



Holy Trinity Church, Main Road, Bolton-le-Sands. LA5 8DU
St Mark's Church, Main Road, Nether Kellet. LA6 1ER

Reg. Charity No. 1144401

Financial Accounts & Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2023

Treasurer: Andy Hampshire. Independent Examiner: Elizabeth Bateman

Approved by Bolton-le-Sands Parochial Church Council on 19 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by Peter Hamborg (Chairperson of the PCC)

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2023 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of Holy Trinity Church, Bolton le Sands and St Mark's Nether Kellett

Aim and purposes

Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Holy Trinity and St Mark's Churches.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at Holy Trinity and St Mark's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.

Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.

Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of Holy Trinity and St Mark's.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At Holy Trinity the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2023 until the date this report are:

Ex Officio members:

Incumbent: The Reverend Peter Hamborg (Chairman)

Wardens: Peter-John Davies, Mary Bunting

Elected members:

Ann Basham (Secretary)

Rob Daunt

Margaret Hutchinson

Russell Longton

David Bateman

Margaret Foster

Brian James

Robert Whittaker

Kathrine Brough

Andrew Hampshire (Treasurer)

Duncan Johnson

Andrew Williams

Co-opted 23 November 2023: Jo Fitzgerald

Electoral Roll 2023

The electoral roll at the end of 2023 stood at 132

Rob Daunt, Electoral Roll officer

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Bolton le Sands Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 4 to 10.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church'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);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- 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. 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 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
2. in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Original signed/...../2024

Elizabeth Bateman CPFA

1 Greenwood Crescent, Bolton le Sands, Carnforth LA5 8BE

**Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Holy Trinity, Bolton-Le-Sands & St Mark's
Nether Kellett**

Notes to the financial statements for the accounting year ending December 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of financial statements^[1]_[SEP]: The financial statements have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2015).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for investment assets, which are shown at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Fund accounting:

Endowment Funds are funds, the capital of which must be retained either permanently or at the PCC's discretion; the income derived from the endowment is to be used either as restricted or unrestricted income funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established in the first place.

Restricted Funds comprise (a) income from endowments which is to be expended only on the restricted purposes intended by the donor, and (b) revenue donations or grants for a specific PCC activity intended by the donor. Where these funds have unspent balances, interest on their pooled investment is apportioned to the individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted Funds are income funds which are to be spent on the PCC's general purposes.

Designated funds are general funds set aside by the PCC for use in the future. Project funds are designated for particular projects for administration purposes only. Funds designated as invested in fixed assets for the PCC's own use are abated in line with those assets' annual depreciation charges in the SOFA. Designated funds remain unrestricted and the PCC will move any surplus to other general funds.

The accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis

Fixed assets: Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011.

Investments are valued at market value at 31 December 2023

Bolton le Sands Holy Trinity
Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Receipts						
Planned giving	44,892	—	707	—	45,599	44,870
Collections and other giving	10,072	—	—	—	10,072	7,700
Other voluntary receipts	7,384	715	2,093	—	10,192	74,509
Gift Aid recovered	17,576	—	—	—	17,576	13,591
Other receipts	—	—	725	—	725	271
Activities for generating funds	8,869	355	596	—	9,820	9,439
Investment Income	1,556	—	2,015	—	3,572	2,256
Receipts from church activities	8,866	17	—	—	8,883	9,723
Total income	99,217	1,087	6,138	—	106,442	162,362
Payments						
Cost of generating funds	1,510	—	629	—	2,139	2,217
Missionary and Charitable Giving	—	1,070	1,928	—	2,998	1,388
Parish Share	80,000	—	—	—	80,000	73,000
Clergy and Staffing costs	6,403	—	—	—	6,403	4,901
Church Running Expenses	11,836	8,967	4,014	—	24,818	19,867
Church Repairs & Maintenance	294	1,805	4,916	—	7,016	37,046
Total expenditure	100,045	11,843	11,488	—	123,376	138,419
Gains / losses on investment assets	—	—	—	5,625	5,625	(7,932)
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	(827)	(10,756)	(5,350)	5,625	(11,309)	16,009
Transfers						
Gross transfers between funds - in	0	—	7,872	7,872	15,745	8,904
Gross transfers between funds - out	—	—	(7,872)	(7,872)	(15,745)	(8,904)
Other recognised gains / losses						
Net movement in funds	(827)	(10,756)	(5,350)	5,625	(11,309)	16,009
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward	9,905	16,524	40,747	66,128	133,305	117,295
Total funds carried forward	9,077	5,768	35,396	71,753	121,995	133,305
Represented by						
Unrestricted						
General fund	9,077	—	—	—	9,077	9,905
Designated						
Capital Reserve	—	3,113	—	—	3,113	4,977
Communications Development	—	—	—	—	—	917
Graveyard Designated Fund	—	2,654	—	—	2,654	10,629
Restricted						
100 Club Prize Fund	—	—	80	—	80	112
Agency collection	—	—	337	—	337	337
CBF and Diocese investment (use of School)	—	—	1,019	—	1,019	931
Choir Fund	—	—	474	—	474	474
Confirmation : Bible Fund	—	—	—	—	—	0
Discretionary Fund	—	—	63	—	63	63
Flower Fund	—	—	371	—	371	342
Graveyard Fund (Restricted)	—	—	140	—	140	152
Holy Trinity Fabric Fund	—	—	28,285	—	28,285	34,404
Organ Fund	—	—	2,269	—	2,269	2,551
St Mark's Fabric Fund	—	—	20	—	20	34
St Mark's Toilet Fund	—	—	365	—	365	365

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Thomas Robinson	—	—	723	—	723	723
Tower clock	—	—	245	—	245	254
Under 18s	—	—	1,000	—	1,000	—
Endowment						
Legacy Funds for school	—	—	—	71,753	71,753	66,128

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

Bolton le Sands Holy Trinity

Balance Sheet detailed

	As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
Fixed assets		
5501: Shares-2 The Nook	66,256.13	60,674.04
5502: Shares-J I Hall Legacy	497.32	454.21
5503: Deposit 2 The Nook	5,000.00	5,000.00
Total Fixed assets	71,753.45	66,128.25
Current assets		
6501: Bank current account	8,452.75	7,225.67
6502: Nat West Graveyard Account	167.04	32.04
6503: Bank current account - 'Raise the Roof'	—	—
6505: Nat West Reserve Account	425.19	30,953.94
6510: CCLA (CBF) deposit account	42,324.57	28,934.36
6590: Cash account	61.97	120.85
Total Current assets	51,431.52	67,266.86
Liabilities		
6650: Unpresented cheques	—	—
6699: Agency collections	1,189.00	90.00
Z06: Wedding deposits	—	—
Total Liabilities	1,189.00	90.00
Net Asset surplus (deficit)	121,995.97	133,305.11
Reserves		
Excess / (deficit) to date	(16,934.34)	23,942.37
Z01: Starting balances	133,305.11	117,295.42
Z02: Other gains/(losses)	5,625.20	(7,932.68)
Z03: Gains and losses own use	—	—
Total Reserves	121,995.97	133,305.11

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	9,077.65	9,905.24
Designated	5,768.26	16,524.51
Restricted	35,396.61	40,747.11
Endowment	71,753.45	66,128.25
Total	121,995.97	133,305.11

Bolton le Sands Holy Trinity

**Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023**

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Receipts						
Planned giving						
0101 - Standing order with Gift Aid	20,363	—	707	—	21,070	36,509
0102 - Parish Giving Scheme (d/d)	16,813	—	—	—	16,813	790
0105 - Regular Giving by cheque	—	—	—	—	—	200
0120 - Charity Cheques	—	—	—	—	—	20
0201 - Envelopes- weekly planned giving	4,906	—	—	—	4,906	4,627
0202 - Standing order, no Gift Aid	2,809	—	—	—	2,809	2,724
Planned giving Totals	44,892	—	707	—	45,599	44,870
Collections and other giving						
0301 - Loose plate collections	6,024	—	—	—	6,024	5,030
0302 - Plate Gift Aid (Pew envelopes)	3,035	—	—	—	3,035	2,086
0310 - Loose plate collection-Occ. offices	529	—	—	—	529	373
0315 - Gift Aid envelopes, occ. offices	482	—	—	—	482	209
Collections and other giving Totals	10,072	—	—	—	10,072	7,700
Other voluntary receipts						
0502 - Donations - cash & cheques	2,111	—	1,216	—	3,327	4,519
0504 - Donations - Text, Online, Contactless	2,397	—	475	—	2,872	2,054
0505 - Donations - refreshments	2,875	—	—	—	2,875	2,585
0550 - Donations for specific appeals	—	715	—	—	715	—
0701 - Legacies	—	—	—	—	—	40,099
08A1 - Non-recurring one-off grants	—	—	402	—	402	25,250
Other voluntary receipts Totals	7,384	715	2,093	—	10,192	74,509
Gift Aid recovered						
0601 - Gift Aid claimed from HMRC	17,576	—	—	—	17,576	13,591
Gift Aid recovered Totals	17,576	—	—	—	17,576	13,591
Other receipts						
0503 - Donations: Graveyard	—	—	100	—	100	30
1310 - Insurance claims	—	—	625	—	625	—
1320 - Surplus - sale of fixed assets	—	—	—	—	—	241
Other receipts Totals	—	—	725	—	725	271
Activities for generating funds						
0915 - Fund Raising-Fetes, Sales etc.	6,556	355	—	—	6,911	6,251
0918 - Sale of small items	1,204	—	—	—	1,204	1,603
0921 - Hundred Club 65%	1,108	—	—	—	1,108	1,031
0922 - Hundred Club 35% - Prize Monies	—	—	596	—	596	553
Activities for generating funds Totals	8,869	355	596	—	9,820	9,439

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Investment Income						
1001 - Dividends	—	—	1,814	—	1,814	1,801
1020 - Bank interest	1,556	—	201	—	1,757	455
Investment Income Totals	1,556	—	2,015	—	3,572	2,256
Receipts from church activities						
1101 - Fees: weddings & funerals	8,386	17	—	—	8,403	9,243
1102 - Community Use of Church	480	—	—	—	480	480
Receipts from church activities Totals	8,866	17	—	—	8,883	9,723
Receipts Grand totals	99,217	1,087	6,138	—	106,442	162,362
Payments						
Cost of generating funds						
1730 - Costs of fetes & other events	104	—	—	—	104	400
1731 - 100 Club prizes	—	—	629	—	629	539
1732 - Cost of small items for sale	768	—	—	—	768	684
1734 - Payment card/text commission	33	—	—	—	33	37
1735 - Refreshments costs	604	—	—	—	604	556
Cost of generating funds Totals	1,510	—	629	—	2,139	2,217
Missionary and Charitable Giving						
1870 - Secular charities	—	1,070	—	—	1,070	20
1880 - School Barchester	—	—	1,928	—	1,928	1,368
Missionary and Charitable Giving Totals	—	1,070	1,928	—	2,998	1,388
Parish Share						
1910 - Ministry parish share etc	80,000	—	—	—	80,000	73,000
Parish Share Totals	80,000	—	—	—	80,000	73,000
Clergy and Staffing costs						
2002 - Gifts & Discretionary giving	431	—	—	—	431	77
2060 - Organist	1,050	—	—	—	1,050	1,200
2101 - Working expenses of incumbent	203	—	—	—	203	273
2120 - Council tax (vicarage)	3,636	—	—	—	3,636	1,696
2130 - Parsonage house expenses	—	—	—	—	—	1,500
2140 - Water rates - vicarage	795	—	—	—	795	—
2150 - Vicar's telephone	237	—	—	—	237	153
2370 - Visiting speakers / locums	49	—	—	—	49	—
Clergy and Staffing costs Totals	6,403	—	—	—	6,403	4,901
Church Running Expenses						
2301 - Church running - insurance	2,114	—	—	—	2,114	2,299
2310 - Church office: phone, broadband	441	—	—	—	441	364
2320 - Organ / piano tuning	—	—	282	—	282	282
2330 - Church maintenance	—	—	2,484	—	2,484	2,481
2331 - Cleaning	36	—	—	—	36	16
2340 - Upkeep of services	1,546	—	952	—	2,498	3,525
2345 - Under 18s	520	—	—	—	520	371
2350 - Upkeep of churchyard	—	7,738	210	—	7,948	4,237

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	
					This year	Last year
2360 - Administration	1,767	—	—	—	1,767	1,290
2401 - Holy Trinity - electric	1,446	—	—	—	1,446	1,246
2410 - Holy Trinity - gas	2,463	—	—	—	2,463	2,415
2420 - Holy Trinity - water	163	—	—	—	163	118
2430 - St Mark's running/maintenance	580	1,229	86	—	1,895	587
2440 - St Mark's: Heat & light	757	—	—	—	757	629
Church Running Expenses Totals	11,836	8,967	4,014	—	24,818	19,867
Church Repairs & Maintenance						
2343 - Replacement/New Equipment	294	1,632	873	—	2,800	2,228
2701 - Holy Trinity major repairs - structure	—	—	3,937	—	3,937	34,817
2711 - St Marks repairs	—	173	—	—	173	—
2720 - Holy Trinity interior/exterior decoratin	—	—	105	—	105	—
Church Repairs & Maintenance Totals	294	1,805	4,916	—	7,016	37,046
Payments Grand totals	100,045	11,843	11,488	—	123,376	138,419

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

FINANCIAL REPORT for 2023

At the end of 2022 the life of our Parish, and therefore of its finances, had returned to normal following the upheavals caused by the coronavirus pandemic and, to a lesser extent, by the interregnum between vicars. 2023 was therefore a year of renewal and progress

The following pages summarise how our income was raised and spent and I have commented on the more significant aspects of 2023 before finally taking a look at the future.

Prior to having a more detailed look at the year in figures I would like, as ever, to thank all those who have helped to make my role as treasurer so much easier than it might otherwise have been. – Vicar, Wardens, Committee Chairs, those who count and collate the collections, and all those who work behind the scenes to keep things running.

Also, grateful thanks to Elizabeth Bateman for once again completing the Independent Examination of our accounts in such a professional way.

Financial Review: Highlights summary

The following highlights will be expanded upon later in the report, but give a brief overview of significant items:-

- Unrestricted income up £4353 (4.6%) to £99217.
- Unrestricted expenditure (excluding Parish Share) up £2463 (13.8%) to £20045.
- Parish Share contribution increased by £7000 (9.6%) to £80000.
- Parish Share 'paid in full' for seventh consecutive year, but after Diocesan grant of £3658
- General Reserve £828 (8.4%) lower at £9077, equivalent to five months' expenditure (excluding Parish Share).
- Parish Giving Scheme (monthly direct debit): numbers now exceed those paying by standing order.
- Historic legacies restricted to expenditure on Holy Trinity fabric continue to cover maintenance costs of our historic building.
- £4326 raised for charities other than Holy Trinity (not shown in the accounts).

Detailed Financial Review

The accounts comprise three separate documents:

1. **Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA)** summarising income/expenditure, followed by a list detailing how Reserves are split between different Funds
2. **Balance Sheet** as at 31 December 2023, showing how assets and liabilities are split.
3. **Analysis of Income and Expenditure (AIE)** giving additional detail about income & expenditure

The following notes expand upon the figures in the SOFA and AIE in the order that they appear in those reports. Unless stated otherwise, remarks relate to figures in the Unrestricted column, which pertain to the day-to-day running of the Parish,

Receipts

Unrestricted income went up by 4.6% to £99217 meaning that receipts kept up with inflation (RPI in December was 4.1%). At a time when church finances elsewhere are suffering this is a welcome outcome. However, our own costs increased by far more than 4.6% during the year, so a note of caution is also appropriate.

- **Planned Giving** increased by £794 (2%) to £44892. When Gift Aid is included, regular Planned Giving provides the largest part of our income each year. Whilst our congregation returned to pre-covid levels during 2023, the number of Planned Givers reduced from 74 to

69. The 2% increase in money received was therefore welcome but did not match inflation, so must be a cause for concern in the longer term.

The majority of our Givers moved from standing order to direct debit during the year by using the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). The AIE shows standing order income higher than direct debit income, as the switches were made gradually during the year, but in future this situation will be reversed.

One benefit of the PGS is that Givers can opt to have their contribution increased automatically each year by inflation. I would therefore encourage anyone who is not yet in the PGS to join, and so contribute to the long-term health of our Parish.

- **Collections and Other Giving at church services** showed a large increase of £2372 (31%) to £10072. Regrettably this is not due to a surge in giving during services, but reflects the much lower income in 2022 which was affected by restrictions on gatherings at the end of the coronavirus epidemic. By way of comparison, receipts under this heading in 2019 were £10916.
- **Other Voluntary Receipts (i.e. donations not included above)** were inflated in 2022 by a 'one-off' grant of £3249 from central church funds and if this is excluded for comparison purposes the income of £7384 in 2023 was little different to 2022.

Income of £2808 in the 'Designated' and 'Restricted' Funds was much reduced in 2023. As there were no legacies (£40099 in 2022), and no grants (in excess of £25000 in 2022).

- **Gift Aid** increased by £3985 to £17576, showing the importance of donors 'signing up' for this. £4087 of the total came from Gift Aid obtained on our behalf via the Parish Giving Scheme. In previous years we would have waited until after the end of the financial year to claim this ourselves, so this sum is a one-off addition to cashflow in 2023, but no less welcome for that.
- **Activities for generating funds (i.e. 'fundraising')** was virtually unchanged (particularly after allowing for the 'cost of generating funds' shown in the expenditure summary) at £8869, reflecting the continued hard work of the Social Committee.
- **Investment income** relates to interest received on our deposit accounts with Natwest and Church Commissioners. The increase is entirely due to higher interest rates during the year.

'Restricted' income here relates to dividends and interest on Endowment Funds, where income is ring-fenced for the Diocesan Barchester Fund. This is available for capital projects at the C of E primary school in Bolton-le-Sands
- **Receipts from Church Activities** relate to 'official' activities in church where fees are charged – weddings, funerals, burials etc. The total of £8866 received in 2023 was £857 (9%) lower than similar unrestricted income in 2022. As in 2022 'graveyard' income was put to General income, as there was an excess in the Graveyard Designated Reserve. The Reserve now needs to be topped up again, so this type of income (£4900 in 2023) will not contribute towards day-to-day expenses in 2024.

Before moving on to look at expenditure, I think that it is worth noting that the Parish facilitated fundraising for other charities totaling £4326 during the year. This was done in a variety of ways – by hosting events, concerts and by specific appeals such as for both local Foodbanks and the Children's Society. A full list is appended to this report. For regulatory reasons these funds do not pass through the Parish accounts.

Payments

Total Unrestricted expenditure went up by £9462 (10.4%) to £100045. £7000 of the increase was Parish Share payments and the following comments relate to each area of expenditure on the SOFA. Unrestricted expenditure excluding Parish Share was up £2463 (13.8%) to £20045.

This % rise was exceptional and reflected low costs in 2022 returning to 'normal' rather than any major change in circumstances. The increase could have been much higher, as regular readers of my reports will remember that the PCC authorised additional expenditure of up to £6000 during the year to allow Peter our vicar to pay for some much-needed administrative help. In the event Peter managed without this help, but the option is still open to him in the future should he feel the need.

- **Cost of generating funds:** this figure relates to the fundraising activities noted above
- **Parish Share** increased from £73000 to £80000 and we were able to pay this in full for the seventh year running, although the 'in full' was only after a grant from Diocesan Reserves which had reduced the original request by £3658. Over the seven-year period these grants have totaled £75000.
- **Clergy & staffing costs** increased by £1502 (31%) to £6403. This is mainly due to costs related to the vicarage returning to normal after lower costs during the interregnum when the vicarage was empty.
- **Church running expenses:** costs of £11836 were virtually unchanged from 2022. Whilst there was some variation in the individual elements making up these costs the overall result is welcome in the light of general inflation. Fixed three-year contracts for gas & electric at both Holy Trinity & St Mark's insulated us from energy cost rises, but these expired at the end of the year.

There was also expenditure of almost £13000 covered by Designated and Restricted Reserves. Of this, £7738 related to upkeep of the churchyard although this is not the 'true' figure for 2023. This is because the £3085 bill for grass cutting in 2022 did not arrive soon enough to appear in the 2022 accounts and was added to 2023.

Further fabric related expenditure at both Holy Trinity and St Mark's totaled £5243. We are fortunate that these could be covered from specific reserves held for these purposes. These reserves arose from legacies received in 2022 and without them expenditure would be a drain on the General Reserve or, if not essential, would not be made at all.

- **Church repairs & maintenance:** as above, expenditure from the General account was again negligible, as costs for Holy Trinity were covered by the Designated and Fabric Reserves

Reserves Policy

As noted above, we are fortunate to have sufficient Restricted and Designated reserves to cover normal repairs and maintenance to the fabric of Holy Trinity, so that these costs do not drain unrestricted income. Similarly, expenditure on maintenance of the graveyards is covered by income from burials. This is accounted for via the designated graveyard reserve.

The position at St Mark's is different, as there are no reserve funds to pay for expenditure on repairs and improvements that would be much appreciated by the congregation there.

The 'Designated' and 'Restricted' funds columns on the SOFA show the income and expenditure passing through these and other areas and the totals in 2023 were much lower than 2022, when there was a major project to replace the stone louvres in the tower at Holy Trinity. Total income in both columns totaled £7225 in 2023 against £67497 in 2022, expenditure £23331 against £47837.

The SOFA report lists a number of accumulated reserves under three different headings: Unrestricted, Designated and Restricted. I will cover relevant points in turn:-

- **Unrestricted: General Fund:** as noted above, most income is unrestricted and is used to pay the majority of costs, including Parish Share. To ensure that there is always enough cash available to cover fluctuations in cashflow, it is PCC policy to keep a minimum balance to cover two/three months' normal expenditure, excluding Parish Share, (currently equating to approximately £5000) in the General Reserve.
- **Designated: Capital Reserve:** it is PCC policy that any legacies received, where specific instructions are not given, are used for fabric expenditure, and this fund consists of the balance of such receipts less any relevant expenditure. In 2023 there were no legacies and the balance on this Reserve fell by £1864, due mainly to fabric-related expenditure of £1400 at St Mark's.
- **Designated: Graveyard Fund:** as reported last year, from 2022 the PCC has suspended its policy of allocating fees from graveyard burials to this Reserve, as the accumulated balance was more than sufficient for foreseeable needs. All such income in 2023 was therefore allocated to the General account but the balance in the Reserve has now fallen below the level authorised by the PCC, so future income of this type will now be designated, until two years' average expenditure (£8500) is held.
- **Restricted Funds:** there are a number of separate Restricted funds where cash has been raised or donated for specific purposes. As can be seen in the Balance Sheet, there was little or no movement in the majority of these during 2023, apart from:-
 - i) **Holy Trinity Fabric Fund:** consists of a substantial legacy received in 2022. The balance fell by £6119 during 2023 due to expenditure on the fabric of Holy Trinity.
 - ii) **Under 18's:** we received a generous donation of £1000 at the end of the year, with a specific request that it be used to fund youth work in the Parish, such as Messy Church and events to improve links with Bolton-le-Sands Primary School.

THE FUTURE

Whilst we met all our commitments in 2023 the Parish finances were starting to show signs of strain, and it is only by calling on reserves to the tune of £5700 that the books were balanced.

Looking ahead into 2024 there will be additional pressure on the General (Unrestricted) account caused by a variety of adverse factors, the main ones being:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| ● Parish Share increased by | £14000 |
| ● Higher fuel bills, estimate | £ 8000 |
| ● Lower Gift Aid | £ 3000 |
| ● 'Graveyard' income redesignated | £ 5000 |
| | TOTAL £30000 |

There is a £4000 surplus on the General Reserve that could be used to alleviate the position slightly, but unless there is an increase in income from all sources, we are looking at a shortfall of around £25000 by the end of 2024.

The PCC, when discussing these figures at its final meeting in 2023, agreed that there is very little scope to reduce or eliminate any expenditure, other than reducing payments towards the Parish Share. This would obviously lead to a build-up of arrears which would be a factor when any major decisions about the staffing of the Parish are made in the future.

Property repair and maintenance is also likely to be a continuing call on cash resources. We are fortunate that there is a substantial balance on the Holy Trinity Fabric Fund, which is sufficient to cover these costs for the foreseeable future.

At St Mark's there are, as previously noted, some issues with the condition of the building, and there are works that the congregation there would dearly love to implement. Unfortunately, no similar cash

reserves are currently available and the work cannot therefore proceed. Additionally, at the time of writing, a structural defect is being investigated and if this proves to be costly to repair it is unclear at present how this would be resolved. It therefore feels appropriate to add a note about this potential liability in this report.

Furthermore, due to a decline in congregation numbers the gap between income and running costs at St Mark's has been steadily widening in recent years. This has been absorbed within the budget of the Parish as a whole but the added burden of further, substantial, increases in fuel and maintenance costs is again a concern that needs to be addressed.

In conclusion, 2024 will be more challenging financially than in any of the seven years that I have been Treasurer and income will need to rise by about 25% if we are to balance the books this year. Fortunately, we have a committed and proactive vicar and a talented team of enthusiastic volunteers. The solution, whilst difficult, could not therefore be in better hands.

Andy Hampshire, Treasurer Holy Trinity & St Marks