



The Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

of the

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

of

ST JOHN THE DIVINE, ELMSWELL

for the

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023



GENERAL INFORMATION

Website:	www.stjohnselmswell.org.uk
Facebook Page:	www.facebook.com/stjohnselmswell
Church address:	St John the Divine Church Road Elmswell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9DZ
Rector:	The Revd Peter Goodridge The Rectory, Church Road Elmswell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9DY
Secretary:	Mrs Abbie Titchmarsh 98 Bennett Avenue Elmswell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9EY
Treasurer:	Mr Michael Schofield Minerva Fairmead Elmswell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9HT
Bank:	HSBC Bank plc 54 Abbeygate Street Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 1LJ
Independent Examiner:	Mr Mike Smith Bay Tree House The Street Badwell Ash Suffolk IP31 3DG

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity exempted from registration with the Charities Commission.

Elmswell Church Land Charity (255055) and The Friends of St John's Church - Elmswell (1083116) are associated registered charities who provide financial support to the PCC. Further details of these charities can be found in the Notes to the Financial Statements – see near the end of the report.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of co-operating with the Rector in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

At St John's Church our aim is **to know Christ and make him known** as we

1. demonstrate God's love to the world
2. declare the good news of Jesus Christ
3. depend on God as part of His family

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

Clergy:

Rector - The Revd Peter Goodridge

Term of office ends

Churchwardens:

Mr Michael Brown (Vice-Chairman)

May 2024

Mrs Linda Barber

May 2024

Deanery Synod Representatives:

Mrs Carol Blissett

31 May 2026

Mrs Margaret Hitchins

31 May 2026

Elected Members:

Mrs Janet Baker

APCM 2024

Mr Michael Schofield (Treasurer)

APCM 2024

Mr Eddie Barber

APCM 2025

Vacant

APCM 2025

Mrs Abbie Titchmarsh

APCM 2026

Mrs Alex Cubitt (Safeguarding Officer)

APCM 2026

Mr Alex Titchmarsh

APCM 2026

Mrs Rosemary Ellis

APCM 2026

STRUCTURE

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and in accordance with Church Representation Rules (Rule 16 [1]) one third of the members of the Parochial Church Council are required to retire each year but may stand for re-election.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

There are 84 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll (2022 – 84) of whom 10 are not resident in the parish.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC met 5 times (once using Zoom) during the year, with approximately 85% attendance. Reports on fabric, finance, mission, outreach and social events were reported to the PCC as were those of the committee of Christians Together in Elmswell, of which St John's is a member.

Worship: St John's is a diverse congregation, made up of people of all ages and has a range of worship styles. Our main service continues to be held each Sunday at 10:30am. On the first Sunday of each month the main service is all age and there is an additional service of Holy Communion at 9:00am. Sunday School meets on other weeks during the main part of the service in the church rooms. Tea and coffee are served after the main service to aid fellowship.

During October, the month used for Diocesan statistics, the average attendance in church was 45 adults and 7 under 16's. There were also approximately 10 individuals joining online or watching later. It was also lovely to have 1 wedding, 7 baptisms and 1 confirmation. Unfortunately, 3 other confirmations were cancelled at short notice due to flooding near Stanton.

During the year there were a range of special services held. There were 2 Mission Sundays to support and hear from mission partner organisations. In May, we heard from a family working in a country in SE Asia with OMF and in September we heard from a Tearfund speaker. Other special Sunday services included a St George's Day Parade Service (with uniformed organisations), Eco Sunday, Back to Church Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance Sunday. Special services on other days included: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day, Time to Remember, Carols by Candlelight, Christmas Eve Nativity, Midnight in Bethlehem and the Christmas Day celebration.

Schools work continues with both Open the Book and the Rector taking regular assemblies in the primary school. KS2 visited St John's for their Harvest and Christmas services. We also ran Discover Advent (a creative interactive telling of the Christmas story) for Year 5 and 6 in St John's in early December. Sadly, Little Elms (nursery) did not respond to their invitation to hold their nativity in St John's (as they used to pre-Covid).

St John's has a number of regular groups that meet, including a weekly prayer meeting on Saturday mornings and 4 Bible Study groups (2 meet in person and 2 online). A Christianity Explored series was run in the early spring. The Rector also conducts a number of other "one-to-one" Bible studies during the week with individuals and couples.

Fund raising and social events in 2023 included a Ukele concert, men's gatherings in the pub, a show and discussion by magician and entertainer Beverley Bishop, a concert by *Nutz and Boltz* in church,, 2 family gatherings with games and hot dogs, 3 buffet lunches after services (OMF, Friends, Harvest), and mulled wine and mince pies after the main Carol service.

St John's also was involved with the Elmsfest Fair, the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust Bike ride and the Lukeswood Apple Day. Song Circle (formerly the Ixworth & Elmswell ladies Choir) rehearses in the church on Tuesday evenings and the choir took part in Carols by Candlelight. Mission and support agencies supported in 2023 were primarily the Stowmarket Foodbank, the Elmswell local foodbank, OMF, Tearfund, Suffolk Historic Churches Trust and the sponsorship of a schoolchild in Cambodia.

Christians Together in Elmswell includes St John's, the Baptist Church and some members of Norton Salvation Army and Stowmarket Catholic Church. The Good Friday service was on the Green by the railway station, the Pentecost service at the Baptist Church and Carol singing with the SA band in the Elmswell Tavern grounds, which attracted over 100 people. Bible Society story booklets were again distributed to the children at the primary school at Easter and Christmas. The stall at Elmsfest was a joint effort, where prayer and chat was offered and many children enjoyed the Sunday School activities.

Summary: 2023 saw more newcomers join our fellowship, but sadly we again said farewell to some of our older members. The parish share remains our greatest challenge and we fell substantially short. However, Elmswell continues to be a growing village and we look to God as we seek to grow in number, deeper in faith, younger and in influence.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Accounting Basis

On the advice of the independent examiner, the accounts have now been prepared on a cash basis rather than the previous accruals system. This means that only payments cleared by the bank up to the 31st December appear in these figures. Transactions made relating to 2023 but not yet cleared will be included in next year's accounts. Any significant transactions are highlighted in the Notes to the Accounts. This primarily relates to the final payments for the Parish Share and the December claim for gift aid from HMRC.

Planned Giving

The level of planned giving, both gift-aided and non-gift-aided, did not increase as hoped for, during 2023 but reduced by £1,200, a 5% decrease from 2022. Gift-aided income includes both direct planned giving and planned giving collected through the Parish Giving Scheme, to which we moved during September 2023. Most of our gift-aided income will eventually come through this scheme, although a minority will remain given directly. The income from collections, however, increased by £770 during the year, partly offsetting the decrease in planned giving. However, the decrease in planned given is a distinct concern given the ever-increasing nature of the Parish Share payment.

Parish Share

The major expense each year continues to be the Parish Share, which is St John's contribution to the Diocesan Purse. We were only able to pay off £56,000 from the 2022 Parish Share by the end of December, with two further payments made in January, after those accounts were closed, which paid the remaining balance in full. However, in 2023 the PCC, at its January meeting, agreed to withdraw £25,000 from the Martyrs' Memorial Fund to enable the payment of the Parish Share for 2023 in full but this proved not to be possible. Consequently, there is a shortfall of £25,000 in the payment. – see Notes to Accounts.

Donations – Contactless, Online and CAF

In 2023, we received £1,438 (after charges) in donations via the contactless giving machine and through easy fundraising, a considerable increase from 2022.

We also continue to receive several donations through the giving scheme Charities Aid Foundation (CAF).

Fabric Fund

We again received a total in excess of £12,000 in income in 2023. I am, however, pleased to say that during the year the value of our investments recovered significantly and now stands at £453,486, compared to a high of £469,000 in 2021. This represents an increase of almost 10%. There was a surplus of income over expenditure in the year of £6,500, almost double the surplus for 2022.

The value of the Martyrs' Memorial Fund has recovered somewhat from its figure of £251,000 in 2022 to a total of £274,000 at the end of 2023, although this is still short of the value at the end of 2021, which was £285,000. It does, however, mean that the planned withdrawal of units to help meet the Parish Share payment will have a lesser effect on the quarterly income distribution we receive.

Defibrillator

The defibrillator has now been installed and the second year's subscription paid which covers any maintenance or consumable costs.

Food Bank

We started to manage the finances of the village food bank at the end of 2022. 2023 has seen a large inflow of grants and donations with the receipt of over £17,000 from multiple sources which is ringfenced for spending by the food bank and which largely accounts for the rise in income over 2022.

Fundraising

One event took place, a Nutz and Boltz concert which raised £374. The income from floodlighting contributed £635 towards the total of £1009. There was also a Ukele concert and £1000 in donations for allowing a banner advertising new housing.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The PCC has previously carried out a detailed review of the church's activities (as Charity Trustees) and produced a comprehensive, strategic plan setting out the major opportunities available to the Church and the risks to which it is exposed. The PCC monitors progress against the strategic objectives set out in the plan at each meeting and a comprehensive review of the plan is carried out annually. As part of this process the PCC has implemented a risk management strategy which covers:

1. **Financial Risks** – this is the most common risk to be managed through budget, internal audit and proper financial procedures.
2. **Reputational Risk** – unwelcome publicity which hinders the mission of the Church.
3. **Statutory and Legal Requirements** - to cover health and safety, employment law, child protection and associated difficulties which could lead to compensation claims.
4. **Operational Risk** – threats to the Church's ability to deliver its objectives.

The PCC (as Charity Trustees) have established systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the plan through recording, PCC authorisation and review. The PCC is satisfied the above risks have been reduced to their minimum, by systematic consideration and assessment regarding both the level of risk and the Health and Safety procedures relating to each of the above areas.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSES FUND

<u>General Purposes Fund</u>	2022		2023	
<u>INCOME</u>	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income				
Planned giving (Gift Aid)	24,550		21,449	
Other planned giving (no Gift Aid)	3,232		3,188	
Collections	5,227		5,995	
Donations	1,567		2,753	
Income Tax recovered	5,773		9,094	
Parish Giving Scheme	0		3,898	
CAF Donations	2,000		2,000	
Contactless Giving	859		1,438	
Transfers from Fabric Fund	0		1,069	
Grants	0		1,200	
Restricted donations for parish projects	2,556		17,203	
Other Restricted donations	<u>0</u>		<u>4,702</u>	
		45,764		71,996
Activities for generating funds				
Church Room lettings	-		-	
Fund raising events	<u>984</u>		<u>1,009</u>	
		984		1,009
Income from church activities				
Fees	5,048		2,716	2,716
Income from investments				
Diocesan Trust Fund	944		924	
Martyrs Memorial & Church of England Trust Fund	<u>7,462</u>		<u>7,378</u>	
		8,406		8,302
Miscellaneous				
		-		-
TOTAL INCOME		60,202		84,102
		2022		2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE FABRIC FUND

Fabric Fund

<u>INCOME</u>	2022		2023	
	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income				
Donations	0		1,892	
Friends of St John's	<u>0</u>		<u>4,702</u>	
		0		6,594
Income from investments				
Dividend Income from New Investment		12,328		12,396
TOTAL RECEIPTS		12,328		18,990
 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Church activities				
Insurance	2,475		2,593	
Repairs to Church Fabric	2,991		2,386	
Bank Charges	56		60	
Cleaning	1,881		1,872	
Utilities	1,361		3,527	
Internal Maintenance	124			
Miscellaneous	<u>2</u>		<u>1,991</u>	
		8,890		12,429
TOTAL PAYMENTS		8,890		12,429
 Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		 3,438		 6,561
Balance at HSBC Bank account at 1 January 2023		6,486		9,924
Balance at HSBC Bank account at 31 December 2023		9,924		16,485

The Church of England Central Board of Finance investments for the Fund are as follows:

Deposit Fund	Value at 31 December 2023 - £453,486	(2022 – £414,178)
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**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE MARTYRS MEMORIAL
& CHURCH OF ENGLAND TRUST FUND**

Endowment Fund

	2022	2023
	£	£
INCOME		
Dividend Income	7,462	7,378
TOTAL INCOME	7,462	7,378
EXPENDITURE		
General Purposes Fund	7,462	7,378
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,462	7,378

The Church of England Central Board of Finance investments for the Fund are as follows:

Investment Fund	11,192.01 shares	Value at 31 December 2023 - £252,999	(2022 - £231,243)
Fixed Interest Securities	14,828.48 shares	Value at 31 December 2023 - £21,464	(2022 - £20,330)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE DIOCESAN TRUST FUND

Endowment Fund

	2022	2023
	£	£
INCOME		
Dividend income	944	924
TOTAL INCOME	944	924
EXPENDITURE		
General Purposes Fund	944	924
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	944	924

The Church of England Central Board of Finance investments for the Fund are as follows:

Investment Fund	1,348.94 shares	Value at 31 December 2023 - £30,493	(2022 - £27,850)
Fixed Interest Securities	2,912.94 shares	Value at 31 December 2023 - £4,216	(2022 - £3,979)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR ELMSWELL CHURCH LAND CHARITY

Registered Charity no. 255055

	2022	2023
	£	£
INCOME		
Elmswell Poor's Land Charity	172	401
Investment income:		
Charity Commissioners	0	173
TOTAL INCOME	172	574
EXPENDITURE		
Repair to North Aisle Roof Ecclesiastical Policy Excess	0	0
Elmswell Church Land Charity	0	
Bank Charges	56	60
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	56	60
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	116	514
Balance at HSBC Bank account at 1 January 2023	1,507	1,623
Balance at HSBC Bank account at 31 December 2023	1,623	2,138

The COIF Charities investments for the Charity are as follows:

Investment Fund	317 Income Units	Value at 31 December 2023 - £6,278	(2022 - £5,761)
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STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

DESIGNATION OF FUNDS	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	TOTAL £
	Designated	Undesignated		
Elmswell Church Land Charity <i>(Registered Charity no. 255055)</i>			2,138	2,138
Fabric Fund			16,485	16,485
General Purposes Fund		230	18,169	18,399
The CBF Church of England Deposit Account			48	48
TOTAL	0	230	36,840	37,070

MONETARY ASSETS	Cash	The CBF Church of England Deposit Account	HSBC Bank	TOTAL £
Elmswell Church Land Charity <i>(Registered Charity no. 255055)</i>			2,138	2,138
Fabric Fund			16,485	16,485
General Purposes Fund			18,399	18,399
The CBF Church of England Deposit Account		48		48
TOTAL	0	48	37,022	37,070

The *NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS* on Page 11 form part of these financial statements.

**Approved by St John's Parochial Church Council on 11th March 2024
and signed on its behalf by:**

.....Chairman..... Treasurer

(The Revd. Peter Goodridge)

(Michael Schofield)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the cash basis and comply with the Charities Act 2011 (SORP 2010).

Funds

The General Purposes Fund represents funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC. These include funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC, primarily for ongoing costs of the defibrillator and for the running costs of Elmswell Food Bank. The restricted funds comprised Food Bank: £16,787; defibrillator: £976; sponsorship of Phearak Moeung in Cambodia: £108; Mission: £163; Flowers: £100 and Microphone: £35.

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

The accounts do not include the gift aid claim for quarter 3 as the funds were received only after the end of the accounting year and will form part of next year's accounts. Similarly, payments made in January relating to the outstanding sum for the Parish Share in 2023 will only appear in next year's accounts.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

The following assets are recognised but not valued in the 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.
- Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.
- Other fixtures and fittings where the PCC is free to dispose of such assets without faculty and where the original cost exceeded £1,000.

2. ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The following are capital funds and the PCC may only use the income generated from these investments:

▪ Martyrs Memorial & Church of England Trust Fund

This fund represents the proceeds of the sale of the old Church Hall in School Road in 1988, after deduction of expenses incurred following the re-ordering at the West end of the church in 1993 when the Church Room, Balcony, Kitchen and Toilet were built. The balance to be retained as capital with the PCC able to use the investment income for the maintenance of the fabric. At one time part of this income was reinvested but the current financial situation no longer allows this.

A special exception was made in 2000 when the PCC was granted permission to temporarily withdraw £10,000 capital from the Fund due to the urgent need to carry out repairs to the chancel roof. Thanks to fund raising and the provision of grants the capital was repaid in 2001.

A further exception was made in 2017 when the PCC was granted permission to withdraw £25,000 capital from the Fund due to the urgent need to carry out repairs to the chancel roof.

A further exception was made in 2020 when the PCC voted to withdraw a further £25,000 capital from the Fund due to Coronavirus Pandemic. In 2023 the PCC again voted to withdraw a further sum of £25,000 to enable the full payment of the Parish Share in 2023 but following advice this has not taken place as the endowment is clearly designated as being for the use of fabric maintenance. Permission to change this designation is being applied for.

▪ Diocesan Trust Fund

This fund comprises money given to St John's with specific instructions that it be retained as capital with the PCC able to use the investment income for general ecclesiastical purposes or for the maintenance of the fabric of the church. There was no further investment in The Church of England Central Board of Finance Investment Fund during 2023.

▪ Fabric Fund Trust Fund

In 2020 St John's was left a legacy of £389,902 and, whilst The PCC are not entitled to the Capital for 86 years, the income the investment generates is restricted for the upkeep of the Church Fabric. The interest is paid directly into the Fabric Fund.

CONNECTED CHARITIES

- **The Friends of St John's Church - Elmswell (*Registered Charity No. 1083116*)**

The organisation raised funds for the upkeep of the church building but has now been disbanded with all monies held being paid into the Fabric Fund. The PCC Fabric Fund for 2023 therefore shows an income of £4,702 from The Friends of St John's Church – Elmswell.

- **Elmswell Church Land Charity (*Registered Charity No. 255055*)**

A charity set up in 1898 for the maintenance of the fabric of the Parish Church of Elmswell, inclusive of the tower, but exclusive of the chancel.

3. PAYMENTS TO TRUSTEES

Any payments made to Trustees (PCC Members) solely relate to reimbursement of expenses incurred in respect of the administration of St John's Church PCC.

4. The FABRIC FUND includes a balance of £107 in respect of the Handbells Account.

Independent Examiner's report to:

The Parochial Church Council ("PCC") of St John the Divine Church, Elmswell.

I report on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

The members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with

the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Michael R Smith*

Name: Michael R Smith

Address: Bay Tree House, The Street, Badwell Ash. IP31 3DG

Date: 30 March 2024