to all, and to provide a sacred space for personal prayer and contemplation. We teach the Christian faith through sermons, courses and small groups, and offer a pastoral ministry to the sick and bereaved. We want to promote the whole mission of the church through the provision of activities of benefit to people in our local community, and want in particular to work with the schools within our parish.

St Mary's PCC is focused on the advancement of religion for the public benefit. When compiling our action plans for each year, we consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, particularly the specific guidance given to charities concerned with the advancement of religion. We also consider the wider needs of the local community which we serve.

Structure, governance and management

St Mary's Peterborough PCC is a body corporate operating under the *Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956* and the *Church Representation Rules*. In essence its role is to work with Canon Michael, as our Vicar, in all church activities, including the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social & ecumenical; participating in local Deanery and Diocesan events; looking after our building and contents; managing our finances and ensuring that things successfully happen.

St Mary's PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church Centre complex, which is spread over two floors and comprises the church, the chapel, two halls, two kitchens, three small meeting rooms, three vestries and an office. This modern, purpose-built building was opened in 1991, replacing the original Victorian church which was in a very poor state of repair and had no community facilities.

Given its wide responsibilities, the PCC has a number of committees and teams and authorises individuals to be responsible for particular areas of church activity, such as safeguarding, health and safety, stewardship, pastoral visiting and Churches Together liaison. It also employs two people: a part-time administrative assistant and a part-time cleaner/caretaker.

The day-to-day management of St Mary's Church is exercised by the Standing Committee: Revd. Canon Michael Moore (*Vicar)*, Andrew Christie, Michael Holborn (*Churchwardens)*, Vicky Brett *(PCC Secretary)*, Richard Smith *(Treasurer)* and Elizabeth Pedley. This is the only committee required by law, and it has the power to transact business between PCC meetings and consider issues which may affect the church.

PCC members are appointed in accordance with the Church of England Representation Rules and are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), held each Spring. By decision of a previous APCM, elected members serve for one year only (except for those elected to Synod, who generally serve for three years). Everyone who regularly attends St Mary's is encouraged to join our Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC. All members of the PCC are required to be DBS checked and to complete safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role. They may also receive other external training as and when deemed appropriate.

Our APCM was held in March 2023. This meeting elected two churchwardens, four members of Deanery Synod and twelve lay PCC members for one year (2 PCC members retired after the first meeting). St Mary's PCC met seven times during 2023. The average level of attendance during 2023 was 85.1%.

Meetings are chaired by an elected Lay Chair at the request of the Vicar, who otherwise retains chairmanship of the PCC as Trustees of St Mary's.



Our Plans for the future - the next five years

During 2019 St Mary's PCC set a new five year growth agenda for the years 2020 — 2025, which we felt would help strengthen our commitment to the core functions forming the basis of our on-going purpose, namely:

- to worship God,
- to help each other grow in faith and fellowship, and
- to spread the love of Jesus Christ and the Gospel message throughout our local community.

Our 5 Year Plan (2020 to 2025) identifies specific ways in which we hope to grow, and things we wish to achieve:

To grow nearer to God through worship:

By offering worship opportunities in a range of different styles and on different days of the week

By encouraging those who come to attend more regularly

To grow in faith and spiritual understanding:

By encouraging more of the congregation to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith through attendance at the activities we offer (e.g. Bible Study, House Groups, Lent Course)

By ensuring that our children and young people have firm foundations on which to grow their Christian faith

To grow in fellowship with one another:

By ensuring that everyone who walks through our doors is greeted with the same high standards of warmth and hospitality, and made to feel a valued member of our community

By offering a range of social and fund-raising activities appropriate to the age and interests of both our diverse congregation and our wider church community

By living out the principles of Inclusive Church

By developing a close partnership with our local Christian churches

By actively supporting specific charities through fundraising events

To grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:

By making contact with residents throughout the parish

By making contact with local offices and businesses, including those on the Eastern Industrial Estates

By strengthening our links with local schools

By offering activities for local children and young people

To grow in numbers:

By working to increase the numbers of those who attend our Sunday and weekday services on a regular basis

And in order to achieve these aims, we want to ensure that we:

Have sufficient numbers of people from various age-groups with the necessary skills and training to get things done

Have appropriate, well-maintained facilities, with improvements made where necessary

Have enough money, whilst giving a tenth of our income away to charity each year

Limit the damage we may be causing to our planet

What PCC wanted to achieve in 2023

Our 5-year implementation plans were adversely affected by the Covid pandemic, disrupting the original timetable and altering our views on what to regard as a priority.

However, it has not altered our purpose as a Church or changed our intention to achieve these aims.

and this is what we managed to do in 2023. We:

Continued to make public worship a priority:

- Continued the efforts to contact church members who hadn't been seen since the pandemic started.

Took steps to grow in faith and spiritual understanding:

- Explored ways to offer online fellowship groups, including a remote prayer group.
- Ran an Advent course.
- Ran an Alpha course, meeting weekly from January to March.
- Ran a confirmations class and held a confirmation service.

Took steps to grow in fellowship with one another:

- Improved the accuracy, consistency and accessibility of our communications, so that all were aware of forthcoming activities and feel invited
- Rebuilt our Welcoming Team, and involved children & young people wherever possible
- Supported and promoted activities offered by the Diocese and Churches Together in Central Peterborough, e.g. Bishop's Bible Day in March and Advent Reflection Day in November
- Hosted a Christian Aid event for local churches to promote environmental awareness and climate justice

Took steps to grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:

- Re-launched regular Street Prayer visits in residential areas of our parish
- Considered possible ways of rebuilding our Open the Book contact with local primary schools
- Offered a Family Fun Day in the summer for local families
- Distributed copies of '*News Around St Mary's*' to new houses in the parish.
- Distributed 2,000 leaflets advertising Christmas Services.
- Continued forging links with the ARU Peterborough university.
- Supported Food For Nought, a local charity through our Summer Fundraiser.
- Held our social events - see page 11 for details.

Took steps to ensure that we had appropriate resources and facilities to achieve our plans:

- Repainted the edges of the front steps to improve their visibility
- Investigated cost-saving measures for the regular services and maintenance.
- Continued efforts to increase the amount of money our members give to the church, and held a Stewardship Campaign

We also want to limit the damage we might cause to our planet:

- Continued our programme to replace all light fittings with LED lights
- Put up our Silver Eco Award plaque made of recycled wood.

Our Priorities for 2024

2024 is the final year of the Five Year plan adopted in May 2019. Our context has changed significantly over the past five years. The Market and many of the local offices have closed and are being turned into flats. The Covid closures opened our eyes to the potential offered by the internet. PCC agreed at their January meeting to focus on two key priorities:

- Address any outstanding issues
- Discuss and agree our priorities for the next five years. This will be done at the Awayday arranged for Saturday 13th July

During 2024 we hope to achieve the following:

To grow nearer to God through worship:

By encouraging those we haven't seen since the pandemic started, to come back to church

To grow in faith and spiritual understanding:

By offering Alpha, Advent and Lent Courses

Launch new monthly discussion groups – Church based 'House' Group, Book Club

To grow in fellowship with one another:

Have an effective Welcoming Team, involving children & young people where ever possible

Launch free family friendly film sessions for the local community when funds allow

Support and promote activities offered by the Diocese and Churches Together in Central Peterborough, e.g. Bishop's Bible Day and Advent Reflection Day in November

To grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:

Hold regular Street Prayer visits in residential areas of our parish

Rebuild our Open the Book contact with local primary schools

Offer a Family Fun Day in the summer for local families

Offer 'Come & Sing' sessions for elderly people and their carers.

And in order to achieve these aims, we want to improve our facilities :

Grow our volunteer base in areas where we are short

Reconsider the feasibility of installing handrails up the Sanctuary steps

Continue efforts to increase the amount of money our members give to the church, and hold a Stewardship Campaign if deemed necessary

Work to increase our Eco Award level from Silver to Gold across all areas

Continue our programme to replace all light fittings with LED lights

Research the possibility of installing solar panels on our south-facing roof

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Saviour

Oceans (where feet may fail) by Hillsong

Achievements & Performance

Numbers on the Electoral Roll

At the start of 2023 there were 124 names on our Electoral Roll, 60% of whom were women and 40% men. 50 (40%) lived within the parish, and 74 (60%) outside.

By May 2023, and following the revision of the Electoral Roll prior to the Annual Church Meeting in accordance with Church Regulations, numbers had increased to 130, 61% women and 39% men. 43% lived in the parish and 57% outside. Numbers remained stable at 130 up to December 2023.

Worship

All are welcome to attend our regular services. We recognise that not everyone finds it helpful to worship God in the same way, and we encourage everyone to explore new ways of worship as they try to come closer to God. Our main Sunday morning service is Family Communion, but our regular pattern of services covers a wide range to suit different tastes and offer different worship experiences. Our popular monthly café style 'Friday Night Worship' appeals to those who enjoy informal worship with a live band, whilst those who value time for silent prayer and reflection are also catered for with our monthly prayer evenings. Our Compline and Evensong Sunday evening services complete our worship. Our Lay Pioneer Ministers lead 'Inclusive Church Peterborough' at St Mary's on Sunday evenings.

The online services have been offered each week since March 2020, thanks to the technical expertise of church members, and viewing figures have been encouraging. Our most popular services this year were Easter Sunday 9th April and the Confirmation service on the 10th December with 105 views each. Our monthly online Compline services regularly have 30-40 views.
We know from feedback that people living miles away from St Mary's, including some from different continents, watch our services regularly, we had over 4,216 views in 2023. Some have an existing contact with St Mary's, and others seem to have found us by chance and stayed.



As well as our regular services, we enable people in our community to commemorate and thank God for, life's milestones of birth, marriage and death. We held one wedding and nine baptisms in church. Sadly there were a total of eight funerals, with two in church and six at the crematorium. We were also able to live-stream funerals to enable far-flung family members to say their goodbyes. One such funeral had 138 viewers, including many from Jamaica.

Children, young people and families in our church and local community

Children's work in church is very important. The first Sunday of the month the children stay in for our All Age Communion service, and are encouraged to take an active part, with one child on the technical team. For other services the children leave during the first hymn for their own 'Children's Church' activities, returning for communion. They are then given the opportunity to share some of the learning they have done towards the end of the service. In the last 18 months the number of children attending has doubled and we are thankful to have an amazing team of helpers.

Our Youth Group: for school-aged young people in Year 6 and above, had a successful year. They meet once a month on Saturday mornings and enjoy discussion and fun activities.

Children and families in our local community: We are particularly keen to build stronger links with local families. Our St Mary's Parent & Toddler group is ver popular.

Local primary schools: Our 'Open the book' team only managed one Assembly at Bishop Creighton Academy during 2023, but plan to rebuild the team and increase their visits in 2024.

A donation was made to Newark Hill school towards some toys and equipment for a new project, a safe space for nurturing troubled children. A Donation was also made to Dogsthorpe Infants School to help them provide a free breakfast to children in December 2022, January and February 2023. Although the school is outside our parish, we have a link through members of the congregation.

Pastoral Care to our local community & our church

Pastoral care and service to our community are very important to St Mary's, both within our church and within our parish and local community. Our Pastoral Team is co-ordinated by Sue Moore, one of our Lay Pastoral Ministers.

The Team coordinates visiting and takes House Communion to church members who are unable to attend services due to illness and mobility reasons. They also regularly take Holy Communion to residential homes in our parish (Broadleigh, Lavender House, and The Star). Over the years we have built strong links between St Mary's and the staff and residents.

The Team deliver free copies of our church magazine, 'News Around St Mary's', to schools, medical centres, sheltered housing schemes, residential homes, dentists and hairdressers in our local community.

Other roles include organising the 'Prayer Link' for urgent prayer requests, keeping our church Prayer Board updated and updating our 'Prayer Shepherd' card for every church member, thus ensuring every person in our church is regularly prayed for.

The team supports people via personal visits, phone, email and prayer. It is involved in baptism preparation, visiting and support, including regularly sending out baptism anniversary cards.

The team supports those who are bereaved through an annual Remembering Service and provides support, as and when needed.

We continue to broadcast our services online, and regular contact and encouragement is made via YouTube, Facebook messaging and email to our many viewers locally, throughout the UK and the world.

Church members continue to support Peterborough Food Bank with regular provision and collection of food items in church.

Our weekly 'Chill and Chat' continues to welcome old and new friends. Residents from a local care home attend our midweek Communion service.

Positive visits, connections and follow-ups continue to be made through our successful community outreach initiative, 'Street Prayer'.



God hears the cry of the poor - with permission Pat Marrin, ncronline.org

Social events for church and community

At St Mary's we like to have fun and socialise. Our events are open to all and give everyone a chance to chat, meet new people and spread the camaraderie that oozes out of our church. Of course, along the way we try to raise as much money as possible for charities whilst keeping ticket prices affordable for all. Each event raises money for a different charity. The following list shows the beneficiaries from 2023.

Month	Event	Charity
February	Pancake Party	Soup Kitchen
March	Beetle Drive with Fish and Chip Supper	Tommy's
April	Peterborough Concert Band Concert	Royal British Legion
May	Coronation Lunch	Christian Aid
June	BBQ and Treasure Hunt	National Deaf Children's

July/August/September - Summer Fundraiser
Monies shared this year between St Mary's and Food for Nought

Summer Fundraiser events:
Mens breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Patronal Lunch, Garden Party, Craft Afternoon, Murder Mystery Party, plus jam sales, marmalade sales, sponsored walks, lunches, bell ringing, plant sales, puddings sales, table top sales etc.

Month	Event	Charity
October	Harvest lunch	St Mary's
	Ceilidh	Deaf Blind UK
November	Quiz and Ploughman's supper	Little Miracles
December	Christmas Singalong	St Mary's
	Christmas Table top sales	St Mary's
	Afternoon Tea	Samaritans

These events raised £7,739 for nine charities plus St Mary's.

Our Church Centre

St Mary's is fortunate in having a well-designed modern building incorporating church, chapel, two halls, meeting rooms, kitchens and toilets, all offering good access for the disabled, including ramp entrance, wide doors and a lift. Until it was closed by the pandemic, this Church Centre was well-used, both for events run by St Mary's Church and by various groups who hire rooms on a regular or occasional basis. It is now once again coming back into life.

Extended Hands (a small local charity supporting women at risk of feeling lonely, isolated or marginalised) rent one of our rooms as their office base and regularly used rooms in our Centre for their sewing and craft sessions, IT skills classes, fitness sessions and coffee mornings.

Inclusive Church Peterborough, led by our Lay Pioneer Ministers, meets each Sunday evening in our Centre. We also hosted a week long interdenominational Icon painting course in October.

Our policy has been to offer free or reduced rate meeting space in our Centre to several local charities, including Samaritans, Peterborough Christian Aid Committee, and the Peterborough Inter-Faith Council. We are very grateful for our Church Administrator, Denise Thomas, for continuing to manage our Centre bookings so efficiently.

Maintaining our church building

Like all buildings, St Mary's needs regular maintenance and repair to prevent deterioration. This responsibility falls upon the Churchwardens, who report to Standing Committee, who in turn advise the PCC on maintenance issues and work needed, so the PCC can assent to work being undertaken subject to the availability of funds. Less significant work is covered by a team of church volunteers with more involved tasks or projects being covered by skilled trades, some of whom are locally based, like Nick Elks for electrical work, who has an association to St Mary's Church. We are grateful to Nick and others, like Gareth Williams, Gavin Mills and Charlie Lee for their continued assistance who with their respective professional skills, provide essential services to our church.

The incumbent Churchwardens, Andrew Christie and Michael Holborn have maintained the fabric of the building with minor repairs carried out as necessary and identifying tasks needing attention. The more substantial activities are detailed as follows:

- Gutters cleaned and repaired.
- Lightning conductors tested and a new receiver point attached to the top of the tower.
- In late November 2023 the bay window in the Fellowship Hall was impacted by a car, resulting in structural damage. The work should be completed in Spring 2024.
- Courtyard steps edged with white paint, replacing the peeling anti-slip strip.
- North-side border has had a membrane and bark topping put in to make gardening much easier.
- Replaced much of the lighting with LEDs to adhere with our Eco-friendly policies.
- Completed an extensive window cleaning activity in Spring 2023, included all internal glass and stained glass for the first time since the opening of the St Mary's in 1991.
- Initiated the WAHR (the Work at Height Regulations) 2005 inspections and record keeping.

We are very grateful to Denise and Ray Howard for the professional expertise they bring to their work cleaning our building during 2023. We are also grateful to David Divers, for everything he did over the year as our voluntary Estate Manager, despite his ill health.

Keeping us safe

Health and Safety:

We take our Health and Safety responsibilities seriously so we can provide a safe environment for everyone to enjoy the facilities that St Mary's Church has to offer. A Health and Safety Inspection of the building is conducted annually by an independent inspector, with our church wardens doing a monthly check to look out for anything that needs fixing or removing.

Annual and periodical safety inspections and services are carried out by registered contractors who comply with professional and regulatory standards, thereby ensuring all our safety certificates are up-to-date. Including:-

- The lift is regularly serviced by Morris Vermaport, including the statutory LOLER (safety) tests.
- The fire safety equipment is maintained and checked by Churches Fire who test the fire alarm, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting. A Fire Safety Floor Plan is on display.
- The gas-fired boiler and heating system is inspected and certified annually by Blounts.
- The portable electrical appliances are PAT tested annually.
- The lightening conductor was tested by PTSG Electrical Services Ltd in 2023.
- Organ and Piano tuners attend twice a year.
- Our large "Red Bin" contract is with Biffa who empty the bin on a 4-week cycle.
- Our windows were cleaned by Beebys Limited every 6 months.
- Cathedral Hygiene attend to the sanitary bins in the toilets.

Safeguarding:
At St Mary's we take safeguarding very seriously. Our parish safeguarding officer is Mrs Jayne Ellis who has attended St Mary's for many years. During 2023 she kept the PCC fully informed on updates to policy and practice as advised by Peterborough Diocese.

Copies of our safeguarding policy are prominently displayed on lobby noticeboards and on the church website with links to the Diocesan Safeguarding website.

Safeguarding concerns are followed up promptly and in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.

St Mary's Church is registered with the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) through which renewals and new clearances for the Statutory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are made.

The Vicar, licensed ministers, PCC members and staff working with children and vulnerable adults have been DBS registered and are completing the appropriate level of safeguarding training as set out by the Diocese. Everyone is aware that they cannot continue in their role without this training.

Data Protection:
The way in which St Mary's collects, stores and processes data on our church members was reviewed in 2018 in order to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). PCC agreed a new Data Privacy notice, which is on display on our noticeboard together with our Health & Safety and Safeguarding policy statements.

All members of the church have completed a Consents Form to give, or withhold, permission on how their personal information can be used by St Mary's Church.

Our links with the wider church

Our links with the wider church are strong.

Our Vicar, Canon Michael is Rural Dean of Peterborough Deanery, and we have four lay representatives on Peterborough Deanery Synod.

One member of St Mary's currently represents Peterborough Deanery on Peterborough Diocesan Synod.

One of our church members was elected in October 2021 to General Synod as one of the three lay representatives for Peterborough Diocese.

St Mary's is part of the Inclusive Church network and Inclusive Church Peterborough meets in our building each week, led by our Lay Pioneer Ministers. They met throughout 2023.

St Mary's is also an active member of Churches Together in Central Peterborough (CTiCP), an ecumenical group of seven city centre churches of various different denominations. Its main aims are to pray and worship together, putting on the Good Friday Walk of Witness and monthly prayer and breakfast meetings and an Advent Reflection Day.

St Mary's PCC is delighted with what we managed to achieve in 2023 in another challenging year. Very little of this would have been possible without ...

...our Volunteers

Almost all the work at St Mary's is done by volunteers. Canon Michael, the Churchwardens and PCC would like to thank them all for giving their time and talents free to enable St Mary's Church—whether the 'physical' church in the building, or our online presence, to function, week in and week out.

Thank you!

Financial Review for 2023 *[Detailed accounts on pages 14-18]*

Report from our Treasurer, Richard Smith

The year ended on a positive financial note for St Mary's. Regular giving from members rose during 2023 and an autumn appeal raised just over £13,000 in donations. This meant that we ended the year with a small surplus of £3,392 (although this year-end figure is flattered by the fact that the final monthly Parish Share payment did not clear until January 2024).

Our second main income source – hiring out our halls and meeting rooms – continued to increase with a healthy 40% increase on last year's figure. Although not back to pre-Covid levels, this is a positive development.

Income via contactless, text and online giving continued to grow, bringing in over £5,000 during the year. A regular programme of fundraising activities helped to increase the amount raised for the church and local charities. Sadly the Traidcraft stall was wound up this year but still managed to raise £1,000.

Running costs during the year fell slightly. The main expenditure incurred was to replace a faulty boiler pump and repairs to the guttering.

Reserves

Our policy, which has been formally agreed by the PCC, is to keep sufficient money in our reserves to cover three months' running costs, plus £20,000.

External Charitable Giving

St Mary's PCC aim to give 10% of our income to charity each year, in obedience to the tithing principle. Part of this giving is in reduced or no-cost rent to local charities who use our rooms, and this giving does not show in these formal accounts. During 2023 we gave £7,739 in direct donations to national and local charities, including:

- British Legion
- Christian Aid
- Community Heartbeat Trust
- Deafblind UK
- Food for Nought
- Little Miracles
- National Deaf Children's Society
- Peterborough Foodbank
- Peterborough Soup Kitchen
- Tommys

We raised a total of £5,904 for Christian Aid and the Children's Society during the year: £2,720 during Christian Aid Week and £2,425 from Christian Aid/DEC Appeals. We also raised £759 for the Children's Society.

Our Summer Fundraising Campaign this year was for Food for Nought and raised a total of £2,800.

Statement of Accounts for the calendar year 2023

St Mary's PCC: General Fund Receipts and Payments Account

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS				
Incoming resources from donors				
Collections - Stewardship	75,561		70,302	
- Loose cash	3,333		4,731	
Gift Aid reclaim	-		2,622	
Online Giving	5,389		4,350	
		84,284		82,004
Other voluntary incoming resources				
Donations and bequests	14,502		7,409	
Fundraising	9,546		6,795	
Grants and similar income	-		419	
Miscellaneous income	243		755	
		24,291		15,378
Income from investments				
Bank interest	191		28	
Investment interest - CBF deposit fund	501		203	
		692		231
Income from charitable and ancillary trading				
Wedding and funeral fees	560		1,929	
Centre income	13,986		9,850	
Traidcraft income	1,000		450	
		15,546		12,229
Transfers				
Hebden trust	-			4,637
			-	
		0		0
Total Receipts		124,813		114,480
Total Payments (see page 16 for detail)		(121,420)		(128,355)
Excess/(deficit) of receipts over payments		3,392		(13,875)
Bank current and deposit accounts at 1 January 2023		70,666		84,541
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2023		£74,058		£70,666

General Fund Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2023

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
PAYMENTS				
Activities relating directly to the work of the Church				
Vicar's expenses		233		94
Locum		1,766		351
Readers Expenses		-		619
Salaries paid by Diocese		11,832		10,886
Upkeep of services		1,370		1,108
Organists		4,133		3,345
Water		189		541
Light and heat		6,212		5,394
Repairs and maintenance		16,951		18,017
Insurance		1,888		1,716
Telephones		684		751
Parish share		61,869		67,269
Magazine		-		1,042
Donations (Overseas and sundry):				
Tithe	8,206		7,460	
Other giving	-	8,206	-	7,460
Sunday Club/Youth expenses		585		184
Stewardship envelopes		-		-
Office administration		101		589
Cleaning and sundry materials		225		324
Diocesan fees		-		654
Piano and organ expenses		-		264
Music licence		-		551
Auditor (CROPS)		200		200
Car expenses - Vicar		-		444
Training		1,116		220
Flowers		-		36
Miscellaneous expenditure		3,861		6,296
Total payments (to page 15)		£121,420		£128,355

Receipts and payments accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023

HEBDEN TRUST FUND - RESTRICTED	2023	2022
Restricted to spending on education	£	£
Receipts		
Interest	-	-
Sale of investments	-	-
Payments		
Transfer to current		(4,637)
Bank deposit accounts at 1 January 2023	0	4,637
Bank deposit accounts at 31 December 2023	£0	£0

ST. MARY'S EASTGATE MISSION - ENDOWMENT		
Receipts		
Interest	64	27
Payments		
Transfer to current		
Bank deposit accounts at 1 January 2023	2,018	1,991
Bank deposit accounts at 31 December 2023	£2,082	£2,018

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2023

	General Fund:		Restricted Funds :		
	General	Hebden Trust	St. Mary's Eastgate Mission Fund	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Monetary assets					
Cash in hand	100			100	100
Bank - current	23,049	0		23,049	25,067
- reserve	34,790			34,790	29,880
CBF deposit fund	16,119			16,119	15,619
Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance			2,082	2,082	2,018
Total cash & Assets	74,058	0	2,082	76.140	72,684

St Mary's Parochial Church Council Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

Funds

General Funds represent funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC. These include funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of other Church groups that owe an affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Subject to the above, receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

The following assets are recognised but not valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities:

- Movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal.
- Other fixtures, fittings and office equipment where the PCC is free to dispose of such assets without faculty.
- Amounts owing from the Inland Revenue where a formal claim has been made.

Closing bank balances as shown in the receipts and payments accounts.

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 14 to 18, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('2011 Act').

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and section 144(2) of the 2011 Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to :-.

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act ;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act;
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act and to be found in the Church guidance 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 accounts 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 131 of the 2011 Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the 2011 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.

N J Burroughs FCA
45 Farleigh Fields, Orton Wistow
Peterborough

29 February 2024

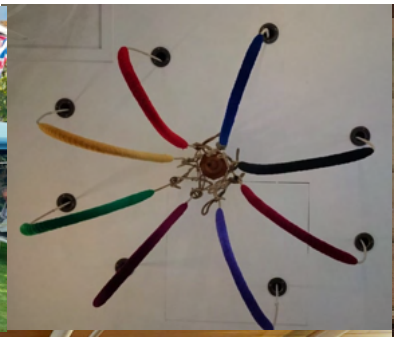
This Annual Report was approved by St Mary's PCC on 7th May 2024, and signed on their behalf by:

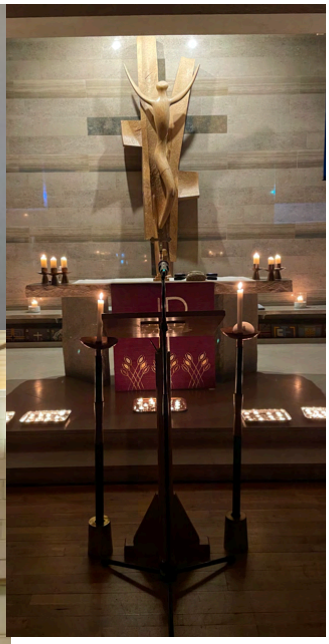
Revd Canon Michael Moore

Vicar

Chair of Trustees of the ecclesiastical parish of Peterborough St Mary

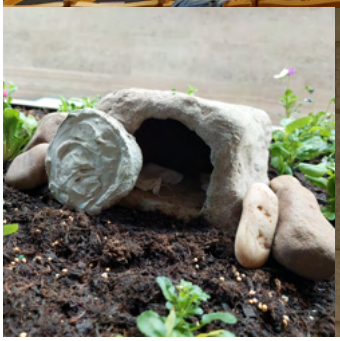




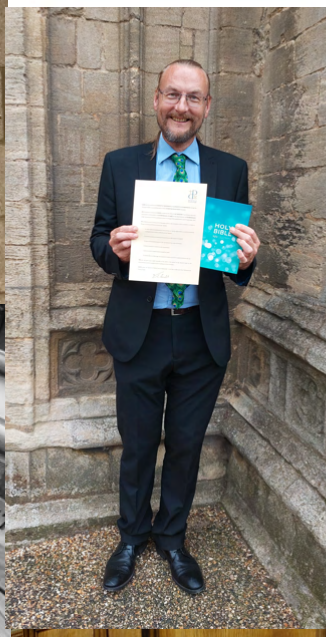




CHURCHES TOGETHER
IN CENTRAL PETERBOROUGH
...serving our communities and our city







Inclusive Church









St Mary's Church and Centre
New Road
Peterborough
PE1 1TT
www.peterborough-stmarys.org.uk
Registered Charity no. 1180032