

Preamble

St John the Baptist is a church which is the responsibility of a parochial church council, duly constituted under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended, and the Church Representation Rules¹.

The Church is Registered with code 614196, in the diocese of Ely, in the parish of Holywell-cum-Needingworth.

The Parochial Church Council of Holywell-cum-Needingworth is a charity for the purposes of the Charities Act 2011. Its members are trustees constituted as a body corporate.

The Church Address is: Holywell Front, Holywell, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 4TG although this is not an address for correspondence. Addresses for correspondence are:

Incumbent

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Cambs PE28 3LN
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Churchwarden (for administrative and fabric issues)

Mr Stephen York
Hawthorne Cottage
Back Lane
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Treasurer (for financial issues)

Commander B F Peilow, OBE, Royal Navy
Wren Cottage
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¹ Archbishop's Council of England and Wales, *Church Representation Rules 2022* (London, Church House Publishing, 2022)

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Enclosures:

1. Accounts including Independent Examiner's Report
2. Minutes of 2023 Vestry Meeting and APCM

1. Membership of the PCC

The members of the PCC are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. There are also co-opted members in the PCC. During the year the PCC's membership was as follows:

Ex-officio members of the PCC

Rector:

Associate Ministers

Churchwarden (Vice Chair):

Mr R Beaman

Churchwarden:

Mr S York

Deanery Synod representative:

Mrs Diane Alder

Elected and co-opted members

The 2020 APCM agreed to revert to six elected members each being elected for a maximum term of three years and then being eligible for re-election.

Elected Members:

Dr C Mills – (until April 2024)

Mrs C Armit (until April 2024)

Mr M Williamson (until April 2026)

Mrs Ann Lorman (until April 2026)

Mr B Peilow (Treasurer) (until April 2025)

Elected LLM:

Mrs C Peilow

Co-opted Members:

Mrs J Turnbull (Secretary)

2. Church attendance and services 2023

The parish and benefice have been in vacancy since 4 December 2022. The normal pattern of services in church was maintained in 2023, with the assistance of the Rural Dean and other visiting clergy for Holy Communion and Baptism services. Tony Perryman and Carol Peilow, as LLMs, were able to lead other regular services and funerals. One significant change to the regular pattern was to move the time of morning services from 9.30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

A new monthly evening service of Prayers and Compline was introduced in March. Special services included a blessing service for Hunts Bowls Club in April, a Choir 20th anniversary celebration service in July, a Taizé service in November and an outdoor Carol service at Needingworth Park, in addition to the outdoor one at the school. The school Leavers' service was held in the churchyard in July.

Service	Number of services held		Average attendance (Adults Children Communicants)	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
All-Age Service	11	9	17 1	23 5
All Souls	1	1	27 0	16
Ashing service	1	1	11	9
Baptisms	7	4	27 8	43 15
Benefice Communion (at this church)	2	1	31 3 30	27 1 26
Café Sunday	9	12	8 1	10 1
Carol Service (outdoor)	2	1	Unknown	Unknown
Carols by Candlelight	1	1	96 9	118 40
Crib Service	1	1	18 9	18 11
Easter Day Dawn Communion	1	1	25 0 23	20 0 18
Easter Day Holy Communion	1	1	37 4 35	29 4 29
Evening Prayer	3	4	3 0	3 0

Funerals	5	8	58 1	41 1
Holy Communion (BCP)	10	12	10 0 10	10 0 10
Holy Communion (CW)	11	12	23 1 22	24 1 23
Holy Week evening services	2	2	9	8
Holy Week Good Friday service	1	1	15	12
Interment of ashes in Remembrance Garden	3	3	4 4	6 0
Midnight Communion Christmas Eve	1	1	56 1 55	34 0 25
Morning Worship	9	9	21 1	19 1
Mothering Sunday	1	1	27 1	57 5
Music Makers (Village Hall)	11	11	10 7	13 10
Prayers and Compline	9	–	5	–
Remembrance Service	1	1	98 40	80 40
Taizé service	1	–	27	–
Weddings	1	1	81 5	67 10
Well Blessing Service	1	1	133 70	54 17

Stephen York

3. Review of the Year

a. Overview

The main focus of the PCC in 2023 was to participate with our sister parishes in selecting and appointing a new incumbent for the Meridian Benefice. This process extended over most of the year. After one unsatisfactory interview with another candidate, the Benefice representatives (including Mrs Carol Peilow LLM and Stephen York, Churchwarden, for our parish) interviewed and were happy to vote for the appointment of Revd Valmor Alves Pimenta. We look forward to his ministry here and we pray that he always find Holywell-cum-Needingworth a warm, welcoming and forward-looking parish.

During the vacancy the PCC and many members of our congregation have worked hard to maintain our regular services and church life in general. Grateful thanks are due to our worship leaders Mr Tony Perryman and Mrs Carol Peilow as LLMs, and Dr Carole Mills; to the Rural Dean, Revd Canon Fred Kilner and the Archdeacon Ven. Richard Harlow for their support and advice; and to associate and visiting clergy who have enabled us to celebrate Holy Communion and baptisms, including Revd Gary Evans, Revd Clifford Owen, Revd Barry Pate, Revd David Robertson and Revd Liz Strickland.

There were many highlights in our worship in 2023: among them, the institution of a monthly Compline service and Prayers in the Porch; an exceptionally well-attended service for the Well Blessing, memorably led by our new Archdeacon; a special Taizé service for Advent; and a very successful and welcoming extra carol service on the green in the new development of Needingworth Park. We also joined in the national celebration of our new monarch HM King Charles III.

The fund-raising team excelled themselves once again in bringing in funds for church upkeep and at the same time strengthening our links with the local community. We maintained our strong connection with Holywell Church of England Primary School, one of our church's greatest assets, and thanks are due for the work of Carol Peilow as a Foundation Governor and to the Open the Book group, led by Carol Mills, who continue to entertain the children while bringing the word of God to them. We also thank Carole, Carol and Heather for their work in connecting with young families at the monthly Music Makers.

During 2023 we have been visited frequently by a church history team, led by Mrs Pat Hamilton, who are examining and charting every aspect of our church building and parish history. In particular, they made us aware that we have a valuable 18th-century chalice in our possession.

Finally, a big vote of thanks to all our church volunteers not already named, for cleaning the church, the flower arrangers, the bellringers, hospitality, raising money and all those who work so hard in the garden.

Stephen York, Roger Beaman, Churchwardens

b. Safeguarding

During 2023, the PCC has given due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding and as such continues to adopt the House of Bishops' Promoting a Safer Church's safeguarding statement. A signed copy of the parish statement is available on the benefice website and also displayed in the church alongside contact details for the diocesan safeguarding officer, and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). A copy of the parish safeguarding handbook is also available on the noticeboard.

The Church has a procedure in place for dealing promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse and has policy statements for the recruitment of ex-offenders, domestic abuse and also lone working.

Church officers working with children or vulnerable adults have undertaken safeguarding training and are safely recruited. All church members were given the opportunity to undertake the basic safeguarding module in person at a session delivered in the church in October.

Activities involving children and vulnerable adults continue to be authorised by the PCC.

Appropriate risk assessments continue to be undertaken for services, authorised activities and fund-raising events.

Carole Mills, Parish Safeguarding Officer

c. Fund-Raising

The fundraising table is set out below showing 2023 with the previous year for comparison:

Source	2023	2022	Remarks
200 Club	£ 964	£ 896	
Joyce's Cards	£ 300	£ 200	
Meridian Concert	-	£ 448	
G&S Concert	-	£1,270*	*For Welcome Space..
Plant Sales	£ 845	£ 35	
Lent Lunch	£ 20	-	
Back to Front	£ 160*	-	*For Welcome Space
Coronation Party/Village Book	£ 1,651*	-	*For Welcome Space (BTF) less £56 production cost of Village Book
Cream Teas	£ 435	-	
Patronal Festival	£ 1,152	£1,050	
Music Festival Teas	£ 476 **	£ 600*	*Includes £225 to VH Trust. **Includes £100 to VH Trust
Military Wives Concert	£ 350*		*Includes s£200 Donated to SSAFA
Harvest Produce Sale	+ -	£ 123+	+Code 06, Special Appeal
Coffee Mornings	£ 1,553	£1,696	
Christmas Fair	£ 205	£ 318	
Christmas Draw	£ 865	£ 800	
Christmas Cards	£ 323	£ 711	
Books	£ 50	£ 17	
Other	£ 135	£ 170	
Sub Total	£ 9,480	£8,211	Note 2

<i>Budget</i>	<i>£ 8,000</i>	<i>£7,500</i>	
Well	£ 60+	£ 75+	+ Booked to donations accounting code 05
Hole in the Wall	£ 260+	£ 185+	+ Booked to donations accounting code 05
Harvest Produce Sale	£ 237+		+ Code 06, Special Appeal See Note 3
Total	£10,037	£8,594	Includes + entries

1. Funds raised in 2023 are shown in the above table with the 2022 figures for comparison.
2. The accounting convention of rounding to the nearest pound has been used.
3. Special Appeals will be recorded in this section from 2023 onwards to make the presentation more logical.

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of many people, fundraising efforts over the past year have resulted in an outcome well beyond expectations. Both the budget target and the 2022 outcome, itself a record, were left well behind. With the listed activities booked to other accounting codes added in, the grand total has broken the £10,000 barrier which is truly remarkable and a tribute to some very hard work. A big well-done to the Fundraising and Outreach Team. There is a great deal to be thankful for.

The 200 Club, run by Sue Dawson begins the year with a substantial contribution to the Fabric Fund it operates through the year and deserves every support. Joyce Brinkhurst's hand-made cards is another through-year operation which generates a valuable income stream and a great deal of pleasure to those who send and receive them. An unexpected, long-running but most welcome contribution came from plant sales. A very big thank you to Andrew White for keeping the hedge in front of Wren Cottage topped up, seemingly endlessly with plants for sale, together with Betty Lee for her contribution too.

The Snowdrop Coffee Morning in February offered potted Spring Bulbs, other stalls and probably a first chance to meet and catch up in the New Year. A big thank you to Pat and Les Staddon and Carol Burgin for their sterling efforts. Cream Teas were a great success (many thanks Jill Harvey). The Coronation in May offered us the opportunity to celebrate the King and Queen at our Patronal weekend the following month. As always, the involvement of clubs, societies and organisations across the parish in the flower festival contributed greatly to the success of the weekend. The Military Wives' choir rounded things off in fine style.

The Coronation also gave impetus to the 'Village Book' produced in and for Holywell (thank you Penny Peart and Anne Bannell for organising and for all the contributions too). Begun in 2022 for the Platinum Jubilee, her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth's death put the project on hold until the Coronation brought new life to it. Popular demand for personal copies generated a substantial income which has been donated to Welcome Space. Our regular Sunday afternoon Tea Slot at NFEST at the beginning of July provided a good opportunity to meet people and some very tired 'tea ladies' at the end of it. Thank you all! To conclude the 'Summer Season', Felicity Leonard kindly hosted a coffee morning which was greatly enjoyed and appreciated.

Autumn brought the Harvest Season, a September Coffee morning and the introduction of the traditional produce sale (courtesy of the Burgess family) at that event in addition to the Sunday Harvest Service resulting in almost double the amount received in 2022. The approach of Christmas brought the Draw, with considerable thanks to Michael Williamson for encouraging sponsors, Christmas Card sales, and attendance at the annual Christmas Fair. We are next in line to organise 2024 and the WI is a hard act to follow!

I know that listing names for thanks means that someone somewhere may have been left out. Please accept my apologies if that is the case, but know that everyone's efforts are greatly appreciated. What

you have done has effectively covered the running costs for the church (excluding the Parish Share) for the year. In closing, I must add a final, most important thank you. To all who have supported our events, through your generosity and indeed simply by turning up, we are most grateful. The words 'thank you' are simply insufficient to express our appreciation.

Carol Peilow

d. The Church in the Community

Communication

The Herald continued its role as the church's monthly printed communication with the Benefice, under the editorship of Eleanor. The print run is approx. 2900 copies, and the cost is shared by all three parishes. About 100 households, and several families not living in the parish, also receive their *Herald* by e-mail, in colour. Stephen York still arranges distribution in Holywell-cum-Needingworth and wishes to thank our circle of volunteer distributors who give their time every month to delivering copies.

The Meridian Benefice website (www.meridianbenefice.org.uk) continued to be maintained by Stephen York and is updated once a week. Contributions of news from around the Benefice are always welcome. Special services and fund-raising events are posted on two Holywell-cum-Needingworth Facebook pages.

Church Bulletin

In the past the church had a pew leaflet giving details of the Collect and Lectionary readings for the week and alongside notices. This was later expanded for the Benefice as a whole but stopped during the pandemic. The PCC realised there was a need to disseminate information to regular church members, attenders and also visitors. So in August 2023 the first edition of the weekly Church Bulletin began. This contains the Collect, Lectionary readings, notices and contact information for people within the church. Through it the church is able to advertise prayer requests and also offer support in various forms to those who may require it. The bulletin is available in paper form at services, at the back of the church for visitors and also sent via email to anyone who requests it.

Stephen York

Outreach A number of our outreach activities are reported elsewhere, either under fundraising or other headings. However, we have a fundamental duty to reach out to and earn our place in the parish community. Some highlights merit mention here.

Prayers in the Porch Begun during the COVID lockdowns, it became evident that encouraging prayers to be left in the porch was meeting the pastoral need of a part of the community that we may never know or see. The introduction of prayers and Compline on the third Thursday of each month has enabled us to offer these prayers and petitions in church and place them formally before God on the altar. This 'unknown congregation' is now also frequently remembered in Sunday Intercessions.

Carols at Needingworth Park Following an offer to the residents of the new Needingworth Park estate, an informal carol service took place early in December. We felt most warmly welcomed, and it was a first opportunity to meet a community that has, in the space of just a few years, grown to match the size of Holywell.

School

Foundation Governors Currently, only one of the three Foundation Governor places on the School's Governing Body is filled, by Carol Peilow. Once Rev^d Valmor is inducted in March 2024, one vacancy will be taken up, but the third is needed too. Please give this some thought and prayer, as this support is vital to the school's success and indeed building our future. Although demanding of time, the reward and appreciation of the children, parents and staff are plain to see.

Carol Peilow

Open the Book

During 2023, the Open the Book team have continued to go into Holywell school on a Tuesday

morning in term time to deliver a bible story to the school with the help of Year 6 pupils. The team have also organised sessions for Experience Christmas and Experience Easter where two classes are able to explore aspects of the Christmas and Easter stories in more detail.

Carole Mills

Well Dressing and Patronal Weekend The attendance of the entire school on the Friday afternoon of the Patronal weekend was a great illustration of their engagement with the Church and ours with them. Their contribution to the displays within the Church, the artwork on the North Door, including the cheeky looking fox who still graces us with his (or is it her?) presence is greatly appreciated as is the contribution of their choir.

Art Work Building on the artistic contribution to the Patronal Weekend, more school artwork, with a Nativity theme, found place on the North Door, the Screen and in the Chancel and proved a most welcome addition to the Christmas Decorations. There is an enthusiasm to offer more which presents an opportunity to build on existing engagement in coming years.

Carols in the Car Park Due to the pressure of numbers in the church, as experienced in 2022, the decision was taken to engage the school choirs with Carols in the Car Park at the school rather than the Carols by Candlelight service. Despite the highly inclement weather, this proved most successful and offers a model for future years.

Carol Peilow

e. Charitable Donations

Charitable donations from this year onwards are split into two different parts. The new innovation is the sponsorship of a child in a village in Rwanda and since establishment earlier in the year, we have donated £324 towards her well-being and education. We are in regular correspondence with her and her mother, and it is more than humbling to receive the thank you message for a birthday present which tells us that the monetary gift has been used to buy food. Of the remainder, some £1,100, beneficiaries have included the St Ives Food Bank, CRISIS at Christmas and SSAFA, the last being in conjunction with the Military Wives Choir following their concert.

Ben Peilow

f. Church Music

As with last year, I begin with a plea. We are now accustomed to singing with the backing of MP3 accompaniment, the rare occasions when we have an organist or pianist remind us of a vital component missing from our worship. If you can, or know anyone who might be able to help us with live playing and possible rehearsals, even if occasionally, please do get in touch.

The choir has continued to support worship twice a month on Sundays together with the special services for Easter, All souls, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. The impromptu service in Needingworth Park began our Advent, and Carols by Candlelight was very well attended. The COVID break is well behind us and it is a great privilege to contribute to worship. Our voice numbers remain steady at about 8 or 9, but if you are interested, or just curious, please give it a try. You will be most welcome.

Ben Peilow

g. Bellringers.

We continue to have a good number of ringers associated with the tower and regularly provide a band for Sunday morning services. Given the situation at many rural parish churches this is a significant achievement. My own involvement has been significantly reduced due to personal circumstances and my thanks go to Geoff Durrant and Nigel Woodward for maintaining Sunday morning ringing and a learner's practice. We also continue to see Holywell as a popular choice for Quarter peal ringing by other bands, with a total of 16 Quarters being scored during the year.

A lock has been installed on the tower door, which significantly improves the safety situation of the tower. Regular maintenance of the bells continues to take place and some work has been done to improve the performance of the number 3 bell (technically, it's 'odd struck'). No major work is planned for the foreseeable future, but there are ample reserves available to fund most general maintenance requirements.

On the occasion of the Coronation of King Charles III a group of 8 ringers, all from the Holywell tower, took part in some general ringing. This included 6 people who have started ringing in recent years.

Roger Beaman, Tower Captain

4. Parochial Church Council – PCC Secretary

The PCC has the responsibility to co-operate with the Rector, churchwardens and lay ministry team in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Holywell cum Needingworth, the entirety of the Church's mission including its pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical aspects. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church. During the year the membership of the PCC was as indicated at Paragraph 1 above. The PCC has met four times in 2023.

Joanna Turnbull Secretary

5. Church Electoral Roll

As at the end of December 2023, there were 51 parishioners on the Electoral Roll. The change from the previous year is one died and one new parishioner.

Carol Armit, Electoral Roll Officer

6. Deanery Synod Report 2023

We are members of the St Ives Deanery and are entitled to send two lay representatives to the Synod. Regrettably, only one place was taken up following the APCM in April, leaving us under-represented. The Synod's deliberations do have an effect upon us and we have the opportunity to contribute to it, so need to fill the vacant space.

In a change to past practice, the report of the Synod's proceedings will in future be posted separately

Diane Alder

7. Churchwardens' and fabric report

a. Inventory

The silverware, glass, vestments, and other property have all been checked. The inventory has been updated and together with the church Terrier forms a complete inventory of church property.

b. Maintenance.

Annual gutter clearance and lightning conductor testing were carried out in January.

The organ was serviced and tuned in March by Charles James Organs, who have since ceased business. Cousins Organs came to service the organ in November and we expect to revert to this pre-Christmas serving schedule from now on.

Boiler and fuel tank: The boiler was serviced by SS Motors in June. The fuel tank has a problem with water in the outer bund, restricting the amount of fuel we can store. So far, no contractor has been found to deal with this.

Fire extinguishers were serviced by Chubb in September.

A defibrillator was fitted to the inside of the porch in October. At the same time the porch lantern was converted to a PIR light. The work was carried out by Neil Craig. Our thanks go to Mr Grant Williamson, who masterminded the project and covered the entire cost by his fund-raising.

Electrical: All portable appliances are PAT-tested every two years in October; next testing in 2024.

c. The church's Quinquennial inspection

The church's next Quinquennial inspection is due in 2025.

d. Churchyard and the Wild Garden.

Our churchyard was closed by Order in Council in 1976, and so its upkeep is the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Council's groundman continues to do a good job of mowing the grass regularly and respecting areas that we have asked to be left un-mowed while wildflowers are in bloom. He does not cut the bank by the Well, for safety reasons. With some concerns about the condition of the lower steps to the Well and the poor state of the Well itself, in December the PCC began to engage with the Parish Council about the responsibilities for their maintenance. Discussions are still ongoing, but the PCC decided to contribute to the cost of repairing the Well and commissioned jh Building Restoration to do the work in the new year. The Archdeacon gave permission for the work.

The Wild Garden looks better year on year and is enjoyed by a large number of villagers and visitors. Thanks are due to Mr and Mrs L. Staddon for their work and the attention they continue give to it.

The Garden of Remembrance is now looked after on a weekly basis by a team of volunteers from the village and its appearance has improved considerably. The surrounding low hedge suffered badly during the year, probably due to the box moth caterpillar. Plans have been made to bring it back to better condition through cutting and the application of a safe organic insecticide during the risk season.

e. Church cleaning and flowers.

Our dedicated rota of church cleaners and flower arrangers have continued to care for the church interior during the year. We are often complimented on the look of the church in entries to the visitors' book.

f. Church opening.

We have continued to open the church every day during the hours of daylight thanks to a team of three parishioners living in Holywell.

g. Volunteering.

As churchwardens we are very aware that much dedicated work and support is given by the 'official' duty rotas and church groups, whose work is complemented by much informal volunteering and support. More volunteers are welcome, particularly for church opening and closing, cleaning and flowers, sidespeople and intercessions prayers. Please contact a churchwarden or member of the PCC if you feel you could help with any of these duties from time to time. Basic safeguarding training is now mandatory for all church members in volunteer roles. Our church Safeguarding Officer Dr Carole Mills supervises safeguarding requirements and can advise prospective volunteers.

Stephen York and Roger Beaman, Churchwardens

8. New facilities and re-ordering

By the end of the year all requested amendments to the Statement of Need had been made, with a view to finally submitting our petition for a Faculty early in the new year. One important change to our plans was the decision to recommend electric panel radiators around the church as our main heating system. This is planned to have separate heating zones for the chancel and the nave.

In early 2023 we took delivery of some sample chairs of a style that would be approved by the Diocese, which would replace the pews, and members of the congregation were invited to try them and express a preference. A consensus was found for one style of chair.

Stephen York, Roger Beaman, Churchwardens

9. PCC Treasurer's Report

At the end of 2023, our Gross Income was £39,330, exceeding the budget of £38,350 by £980. Gross expenditure was £38,232, £4,847 less than the budgeted figure of £43,079. Income exceeded expenditure by just under £1,000. We were able to pay the Ministry Share in full and Charitable Support broadly matched that of 2022.. My wider contextual assessment remains as I stated for the 2022 accounts, namely that I believe we are in a better financial position than many, but not as good as some, certainly in our Deanery and probably across the Diocese. I should offer some clarification on the use of 'Other' income and expenditure as they might appear rather large. The main reason is the movement of the Cash Reserve from 'Restricted' to 'Designated' status in line with Government Accounting Policies for Charities.

General Funds. Net receipts of general funds² were £32,449, but this includes the reallocation of the cash reserve from 'Restricted' to 'Designated' mentioned above. With that accounting change excluded, receipts broadly matched those of 2022. Planned giving, the majority of which is 'tax efficient' meaning that Gift Aid can be reclaimed, has dropped by nearly £900 by comparison with 2023, about 6.5%. Net expenditure came to (£31,359), so excluding the movement of the cash reserve, we show an overspend of (£1,224) at the year's end. Income/Expenditure trends will need to be watched carefully during 2024.

Restricted Funds. Net Restricted income amounted to £5,080, up significantly on last year. This is largely accounted for by the 200 Club (to the Fabric Fund) and the Village Book to Welcome Space, totalling £4,075. The remainder, £1,005, came from interest and dividends on Reserved Funds.

Trusts and other Funds managed by the Diocese of Ely. There are one small cash fund and three Grave Trusts managed for us by the Diocese of Ely. The cash fund bears no interest and contains less than £500. The three Trust Funds were established to maintain named graves with provision for funds to be allocated to other maintenance of the church fabric and churchyard. The diocese has offered proposals for these to be rationalised, essentially to provide for fabric maintenance in future and these are under consideration. Over the period 2021-2, these have shown a gain of £15,393 which are recorded in these accounts. They are known as 'balance sheet' items which, whilst 'Restricted' items, are treated separately from the discussion in the above paragraphs.

Analysis.. Thankfully, the impact of price inflation was less severe than anticipated, although certainly a contributor to the net overspend in the General Fund. Despite the drop in planned giving, the Parish Giving Scheme continues to prove of immense benefit. Fundraising remains comfortably the second highest heading of income after Planned giving with a record year in 2023. We have felt able to maintain the level and scope of our contributions to worthy causes. Our Restricted expenditure was split almost equally between our Architect's fees for Welcome Space and the redesignation of the Cash reserve referred to in . For 2023, our operating costs worked out as £32 per day, roughly back at the 2021 level, Ministry Share was £56 per day. For 2024, using current inflation figures of ~4%³ operating costs are estimated as £47 per day. We are being invited to pay £21,127 in Ministry Share which works out at £58 per day.

Outcome in relation to Budget and Sustainability Forecast. In terms of budget, we did come close, for General funds, with gross income was £980 (2.5%) over, gross expenditure was wider off the mark but in the right direction being (£4,847) (11%) under. The PCC will be considering the 2024 budget at their second meeting of this year in March. My remaining remarks in this paragraph are largely unchanged from last year in that we are not yet in a situation where I can give assurance that we can set a sustainable one. The only route to achieving that position is, in my judgement to attain a

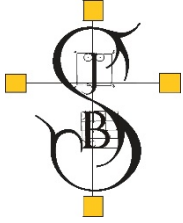
² Excluding the DBF component of Parish Fees which is paid to the Diocese. 'General Funds' consist of Uncommitted and Designated funds.

³ UK ONS gives the latest figure of 4.2% (December 2023) for the Consumer Price Index. By way of comparison, it was 9.2% for the same month in 2022. For ease of calculation, I have used 5% as a planning guide for the 2024 Budget.

position where the Parish Share amounts to no more than 50% of General Fund income. As always, I am afraid that in acknowledging the hard work and dedication which have produced the effect I have described in these accounts, the plea for further efforts remains the message as this year unfolds.

Reserves. We are required to have a PCC policy on reserves. This is established as maintaining a credit balance calculated in relation to two months' unrestricted payments, namely those summarised in the General Fund columns of the Receipts and Payments Account. By this yardstick, our 2023 figure should have been £5,226, slightly under the estimate I offered in my last report. Applying the inflation figure, this becomes £5,445 for 2024. Our COVID-19 experience suggests that having had to operate for longer than reasonable expected with much more restricted income streams, this may not be enough and I believe a figure between £6,500 and £8,000 should be a more realistic aspiration. The purpose of the reserve is to be held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow through the year and to meet emergencies. Needless to say, if it were to be called on for an emergency, its role as a safety net would disappear and it would be extremely difficult to replace.

Ben Peilow, Treasurer



St John the Baptist Parish Church

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parochial Church Council

11 March 2024

**PARISH OF HOLYWELL-cum-NEEDINGWORTH
PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST ANNUAL ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2023**

My Report is contained in the Parish Annual Report and is copied at Enclosure 1 to this covering letter. The Independent Examiner's Report is to be found at Enclosure 2.

The Accounts, Enclosure 3, consist of the following:

Statement of Assets and Liabilities including Account Balances
Receipt and Payments Account
Copy of the Finance Return for Submission to the Diocese of Ely

B F Peilow, OBE
Commander, Royal Navy
Treasurer
Holywell-cum-Needingworth PCC

Enclosures:

1. Copy of Treasurer's Financial Report for 2023 (when filed separately from Annual Report)
2. Independent Examiner's Report
3. Accounts [available in the printed copy of the report posted in church]
4. Copy of the Finance Return submitted to the Diocese of Ely

Mr B F Peilow OBE, Treasurer,
Holywell-cum-Needingworth PCC
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Meridian Benefice 
The churches of Bluntisham-cum-
Earith, Colne and
Holywell-cum-Needingworth

Parish of St John the Baptist, Holywell

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Parochial Church Council of St John the Baptist, Holywell

The financial statements of the PCC for the year ending December 31st 2023 are set out on the following pages. This report below is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

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

Basis of this report

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

- i) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
- ii) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Sarah Lewis MA, ACA
Orchard Cottage
The Front
Holywell
St Ives PE27 4TG

Date: 11 March 2024

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Church Accounts 2023

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Cash Funds *[Note 4]*

	2023	2022
Barclays Bank Community Account – General Fund	£ 9,107.29	£ 11,106.60
Central Board of Finance Deposit Account – General Fund	£ 2,314.51	£ 2,242.64
Barclays Bank Community Account – Fabric Fund	£ 76,499.46	£ 74,380.84
Central Board of Finance Deposit Account – Fabric Fund	£ 29,188.52	£ 28,282.10
EBF Church Charity Lands	£ 461.17	£ 461.17
Total Cash Funds	£ 117,570.95	£ 116,473.35

Debtors

Nil

Creditors

Nil

Movement in Restricted Funds *[Note 5]*

	Brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Carried forward
Bell fund	£ 589.46	£ 218.00	-	-	£ 807.46
Choir Fund	£ 447.54	-	-	-	£ 447.54
Organ Fund	£ 1,332.39	-	-	-	£ 1,322.99
Fabric (f) <i>[Note 6]</i>	£ 5,814.69	£ 1,884.69	(£ 462.00)	-	£ 7,237.24
Welcome Space	£ 65,577.67	£ 1,266.42	(£1,757.04)	-	£ 65,087.05
Keith Adams bqst	£ 25,045.00	-	-	-	£ 25,045.00
TOTAL	£ 98,806.75			-	£ 99,947.32

Designated Funds *[Note 7]*

	Brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Carried Forward
Prayer Room (m)	£ 180.00	-	(£ 108.69)	-	£ 70.31
Cafe Sunday Food (m)	£ 164.70	-	-	-	£ 164.70
Energy Costs Grant (m)	£ 600.00	£ 100.00	-	-	£ 700.00
Kelia -Child Sponsorship (m)	-	£ 40.00	(£ 324.00)	-	(£ 284.00)
Village Book	-	£ 1,651.00	(£ 56.40)	-	£ 1,594.60

(f)					
Cash Reserve (m)		£ 51.63	(£ 2,262.88)		£ 2,314.60
	£ 944.70				£ 4,560.21

Charities and Restricted Bequests treated on the Balance Sheet as Investments

[Note 7]

	Brought forward	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Unrealised Capital Gain	Carried forward
EBF Howes Bequest	£ 3,361.72	£ 422.18			(£ 361.72)	£ 3,422.18
EBF Ingle Grave Trust (Inv)	£28,344.32	£ 873.94			£ 6,774.02	£ 35,992.28
EBF Powell Trust (Inv)	£27,648.34	£ 868.12			£ 6,816.09	£ 35,332.55
	£59354.58					£ 74,747.01

Notes

1. The Financial Statements of the Parish Accounts have been prepared in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations 2006⁴ using the Receipts and Payments basis of accounting.

2. The Accounting Package has been provided by the Diocese of Gloucester and was the current year's version.

3. The following assets are recognised but are not valued in this Statement of Assets and Liabilities:

- Moveable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal.
- Tangible assets held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, recorded on an asset register.

4. This table shows the cash funds in each bank account on 31 December. Additionally, although managed by the Diocese of Ely, the Charity Lands Fund is accounted for as a Cash Fund and more properly belongs in this box.

5. This table shows the breakdown and movement in the Restricted Funds. It is a subset of the funds shown in the first table and does **not** represent new money.

6. Fabric fund incorrectly listed as 'designated' in 2022 accounts. Transferred to 'Restricted' Table for this year and future years.

7. This table shows the breakdown and movement in the Designated Funds. It is a subset of the funds shown in the first table and does **not** represent new money. Designated Accounts enable the Treasurer to manage the 'Main' (m) and 'Fabric' (f) accounts more effectively and are, as with the previous table, a subset of those accounts. By way of example, the Christmas Draw has been for the upkeep of

⁴ PCC Accountability, 5th Edition 'The Charities Act 2011 and the PCC'

the church for many years. In annotating this as specifically for fabric, this shows that we are acceding to the wishes of those who have contributed to the Draw for this purpose. Five designated funds sit in the main account. All are self-explanatory. Specific reference is made to the last, the Cash Reserve, as, following further research during 2023, it was established that it must be treated as a 'designated' rather than a 'restricted' fund in accordance with Charity Law. This was reported to the PCC and the appropriate action taken to redesignate the funds.

8. The Trust Funds shown in this final table are administered on our behalf by the Diocese of Ely and are effectively permanent endowments. Revaluation of the Trusts as of 31 December 2022 is recorded in these, the 2023 Accounts.

Signed on Original

B F Peilow, OBE
Commander Royal Navy
Honorary Treasurer

12 February 2024

Approved by the PCC on 11 March 2024 and signed on their behalf:

Signed on Original

Mr Stephen York (Churchwarden)

Signed on Original

Mr Roger Beaman (Churchwarden)

[plus one further member of the PCC]



Parish of Holywell-cum-Needlingworth
Vestry Meeting
on Sunday 16th April 2023 at 11.30am
St John the Baptist Church, Holywell
followed by the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Minutes



Vestry Meeting

Election of Churchwardens

Nominations:

Mr Stephen York Proposed: Phil Harding, Seconded: Jill Harvey

Mr Roger Beaman Proposed: Carole Burgin, Seconded: Ben Peilow

Both were elected unanimously.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Stephen York – Lay Vice-Chair, and 20 members of the parish in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Diane Alder and Michael Williamson.

2. Minutes of the previous APCM. The minutes were approved and signed.

3. Matters arising. There were no matters arising.

4. Annual report and Accounts. The Annual Report are offered to be noted as required by Charity Law. BP made the following statements;

- We managed in 2022. Parish Share paid in full and very close to budget forecasts. Not prepared to guarantee same level of accuracy this year.
- Parish share remains our biggest single item of expenditure and accounts for 61.5% of net general income (i.e. excludes funds for restricted sub-funds. This is not sustainable in the medium to long term. I would regard a 'sustainable' level as amounting to about 50%.
- Message remains one of more hard graft, and acknowledge the sterling efforts of the fundraising group in generating the sums they do and exceeding expectations.
- On the subject of Fundraising, please be aware that there is an unforced error (mine) in the table in the annual report. The subtotal is £8211, which excludes the 3 items marked with a + sign in the 2022 column. The total figure is £8,594 which includes them.
- My assessment of our daily operating costs for this year is £40 based on historic spend, but £55 if we are able to undertake the level of maintenance that we aspire to. Parish share is £56 per day. That is a total of between £96 and £111 per day. To date our total net unrestricted income comes to just under £70 per day. There are more fundraising activities during the year, which I know will be well supported, but would also ask you, even in these times of high inflation and a cost-of living squeeze, to see if you can be even more generous.
- I am expecting to be asked why we have to pay a full parish share although we are in vacancy. This appears to be the norm across the Church of England, although some offer an element of reduction for extended periods of vacancy. It's not a good answer, as we are not getting a number of things the share is supposed to be paying for, so from our perspective we are not getting value for money.

The Accounts which are included are offered for noting by the APCM having been previously approved and signed off by the PCC on 9th February 2023.

SY thanked BP for his stewardship of funds, his hard work is very appreciated.

5.Election of Independent Examiner. Mrs Sarah Lewis has served as Independent Examiner for the past five and a half years. She has expressed her willingness to continue. Proposed: Roger Beaman, Seconded: Carol Peilow. All were in agreement.

6.Election of PCC members. The following members were duly elected to the PCC for the period of 3 years.
Michael Williamson – Proposed: Mr Les Staddon, Seconded: Mrs J Brinkhurst
Ann Lorman – Proposed: Jo Turnbull, Seconded Carol Armit

7. Proposal to elect one licensed lay minister for one year term on the PCC.
Carol Peilow was elected as licensed lay minister to the PCC for one year.
Proposed: Carol Armit, Seconded: Felicity Leonard.

8.Election of Deanery Synod representative. Diane Alder was elected as Deanery Synod Representative for the period of three years. Proposed: Jo Turnbull Seconded: Stephen York

9. Any Other Business.
SY gave an update of the vacancy and Welcome Space.

Vacancy - An advert will be placed in the Church Times shortly as this will run continuously until the vacancy is hopefully filled. The 23rd May is the short list date and then interviews will be 28th June with candidates to be shown around the parishes.

Welcome Space – The DAC are not going to oppose the plans, they are now going out to the statutory bodies. Once these have been approved we will be able to apply for a faculty to carry out the work. An estimated project cost is £500,000, we would be applying for grants towards this. Unfortunately the work does not lend itself easily to being done in phases. We currently have a good sum of money in the Welcome Space Fund but there is a lot of fundraising to be done. All information and plans are on the display screen at the back of the church. RB informed us that Great Wilbraham church is worth a visit to see what they have done with the bell ringing tower, this is a similar plan for our tower.

SY thanked the fundraising team and all those who helped for all their hard work and fantastic fundraising efforts so far, they have raised a significant amount this year.

Jill Harvey thanked Stephen York and Roger Beaman for their hard work as church wardens. Stephen York thanked all those who helped and volunteered in the church, their hard work and contribution to the smooth running of the church is much appreciated.

The meeting closed at 11.51.

Joanna Turnbull (Mrs)
Secretary to the PCC