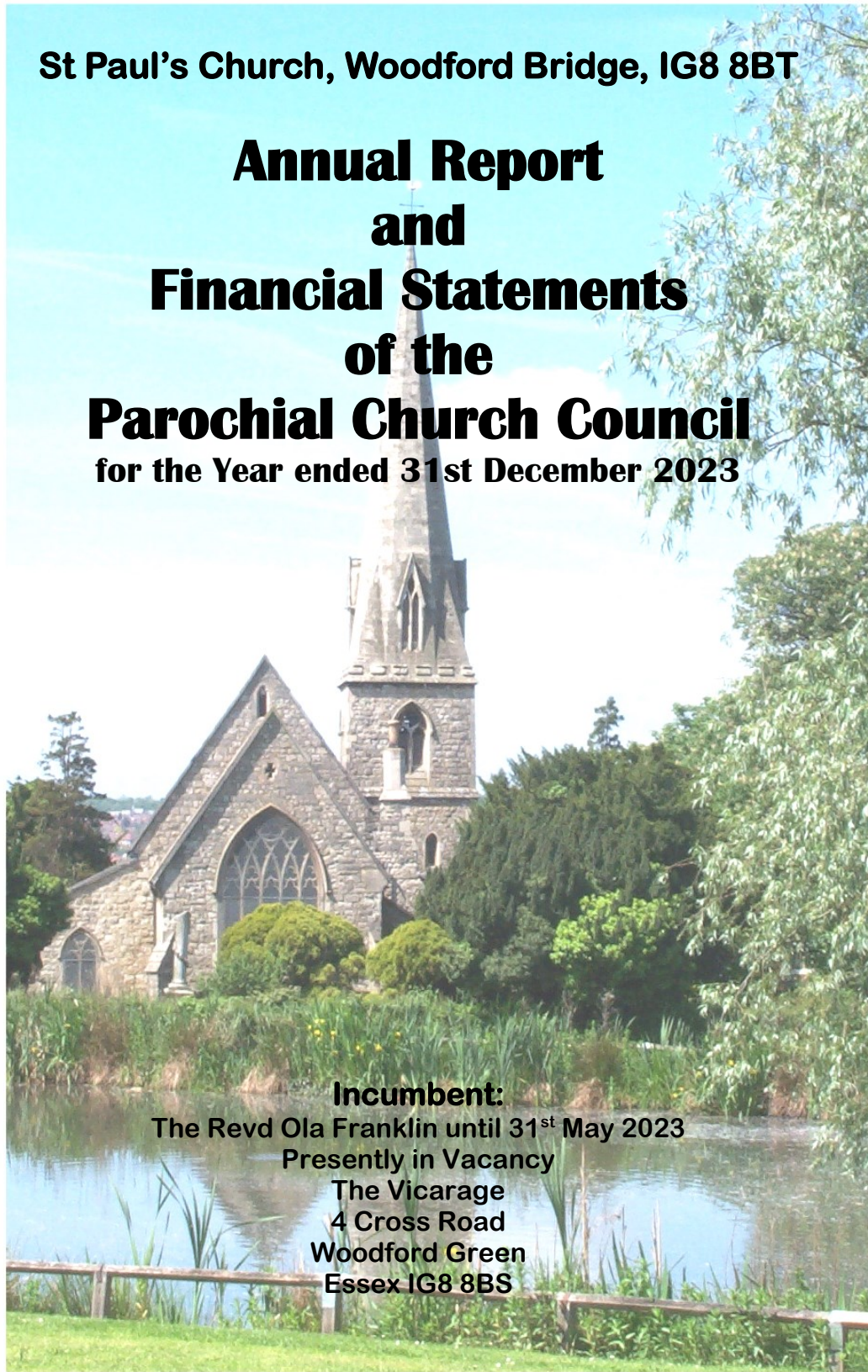


St Paul's Church, Woodford Bridge, IG8 8BT

**Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council
for the Year ended 31st December 2023**



Incumbent:

The Revd Ola Franklin until 31st May 2023

Presently in Vacancy

The Vicarage

4 Cross Road

Woodford Green

Essex IG8 8BS

Bank:

**Barclays Bank plc
Barclays,
Leicester,
LE87 2BB**

**Charity reference
number 1128474**

Independent Examiner:

**Mr Michael Green
41 Buckwoods Road
Braintree
Essex CM7 1DY**

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WOODFORD BRIDGE

Annual Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024

Sunday 28th April in Church after Parish Communion Service

AGENDA

1. Opening prayers

VESTRY MEETING

2. To elect two Churchwardens

3. Apologies for absence

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

4. Draft Minutes of APCM held on 23 April 2023 (attached)

To note

5 (a) Presentation of the Electoral Roll

(b) To appoint 3 PCC members for 3 years, resulting from:

the retirement after 1 years' service of Pam Varughese who was fulfilling a 1 year vacancy and the retirement after 3 years service of Allan Graveson and Sara Rivas.

(c) To appoint 2 PCC members for 2 years, resulting from 2 unfilled vacancies at the 2023 APCM.

6. Finance:

(a) Treasurer's Report

(b) To receive the audited Accounts

(c) To agree that the PCC will decide who to appoint to audit the 2024 Accounts

7. To receive:

(a) Churchwarden's Report (attached)

(b) Deanery Synod Report (attached)

8. Any other business

9. Date of next APCM- TBC

10. Closing prayers

St Paul's Church, Woodford Bridge
Draft Minutes of APCM held on 23 April 2023

Present:

Sheena Adams, Alan Bolding, Pauline Bolding, Yvonne Cartwright, Alan Clark, Sue Clark, Janice Croke, Hazel Dawson, Christine Franklin, The Revd. Ola Franklin (Chair), Douglas Fulcher, Allan Graveson, Renata Groves, Peter Hodges, Valerie Hodges Jill Leonard, Mac Leonard, The Revd. Esther McCafferty, Paul Malam, Sue Malam, The Revd. Ian Monks, Rosemary Monks, Eve Sarginson, Len Stevens, Avril Tate, Clive Tate, Amanda Taylor, Val Trevellyan, Joanna Urbanek, John Wooden (Minutes), Mary Wooden, Joyce Wright

Apologies: Cliffe Adams, Dallas Fulcher, Peter McCafferty, Sara Rivas, George Varughese, Pam Varughese

VESTRY MEETING

1, Election of Two Churchwardens

Two nomination papers had been received for Churchwarden, one for Paul Malam (proposed by Mac Leonard and seconded by Len Stevens) and one for Len Stevens (proposed by Yvonne Cartwright and seconded by Alan Graveson). There being no other nominations, the Chair declared that the nominees were elected. Ola Franklin thanked Paul Malam and Len Stevens for all their faithful service as Churchwardens.

APCM

2. Draft Minutes of previous APCM held on 24 April 2022

The draft minutes of the previous APCM held on 24 April 2022 were duly noted.

3. (a) Electoral Roll

There are currently 90 people on the electoral roll. The Chair thanked Sue Malam for her work in maintaining the Electoral Roll.

(b) PCC - appointment of new members

Ola Franklin had received one nomination to fill a PCC appointment for three years and so was duly elected: Jill Leonard – proposed by Amanda Taylor and seconded by Janice Croke. Jill Leonard was not standing for re-election as a Deanery Synod representative this year which is an ex-officio position on the PCC so was now standing for the PPC in her own right. The other two vacancies for three years were left unfulfilled. Ola Franklin said that Pam Varughese who had come to the end of a one year term, would remain on the PCC to fill a further one year term after the retirement after two years service of Martin Lea.

(d) Deanery Synod – appointment of representatives

Ola Franklin had received two nominations to fill the two Deanery Synod representatives appointments for three years and so were duly elected:

Alan Clark – proposed by Len Stevens and seconded by Pauline Bolding.

Mac Leonard – proposed by Janice Croke and seconded by Sue Malam.

4. Finance

(a) Treasurer's Report

Len Stevens presented the accounts for 2022. He highlighted the progress on the new toilet in church which was close to completion. He said that St Paul's had received £46,000 in grants towards the project and would also benefit from a £9,000 VAT rebate under the listed places of worship scheme, with more claims to be made. He thanked church members for their generosity which allowed St Paul's to give 20% of its income to charitable causes including for Kenyan Street Children and the Redbridge food bank. He thanked Pauline Bolding for her management of the church halls which raised £40,000 for church funds and John Wooden as Gift Aid administrator which added £11,000.

He reported that post COVID we had gone back to paying 100% of our Parish Share but for this year there had been a disproportionate increase and although the Diocese had reduced their demand from £71,000 to £68,000 it was still significantly higher than the £58,000 we paid last year. So, we would only be paying £60,000 and after the toilet project was finished we would see if we can do more. He noted that our three year energy contract would come to an end next April and this had meant we had avoided the huge energy increase over the last year but we would have to see what happens in April 2024. He concluded by saying that we have just had a new piano which cost £18,000 and if anyone wished to make a donation to offset its cost, it would be appreciated - £600 had been given in a week.

Ola Franklin thanked Len Stevens for all his faithful service as Treasurer.

(b) To receive the audited Accounts

The audited accounts were received.

(c) To agree that the PCC will decide who to appoint to audit the 2023 Accounts

It was agreed that the PCC would decide who to appoint to audit the accounts.

5. Other Reports

To receive

(a) Churchwarden's Reports

The report of Paul Malam and Len Stevens had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

(a) Deanery Synod Report

The report of Mac Leonard had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

6. Any Other Business

None

7. Date of next APCM

To be decided.

8. Closing Prayers

The meeting closed with the Grace.

TREASURER'S REPORT 2023

Income and expenditure for 2023 were both higher than for a typical year due to the costs accruing by the installation of the toilet. Income was £202,422 which reflects the generosity of the church family, and being augmented by over £62,000 in grants, legacies and the reclaim of VAT charged on the building costs. Hire of the halls and rent of the schoolhouse totalled £48,105 – with thanks due to Pauline and Alan Bolding for their dedicated management of our buildings. Expenditure was also high for the year with the toilet costs being £109,856 which included laying of a sewer main from the church to the rear of the schoolhouse, necessarily, creating a new churchyard pathway from church to hall, and costs of architects and supervisory fees. It is a great credit to the generosity of the church family that we donated £20,689 to charitable and mission giving throughout the year in addition to meeting the additional expenses described here.

Len Stevens, Treasurer

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022
Incoming resources					
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	125,632			61,552
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	12,738			8,155
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	87			47
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	36,122			29,470
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	27,843			18,000
Playgroup	10				
		<u>202,422</u>			<u>117,224</u>
Total incoming resources					
Resources expended					
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	0			
<i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>	3b	0			0
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	20,689			15,778
<i>Ministry Costs</i>	3d	215,951			90,678
Playgroup	10	()			
Total resources expended		<u>236,640</u>			<u>106,456</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) re- sources					
gains/losses, inc. Playgroup					-9,843
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>					
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	5	410,000			
Net movement in funds	6				
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2022		82,458			80,176
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2022		<u>48,803</u>			<u>82,458</u>
PLAYGROUP - balance 31/10/22					<u>884</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
CHARITY COMMISSION REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1128474
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023	<u>2022</u>
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5	1,540,000	1,130,000
Investments	6	0	
Total fixed assets		<u>1,540,000</u>	<u>1,130,000</u>
Current assets			
Stock			
Debtors	8	0	0
Cash at bank and in hand			
Covenant account - .		1993	186
Total assets less current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	0	0
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	9	0	0
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net current fluid assets		48,993	
NET ASSETS			
Unrestricted Funds, including cash in safe	7	49,703	81,605
Endowment funds	10	0	
Restricted funds	10	10	667
Covenant account - as above.		1993	186
<u>TOTAL HELD AT BANK:</u>		48,803	82,458

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on and signed on its behalf
 Revd Ola Franklin, Chair.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8

8BT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

2 Incoming resources	TOTAL FUNDS			2022
	2023	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	
	Unrestrict- ed Funds £	£	£	£
a				
<i>Voluntary income</i>				
Planned giving	32,069			34,178
Collections at all services	6,344			5,201
Donations and appeals, incl. charities	13,038			11,973
Income tax recoverable	11,499			10,200
Grants	48,196			0
Legacies	14,486			nil
	<u>125,632</u>			<u>61,552</u>
b				
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>				
Fetes, bazaars and other fund-raising events	12,738			8,155
Bookstall sales and magazine adverts	0			0
	<u>12,738</u>			<u>8,155</u>
c				
<i>Investment income</i>				
Dividends and interest	87			47
	<u>87</u>			<u>47</u>
d				
<i>Income from Church Activities</i>				
Church hall lettings etc	30,105			24,070
Occasional Offices-weddings, funerals,etc	6,017			5,400
Textile group / Seniors club	0			0
	<u>36,122</u>			<u>29,470</u>
e				
<i>Other incoming resources</i>				
Party deposits received	0			0
Insurance claims	9843			0
Rent - School				
House	18,000			18,000
	<u>27,843</u>			<u>18,000</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>202,422</u>			<u>117,244</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3 Resources expended	TOTAL FUNDS			2022	
	2023	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	£
	£	£	£	£	£
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>					
Stewardship costs					
Covenant account					
b <i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>					
Fete costs					
Bookstall		nil			<u>0</u>
c <i>Church Activities</i>					
Missionary and charitable giving:					
Overseas:					
Kenyan Street Children, Utugi Centre		8,000			8,000
Home: including 13 PCC nominated charities		9,271			5,278
Senior's Social Club		0			0
Other:		0			0
Trussell Trust - Redbridge Food Bank		3,418			2,500
		<u>20,689</u>			<u>15,778</u>
Ministry costs:					
Diocesan Parish Contribution		68,000			57,000
other clergy costs		0			0
Church running expenses		16,566			12,453
Church maintenance		4,478			1,081
Upkeep of services		0			457
Upkeep of churchyard		0			0
Parish magazine		0			0
Sunday Club / youth work costs		0			0
Church hall running costs		15,929			14,655
Bank charges / depreciation		421			500
Vicarage - utilities and decoration		111			0
Playgroup		0			0
Toilet Costs		109,856			4237
IT microphones, etc		590			296
Total resources expended		<u>236,640</u>			<u>90,679</u>
Other- Fees to Chelmsford Diocesan					
Board of Finance - wedding/funeral fees		<u>(1028)</u>			<u>496</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Staff costs	2023	2022
	£	£
a <i>Wages and salaries</i>	7,530	6,600
playgroup contribution 2019 -	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	7,530	6,600

During the year the PCC employed a hall cleaner, part time.

b

5 Tangible fixed assets	Freehold land and buildings	Church equipment	TOTAL 2021
	£	£	£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 November 2023	1,540,000		1,130,000
Additions			
Disposals			
Revaluation			
At 31 December 2023	1,540,000		1,130,000
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2014			
Provided in the year			
Disposals			
At 31 December 2014			
Net book amounts			
At 31 December 2019	<u>1,540,000</u>		<u>1,130,000</u>

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Church Halls and the School House. For accounting purposes these were revalued in 2023.

6 Investments

£

Market value 31 December 2023 nil NIL

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

7 Analysis of Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds	Comparison 2022
Church assets : insurance valuation hall- 1,320,000;house- 220,000	1,540,000			1,540,000	1,130,000
Investment fixed assets					
Current assets	48,803	9		48,812	80,512
Current liabilities					
Long term liabilities					
	<u>1,588,803</u>	<u>9</u>		<u>1,588,812</u>	<u>1,211,512</u>

8 Debtors

Income tax recoverable (blue envelopes)		1963			2380
Prepayments and accrued income					
Other debtors (water rate)		0			0
		<u>1963</u>			<u>2380</u>

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Deferred income - 2024 wedding fees				100	0
Accruals for utilities/ other costs - UWDC Dec energy used				0	0
Other creditors					
				<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

Wedding deposits for 2023		nil			0
					0

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

10 Statement of funds

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2023
	£	£	£	£	
Unrestricted Fund					
Covenant account	186	20,008	0	18201	1993
General accounts	7001	174247	228640		47392
Desig funds-a+b+c.	<u>8064</u>	<u>8167</u>	<u>8,000</u>	14419	<u>22650</u>
	<u>15251</u>	<u>202422</u>	<u>236640</u>	(3782)	<u>22749</u>
Restricted Fund					
Playgroup	884			884	0
Spire lighting fund	0				
Organ/piano	668	1	659	0	10
Other savings ac- counts	65655		0	30757	24160
Total funds	<u>82458</u>			33655	<u>48803</u>

Fees to Diocesan Board Finance shown in accounts

The unrestricted fund includes a designated sum of £50 which the PCC has set aside for the Kenyan Street Children project(a); £10000 for the School House(b) and £12600 for the halls(c).

The restricted funds comprise the organ / piano fund which is monies dedicated to the maintenance of these assets and other musical provision.

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St Paul's, Woodford Bridge

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are included in this report.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an Independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.
- The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Accounting Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005), issued in March 2005, UK Accounting Standards and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis of Independent Examiners Statement.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on 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 s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts, which accord with these accounting records 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.



(Signed)

14.2.2024

M Green.

H1 Backwoods Road
BLAINTREE
CM7 1DY

CHURCHWARDENS' FABRIC REPORT

2023 was dominated by the installation of our toilet facility in the church - the result of nine years of planning and preparation. The contract was awarded to Punch Construction and Christopher Barker acted as project manager working on our behalf. The installation required the removal of a sink and cupboards from the area once used as a choir vestry but more recently as storage space, and new cupboards were built in the bell-tower porch to accommodate displaced items. The toilet facility has two cubicles, one movement impaired with space for wheelchair access and the second one a conventional cubicle.

Thanks are also due to the churchyard maintenance team led by Pauline Bolding, and with thanks to Redbridge Council for their continuing maintenance and care of the churchyard, and to the many church members whose willing hands made the church so clean and cared for. The church hall underwent a transformation with the necessary adjustments made to storage space, following the closure of the Playgroup - once again many thanks to all involved.

Paul Malam and Len Stevens, Churchwardens.

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Redbridge Deanery Synod met on three occasions in 2023.

The first meeting was held on Wednesday 15th February Holy Trinity Church, Barkingside. The main item was a presentation by Citizens UK, Redbridge and Ilford. The meeting was addressed by Paul Samuels of Redbridge and Ilford Citizens to explain its work and approach. Citizens UK is a non-partisan community organization. It works through community organising using networking and collective action to influence decision-makers such as councillors on important issues. It does not have individual members; rather, institutions or groups of institutions such as churches, become members who help to devise programmes for action. Citizens UK helps them to achieve their goals through advice and training in its methods for influencing outcomes.

Currently, there are nine member institutions, including churches of different denominations, mainly from the south of the borough. Current campaigns include youth safety, promoting mental health and prevention of hate crime. Citizens was previously involved in Project Malachi with the Salvation Army. All churches represented at Synod were invited to become members. There is a financial commitment and a need to commit volunteers. If cost is a barrier, it may be possible for a group of institutions to have a joint membership. A local Citizens representative is available to talk to churches about membership and training.

Philip Carnelley, Lay Chair, commented that the new parish share scheme is now in operation. In Redbridge parishes have tried commendably hard to meet what is required by the diocese.

The second meeting was held on Tuesday 27th June 2023 at Holy Trinity Church, Hermon Hill.

The first speaker was Julia Burton-Jones, Anna Chaplaincy lead for Rochester Diocese and national Anna Chaplaincy training and development lead, to explain its work and approach. Anna Chaplaincy was founded in 2010 to minister to older people emotionally and spiritually. Its model is community-based, around a local church. There is a great need: the number of over-85s is set to double in 20 years. There are 850,000 in UK with dementia (2m by 2051). There is more openness to spiritual questions in later life. The organization, part of BRF, trains and supports Anna Chaplains – there are now over 300 across the country – supported by Anna Friends. It is Ecumenical in ethos, person-centred and non-judgemental, providing community-based spiritual care for older people of strong, little or no faith. Anna Chaplains can be lay or ordained, paid or voluntary, male or female. It is not purely Anglican, it also includes Methodists, Catholics, Baptists and others. Anna Chaplains work at least one day a week. They have a ministry of presence: visiting people at home or in care homes; offering home communion; running groups for older people/those with dementia; offering inclusive worship services in churches and being a voice for older people in the community. For more see <https://www.annachaplaincy.org.uk>

The second speaker was Michaela Southworth who is Chelmsford Diocesan Secretary and CEO. She spoke about her work with the Diocese, her personal history, and the Diocese's challenges and direction of travel. She wishes to bring the Deaneries and central Diocesan functions closer together. She explained the various functions of the Diocesan Office – finance, safeguarding, education support, property services, glebe land management, and mission and ministry – working with the bishops and archdeacons. In terms of finance, we have a plan to reach break-even within the next few years. Michaela believes that God will help to provide the resources we will need. There will be conversations starting in the Autumn to review the needs of deaneries and parishes in the Diocese. We are synodically governed, and episcopally led.

Michaela wanted to hear from Deanery representatives (both lay and clergy) views on what is, and what is not working. We all need to work to discern God's message and mission for us. The Treasurer reported that there are some changes planned for parish share in 2024: there will be a Zoom meeting for parish treasurers, incumbents and churchwardens of the Deanery on the evening of Thursday 20th July .

The third meeting was held on Thursday 16th November at St Paul's Church, Hainault.

The main item was discussion of the Deanery Strategy examining the present state of play. As a first step in developing a new deanery strategy, members were invited to reflect on the successes, challenges, new possibilities and needs within their own parish context - in the format of group discussions. Key findings from the discussion groups included:

What's working / reasons for optimism.

- Lots of life in our churches, and ambition to do more across Christ focused, congregational and community focused activities
- People are still open to meeting with God
- Enthusiasm about initiatives in churches serving the community, eg foodbanks, gardens to work / relax and meditate in, CAB facilitation
- Good work in (and need for) healing ministry, including mental health support through discussion groups or quiet spaces
- excitement about God doing new things in different stages of ministry - vacancy, new incumbency, old incumbency

Challenges

- being a religious minority in contemporary culture
- falling numbers and/or difficulty retaining newer members and especially young families
- Difficulty of connecting with people on the margins - especially with housing estates
- Ageing congregation leading to lessening capacity, which then means that ambition may not be realised and potential burnout for those in support roles
- "Spiritual competition" where other denominations (eg free and ethnic churches) are attracting potential church goers in certain areas
- Challenge to turn community engagement and relationship into discipleship

The Treasurer reported that Redbridge Deanery is doing well with parish share contributions compared to other deaneries and previous years' performance. Members were reminded that the Area Dean needs contribution amounts for 2024 confirmed for each parish before the end of November.

There was also a long report by Canon Jane Richards on the General Synod that had just closed the previous day.

Mac Leonard, Deanery Synod Representative

CHURCH LIFE IN 2023

St Paul's Woodford Bridge exists to worship God, lead people to Christ, build a loving Christian community, and serve a world in need.

Arriving as our new Parish Priest in 2014 Ola Franklin immediately identified something lacking in St Paul's, a toilet inside the church building. Happily on her penultimate Sunday as Parish Priest in 2023 she was able to 'commission' this new facility. St Paul's like all other Christian Churches exist to worship God, to draw people into a relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and by the building up of a strong outward looking Christian family to serve the wider community of Woodford Bridge. The toilet is not just an added convenience, it makes us much more user friendly!

St Paul's is a part of the Woodford Fellowship of Christian Churches and before Christmas was involved in the annual Advent Carol Service at St Thomas of Canterbury RC church, and in the new year, at a joint service at Derby Rd Methodist church during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

There is very good contact with the local primary school within the parish, which comes to St Paul's for its annual carol services, and also brings two Year 5 classes to church to explore the Easter Story on a Labyrinth experience at a variety of stations. We also hosted a carol service for Year 7 from West Hatch the local secondary school, just outside the parish.

Our concerns are wider than our own. We support Redbridge Food Bank with cash and gift, and have been supporting a feeding programme for Kenyan Street Children for many years.

There is a regular Coffee Morning on Thursdays, Wednesday's Lent Lunches in 2023 raised ££612 for Redbridge Food Bank and a fortnightly Quiz Evening most of the year.

We endeavour to be there for people at critical points in their lives, through Baptism welcoming a new life when a child is born, in marriage public vows are exchanged with the blessing of God and in funerals we celebrate a life which has been completed in this world, thanking God for the good in the life of the departed, helping family and friends through their grief and finally commending the departed into God's keeping.

We have also been blessed with a ministry team with very different skills and approaches to faith in the crucified and risen Christ, and two hardworking Churchwardens Mr. Paul Malam and Mr. Len Stevens (also our treasurer).

Parishes waiting for a new parish priest tend to decline and then pick up with the arrival of a new priest. This I rejoice to say has not happened at St Paul's, the main Sunday congregation has either remained the same or grown slightly. I was happy be shocked that on Easter Sunday when the usual congregation of 70 had doubled to over 140.

Revd. Ian Monks (Curate)

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE APCM

Between January and December 2023, the PCC met on six occasions with an attendance of 89% across the meetings. The PCC has reviewed and managed several different aspects of the parish worship and working based on information from the Diocese, Deanery Synod and centrally from the Church of England via the General Synod. Over the year the PCC received regular reports on The Finances, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Property and Church Yard Maintenance and Planned Events. 2023 was an important year for the parish as the Vicar had announced that she would be retiring in June 2023.

At the March meeting the venerable Elwin Cockett, Archdeacon of West Ham explained the PCC's role and procedures and to be undertaken in relation to the Interregnum on the forthcoming retirement of Reverend Ola Franklin the Vicar. As part of those procedures was the requirement to have a PCC Secretary in post as the link between Diocese, Registry and Patron in the early stages of the process. At the first meeting after the APCM in May Alan Clark was elected as PCC Secretary and the relevant church offices and authorities informed. The PCC formed a focus group to draft a new parish profile which would set out what the parish does and would like in a new incumbent as part of the vacancy information pack.

As the May meeting was to be her last meeting the PCC thanked Ola for all her efforts in setting up processes in the parish upon which the PCC and new incumbent could build on and wished her well in her future new life style.

At the July meeting Churchwarden Paul Malam, who had been Vice Chair of the PCC assumed the Chair in the interim and Mac Leonard was elected as Interim Vice Chair.

As required by the vacancy process the secretary arranged a Section 11 Meeting at which the two elected representative from the PCC had to be elected. Both Churchwardens Paul Malam and Len Stevens were duly nominated, seconded, and elected.

Following the information on the result of the election to relevant officials were informed and the process then became confidential from that point.

The remainder of the year the PCC focused on maintaining the life and work of the parish as already existed.

Finally, the work of the PCC could not have continued without the prayers support of the congregation for which we send many thanks. **Alan Clark, Secretary**

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER'S REPORT

Following the resignation of the previous Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), in June 2023, I was elected by the PCC into the post, having been a Safeguarding lead in both the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the Private Ambulance Sector during which time I had undertaken a Designated Safeguarding Officer's training with the NSPCC. Since then, I have been liaising with previous post holders, the Diocese and the Church of England National Safeguarding Team reviewing the parish situation as safeguarding requirements has changed and is regularly changing following the widely publicised abuse allegations and convictions of recent years. I regularly report to the PCC as Safeguarding is now a standing agenda item at every meeting on the position the parish is at in confirming to the Various Safeguarding

legalisation and requirements both in the church and the secular world.

We have established a dedicated telephone number 07903 733497 which is available 24/7 for urgent concerns and advice. There is also a dedicated e-mail address for concerns and advice – SafeGuardingStPaulsWB@outlook.com;

Safeguarding is NOT just about children and their vulnerability it wide ranging and encompasses Vulnerable Adults such as Emotional/Psychological Abuse, Financial Abuse, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Verbal Abuse, Elder Abuse and Spiritual Abuse

If you have a concern in any way about anyone, please either speak to me or a member of the ministry team and we can listen without judging and suggest the best way forward to allay your concerns. I and we are help to help in looking after God's children of all ages.

Alan Clark, Safeguarding Officer

JUST FOR GIRLS

Just for Girls meet fortnightly on a Tuesday morning, we are ten members who meet to enjoy fellowship prayer and meditation. We start at 10am with coffee and biscuits, we listen to a few thoughts for the day, sing a couple of worship songs followed by a time of meditation and prayer. Any female members of St. Paul's church are very welcome to join us. It is a relaxed group where we support each other through the sorrows and joys of life today.

Pauline Bolding

REDBRIDGE FOODBANK

Since last year's APCM I have taken food, drinks(non alcoholic), toiletries, and sanitary products to the Foodbank, together with cheques totalling £4145 to help them feed those in our Borough who are finding life hard to manage in our current climate. I would like to thank all those of you who have supported me in this effort as well as those of you who have given in the stores whilst out shopping. I know that those Folk who have had to resort to using the Foodbank are most grateful to those of us who can afford to do this, so once again my grateful thanks to you all!

Vera Hunt

MOTHERS' UNION

We continued to meet regularly, on a monthly basis, but have moved our meetings to the second Tuesday of each month as a current convenience.

Our meetings are on second Tuesday afternoons; our themes are both spiritual and social. We are a group of some 26 church members who enjoy one another's fellowship and company, and are always keen to welcome new members and enquirers.

Mothers' Union has a wider remit than just St. Paul's, and to this end we welcomed Rose Gorton, a Diocesan Vice-president to our October meeting to talk about "Transformation Now!" an initiative aimed at regenerating the Mothers' Union, which Rose presented in the form of a cocktail evening as a vehicle for presenting our ideas. Other meetings included themes of worship and reflection at New Year and Easter, hearing of Sue Clack's latest adventures abroad, and social opportunities which always seem to include food! Len presented items on Transformation Now and Mary and Yvonne led evenings on fabrics, craft and Christmas parcel wrapping.

We wholeheartedly joined others in our church community to raise funds for the Kenyan Street Children feeding stations, and sent £8,000 last year, making a total of over £164,000 sent since 1998. Allowing for the cost of providing a meal in Kenya we have now provided over a quarter of a million meals to vulnerable children. The food is purchased and the meals prepared by Kenyan M U members, and 200 children currently receive one meal each week.

Len Stevens, Branch Leader

KENYAN FEEDING PROJECT

We continue to support the Kenyan Feeding Project organised by the UTUGI children's home and school in Kutus, Kenya. Our Summer and Christmas Fayres were dedicated to the Project, raising £4,500, and with other generous donations we were able to send our usual £8,000 to UTUGI during the year thanks to the generosity of so many of the St Paul's family.

We learned that we are currently feeding 200 children with one nourishing meal each week.

The Kenyan initiative and the Redbridge Food Bank are now further supported by a fortnightly quiz evening on alternate Fridays in the church hall, with proceeds to these feeding projects. We raise between £50 and £100 per evening.

Len Stevens

SUNDAY CHURCH CLUB

We currently have 21 children on our register, some of whom we see infrequently but are delighted when they are able to be with us. We follow scriptural and Christian themes and usually work as two groups – older and younger. Many thanks to the parents who stay in the hall to help us each week since with up to 12 -15 children we need lots of adults present. We have continued to have help from Alex, Mia Erika and David, all of whom are now beyond GCSE's and into intensive A level study or attending college – their continuing help and interest is appreciated. The weekly meetings involve Bible teaching, games and fun and a Kit-Kat to enjoy as we move to church to tell of our doings.

We decorate biscuits in Lent to sell afterwards in church for Christian Aid and we plant bulbs in the autumn time to give to mums on Mothering Sunday. We contribute to all-age family services and respect Remembrance Sunday. We teach via video and games, wordsearches and craft. We learn by having fun.

Len Stevens

TEXTILE GROUP

The Textile Group currently consists of seven regular members who meet fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons in the Derbyshire Room.

The main events that we work toward are the Christmas and Summer Fairs, making quality items for sale at modest prices. We are pleased with how popular our stall has become and last Christmas we took a record total of over £400 on the main stall and Eve's beautiful pure wool tartan quilt was raffled for a further £180 all in aid of the Kenyan Street Children's Feeding Programme.

The knitters in our group have been very productive. As well as making the baptismal teddies, they have knitted scarves for the homeless, hats and scarves for the Samaritan's Purse shoe boxes and items of clothing for premature babies. We also sold to church members a large number of knitted Easter chicks which always prove to be popular.

We are grateful to all who support our group, particularly Yvonne and Avril, who, although not regular members, donate home made items for us to sell and also to all those who appreciate and buy our work.

Mary Wooden