



Parish of Crookham

Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council
of
Christ Church Crookham

for the year ended 31st December 2024

Incumbent
The Reverend Steve Franklin until 31st May 2024
In vacancy from 1st June 2024

The Parish Office, Christ Church, Gally Hill Road, Church Crookham, Hampshire GU52 6LH



Registered Charity Number 1132174

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This report is arranged in two parts:

- Part A: Sections 1 to 13 are the mandatory sections as listed in Chapter 3 of the PCC Accountability Guide.
- Part B: Sections 14 to 18 are reports from the various committees and church groups, providing a reflection of church life at Christ Church Crookham.



Part A: Mandatory Information & Reports

This report was approved by the PCC on 6th April 2025.

1. Structure, Governance and Management

Church Wardens are elected at the meeting immediately prior to the APCM, and to which anyone on the Electoral Roll or resident of the Parish may attend and vote. Churchwardens are automatically members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules (2020 edition with 2022 revisions). Deanery Synod Members are also appointed in accordance with the said rules at the APCM. The membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our Vicar), Churchwardens, Deanery Synod members, and members elected at the APCM. Based on the numbers on the electoral roll our church has up to 12 elected PCC members and each stands for three years, with the intention of having approximately one third of the members elected each year. All those who attend our services or consider themselves to be members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC is responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the Parish including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. PCC members are inducted through a discussion of their role and function in the first meeting of the new PCC, and by going through a review of PCC policies annually. Specific training is provided by the Diocese in Safeguarding. Eligibility and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are carried out.

The PCC meets sufficient times to carry out the required business, typically around six times per year. The PCC appoints a Standing Committee to transact PCC business between meetings of the full PCC, and consists of the Vicar, the Church Wardens, the Treasurer and at least two other elected members. It operates within the directions agreed by the full PCC. There are also sub-committees for Buildings & Churchyard and Pre-School Management. In addition there are a number of informal groups for specific areas.

The PCC employs two part-time parish administrators and the staff for the Pre-school.



2. Administrative information

Christ Church Crookham is situated in Gally Hill Road, Church Crookham. It is part of the Diocese of Guildford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is: The Parish Office, Christ Church, Gally Hill Road, Church Crookham, Hampshire GU52 6LH. The email and website addresses are: administrator@christchurch-crookham.com and www.christchurch-crookham.com

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission under number 1132174.

PCC members for 2024

Incumbent

- Revd Steve Franklin until 31st May 2024, in vacancy after that

Licensed Lay Minister

- Mrs Rosemary Fox

Churchwardens (ex officio)

- Mr Eric Barnfield, Mrs Briony Allen

Treasurer

- Professor Mark Cross (co-opted) – outgoing treasurer
- Mr Andrew Munnings – incoming treasurer

Deanery Synod (ex officio)

- Mrs Rosemary Fox

Elected Members

- Until 2025: Mrs Marion Foreman
- Until 2026: Dr Keith Mundy, Mr Andrew Munnings, Mrs Jane Ash, Ms Emily Baker, Mr Peter Bradley, Mrs Mel Trundle
- Until 2027: Mr Kevin Fox, Mr David Pooley, Mr John Wilkinson

Mrs Sarah Griffiths resigned in August 2024 due to moving away from the area.

We are sad to report that elected member Mr David Holdway died in April 2024.

Other positions

- **PCC Secretary:** Kevin Fox
- **PCC Minutes:** Mrs Jenny Baker
- **Electoral Roll Officer:** Mrs Sue Foster
- **Safeguarding Officer (acting):** Mrs Briony Allen
- **Health & Safety Officer:** Mr Eric Barnfield
- **Data Privacy Officer:** Mr David Pooley



3. Aims and Purpose

The PCC of Christ Church has the responsibility of working with the Incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the upkeep of the whole premises including the Vestry Hall, the Jubilee Annexe and the churchyard.

The method of appointment of the PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

A pattern of services and events was established by Revd Steve Franklin and the PCC. While in vacancy, from June 2024, the PCC and Church Wardens and PCC has endeavoured to continue with this pattern.

4. Objectives

Our overall activities fall into six main areas that map onto our ongoing development plan:

- **Worship.** Always of high importance, to ensure our worship caters for all ages, requirements, formal and informal, and also to include those unable to be in church in person.
- **Fellowship and discipleship.** To further encourage people to meet after/before Sunday services and at other times. We also recognise the value of the fellowship of groups that support our worship, such as flowers, choir, music group, bell ringers, job squad etc.
- **Service to the community.** To provide pastoral and physical support to the local community, as well as specific church groups, events for the community, and facilities available for use by the community.
- **Proclaiming the message.** To share the saving Gospel of Christ with all. Although this often overlaps with other activities, it is essentially a meeting with those who see themselves as outside the Church and the Kingdom of God.
- **Children & youth.** We encourage families and children to be part of our church community, through a number of channels including children-friendly services, community events, our pre-school, and our close links to Crookham Infant School.
- **Housekeeping & infrastructure.** To ensure Christ Church Crookham is well-managed, provides well-maintained facilities for use by the local community, is financially self-supporting, is compliant, committed to individual safeguarding guidelines and has effective communication channels.

5. Review of the Year and Achievements

An important event of the year was in May when Revd Steve Franklin retired from parish ministry. We thank Steve for his energy and leadership over the past few years, and we hope he and Marion enjoy their retirement in their new community.

Steve attempted to make the transition into vacancy as smooth as possible but inevitably there were still a number of areas where significant challenges were encountered, and finding someone to preside and preach at all the services was the main challenge for the Church Wardens. More generally, we are pleased to report that many stepped up to the challenge of the vacancy, going beyond what



might be normally expected, with a special mention and thanks to our parish administrators, Jenny and Ruth. Also, our thanks to Ros Fox (LLM) and Mike Gibbons (Occasional Preacher) for leading many services, and to Mark Cross for taking on the role of chair of the PCC and the Standing Committee.

One of the few advantages of being in vacancy is the opportunity to welcome others to officiate at our two morning services. We thank all those who have officiated, especially our bishops Rt Revd Andrew Watson and Rt Revd Paul Davies, Archdeacon The Venerable Catherine Mabuza, Area Dean Revd Gemma Foster and others including Revd Haydon Wilcox and Revd Stephen Maurant.

Worship

In 2024 we continued with the pattern of services at 9am and 11am with coffee/tea between, and also once per month 'Cake Church', an informal service for families and children. Cake Church is described in more detail in section 15. One day each week we have Evening Prayer, although we were unable to continue Night Prayer once per month during the vacancy.

In December we held the service for the commemoration of the faithful departed. Our annual services of Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas were conducted with good attendance. Our two Christmas Eve Christingle Services were particularly well attended with altogether over 300 people.

In the course of the year there were four weddings, four baptisms, nine funerals held in Church and nine interments of ashes.

For those unable to attend a service in-person we continue to offer live-streaming of the 9am service on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. While few watch the service live, we usually have up to 20 'views' of each service after a day or so.

Our worship is enhanced by many groups, and we thank all those who contribute their time and expertise. These include the sacristans, the choir, the music group, the handbell team, the flowers team, those who provide tea/coffee, the live-streaming techies, and Jenny in the office producing the weekly service sheets and documents. Laura continues to lead 'JAM' (Jesus And Me) for the younger people during the 11am service, and we thank her for her ongoing work with this. The children did a much appreciated nativity play for both services the week before Christmas. We also recognise the contribution made by many others in the services, such as the sidesmen, the readers, and those preparing and saying the intercessions.

In 2024 Derek Canfield retired from playing the organ. The PCC would like to thank him for his dedication, skill and service to Christ Church over so many years. We are pleased to report that Matt Stapleton is now playing the organ for some services. For services without the organ, music is provided using an Android tablet linked to the church sound-system with the prerecorded music organised by Ros Fox a few days before.

Fellowship and discipleship

The buildings continue to be used by community groups, including every day by our own Pre-school, the Parents & Toddlers group known as "Little Bells", and "Coffee and Conversation" which is an informal gathering of friends at the church. There is also the weekly "Coffee Drop" where parents of pre-school children can drop in for a chat and a coffee.

Led by Marion Foreman, the pastoral care team has found there is an increasing need to support our church members by visiting, phoning, giving lifts etc. The weekly "Coffee and Conversation" sessions have been an opportunity for keeping in touch with the concerns of the congregation and friends in



the wider parish. We also recognise the value of community events such as fayres, plant sales, special services etc. which provide an opportunity to welcome visitors into the church.

We thank all those involved in this important work.

Service to the community

In 2024 there were several community events including a Christmas wreath making workshop, Gift-Your-Gift, the Christmas Fayre, seed exchange and plant sales. We had two major events, a performance by Graham Hix & Friends and our third annual Arts Festival consisting of workshops, refreshments, art sales and live music.

We continued to support national charities: Christian Aid, The Children's Society and Royal British Legion, and we thank those who lead our initiatives for these important charities. Our thanks to Mel Trundle for her work supporting Christian Aid initiatives, not just at Christ Church but also across the Fleet and Church Crookham area.

The mission and outreach work of the Christ Church Christians Against Poverty (CAP) team continued in 2024. This consisted of a number of specific initiatives including: Feed a child programme, Cook Well for Less workshops, Money Coaching and Stretch the budget sessions. More details can be found in the CAP report in section 17. We are grateful to all of those who assist with this important work, and particularly Jan Drummond for leading these initiatives.

Children and youth

Our Pre-school continues to provide a much-needed service for children of ages 2-4, and where Revd Steve was a regular visitor. Close links are kept with the infant school and the junior school, with assemblies and visits, particularly by the FACCTS team.

Our thanks go to Sarah Griffiths for running "Little Bells", the mother and toddlers group.

Infrastructure

We had no major, unplanned expenditure, but we did carry out repairs and improvements to the church buildings and grounds.

To make the church function requires many people working behind the scenes, and particularly we would like to thank Jenny in the office, and Eric and Briony our Church Wardens. We also thank those in the various church groups, working parties and subcommittees that make so many valuable contributions to the life of the church.

6. Future Plans

Over the past few months the challenge has been to keep 'business as usual' as much as possible, but inevitably there is also a need for fresh ideas and new energies to ensure Christ Church Crookham fulfils an important role within the parish and beyond.

We recognise the challenges as a result of events happening globally, nationally, within the local community and within our own church. While we cannot solve these we can provide a church that is caring, inclusive, supportive and welcoming, and also ensuring the facilities will continue to be here in the future.

Our activities continue to be steered by our development plan focusing on Worship, Fellowship, Service to the Community, Proclaiming the Message and Children & Youth, all supported by



‘Housekeeping & infrastructure’ functions. We will commit ourselves to holding firm to what has sustained us; our faith in God, our bond of fellowship and our common mission to our Parish.

We look forward to a new chapter in the life of Christ Church as we welcome our new incumbent, Revd Matt Smith, to the parish in the summer. With new ideas and renewed energies Christ Church will continue to be a reliable presence as part of the local community.

7. The Electoral Roll

A new Electoral Roll has been prepared for 2025 as required every six years in accordance with guidelines from the diocese. There are 107 names on the Electoral Roll, 91 people resident within the parish while 16 live outside of the parish and none in the category of other churches.

The updated Electoral Roll has been displayed in the church for inspection since the 6th April 2025.

8. Safeguarding Compliance

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops’ guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). The role of Parish Safeguarding officer has remained with Briony Allen as Church Warden throughout 2024, with no one else to take on the role at the moment.

There have been a number of additional mandatory requirements added to the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard for each church activity: role descriptions and safer recruitment of volunteers, an induction process, completion of a ‘settling in’ period, and ongoing support and oversight. These will be the standard going forward; although it is the case that some of these are carried out informally, but now need to be formalised, documented and recorded. There is still some safeguarding refresher training outstanding.

One welfare and one mental health concern were reported in 2024; these were signposted to the correct authorities. There was one alert regarding someone of safeguarding concern visiting the deanery, and a report from another church which was investigated and proved to be a miscommunication.

It everyone’s duty to protect and support all users of our church, our parish and our community. I thank everyone in our congregation for their care of vulnerable individuals, particularly during this time in vacancy.

9. Report on the Fabric of the Church

Routine maintenance and checks have been carried out, including fire-alarm testing, Legionella testing, PAT tests, general H&S checks, boiler maintenance and fire drills (pre-school).

Items outstanding from the Quinquennial Review inspection carried out in August 2020 are:

- Inspect the bell cote.
- Repointing at a number of locations.
- Some stones have fallen out from above a lancet window.

A quinquennial inspection is due to be carried out in 2025.



10. Deanery Synod

Aldershot Deanery Synod met in February 2024 at Church of the Good Shepherd, Farnborough, in June at Holy Trinity Aldershot and in September at St Paul's, Tongham. Topics discussed included the Racial Justice covenant, the new Foundations in Ministry course and Eco church. The February meeting was attended by Ros Fox (lay representative) and Revd Steve Franklin (Clergy). The June meeting was attended by Ros Fox (lay representative) and the September open meeting by Ros Fox and Kevin Fox (guest).

Full reports of the proceedings of Aldershot Deanery Synod have been given to Crookham PCC.

11. Financial Review

The financial statements and notes to the financial statements are given at the end of this section, and provides an overview for parishioners who are not financial specialists. The references in brackets gives the relevant heading or note section of the financial statements.

2024 was notable primarily because our vicar Rev Steve Franklin retired in the middle of the year, and much of our time and efforts were subsequently dealing with the management of the parish during the vacancy. Steve had been very active in the Parish and drove a number of initiatives.

Other significant changes from previous years were the following:

- The School House renovation was completed at the end of 2023 and a tenant with a growing family was installed during December of 2023 who has settled in very well. So both properties of the parish are now rented out at something approaching commercial rates.
- The current Treasurer, Mark Cross, has decided to step down after a decade in post to care for his wife and Andrew Munnings, currently the Planned Giving Officer is taking over and so 2024 has been something of a transition year.
- As part of this transition we have moved the financial management from the Fin4 system which we have used for the last decade to a new online system, ExpensePlus. This system automates a number of processes directly from the bank statement and ensures financial accuracy. It also simplifies the management and claims of gift aid substantially reduces the paperwork involved. However, it's a new system to the church team and so has taken quite a while to become accustomed to – there is no gain without some pain!!

During the year we carried out a range of fairly modest repairs including:

- Some of the church lights were replaced on a like-for-like basis (£800).
- Our organ was subject to some extensive maintenance (£544).
- A full scale electrical inspection was carried out for insurance purposes and found to be in good order (£1194).
- The south wall of the church was repaired and repainted (£960)

The authorised spend on repairs and renovations has been limited and targeted at being effective for the congregation, whilst ensuring the fabric of the Church is well maintained.

A notable element of income and expenditure in these accounts continues to be the operation of the Pre-School. This continues to be a very successful service to the community which is generally in high demand from families in the village. The recovery in 2023 in terms of child numbers was continued



into 2024, as the socialisation problems from COVID have attenuated. As such, our income rose from £98,847 in 2023 to £110,319 in 2024, which is now above pre-pandemic levels. Part of the reason for the increase in income was that the fees paid by the local authority rose by about 10% to reflect the increase in pay costs associated with the rise in the national minimum pay rates. We continue the training of a second member of staff (where the cost has been borne through external sponsorship for which we are grateful). All of the Pre-school staff are well qualified – as qualified teachers, at level 3 in EYE or as a graduate. Because of the well-deserved pay increases due to the rise in national minimum pay rates the Pre-school now has direct costs of £88,615 which mostly goes on staff salaries. In addition, of course, there are a range of overhead costs which this does not include (e.g. administrative support, cleaning, use of the Vestry Hall, clergy vestry, the dedicated storage area, etc.). During the course of 2024 the full effects of the doubling of the cost of energy has been felt and this just had to be absorbed by the Church and Pre-school.

Total donations to charities included:

Churches Together in Fleet & Church Crookham (£1,350), The Children's Society (£394), 'Feed a child' (support for needy families in the Parish) and Christians Against Poverty (CAP) together (£3,847), Bibles for our Infants School Leavers (£522) and Toilet Twinning in Africa (£120).

Principal sources of income were:

- Pre-School income from Hampshire County Council, employer vouchers and parents together are the largest single source of income for the PCC at £110,319 [Note 2c].
- The Diocese very kindly forgave 90% of our debt to them from a decade ago if we paid the remaining 10%, which we did.
- The majority of the congregation donate by planned giving, much of which can have income tax reclaimed. There are others who give in other ways, some of which is also income-tax reclaimable. The total of these [Note 2a] is £71,667, which is somewhat lower than in previous years mainly due to a number of elderly parishioners who died during the year. This is an issue our new Vicar and Treasurer must address during 2025.

Financial Administration

Our finances continue to be administered by the following team which was initially put in place at the 2017 APCM and re-affirmed each APCM since:

- Treasurer: Professor Mark Cross
- Planned Giving Office and Incoming Treasurer: Andrew Munnings
- Pensions Officer: Bruce Bulgin
- Independent Examiner: David Sprot

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to meet running costs of the Church's ministry, maintenance of the buildings and emergency situations. The Reserves are sufficient to sustain the church operation under normal circumstances for about six months should all income cease.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The PCC manages the School House Trust on behalf of the trustees which are the Incumbent and Church Wardens of Christ Church Crookham.



Financial Risk Management

The PCC income is less than £500,000 per annum so there is no requirement for a formal financial risk policy. However, it is sensible to consider the main areas of risk. These are considered to be:

- Costs arising from unplanned repair or maintenance work that is not covered by our insurance policies. The policies are believed to be adequate and are with Ecclesiastical Insurance, the recognised insurers for churches and PCCs.
- A Quinquennial Review inspection occurred in the summer of 2020, and although no serious issues were uncovered, there are some costs arising from the findings of our Inspecting Architect's report which was published in 2021. All of the urgent minor work from the 2015 inspection have been completed. It is anticipated that the costs can be contained within current income and special appeals if necessary.
- A significant amount of necessary tree maintenance work was carried out in 2017 and 2018 and any remaining is well within current income levels.
- Under normal circumstances, although the Pre-school income base is the subject of variation because of Government changes to the funding of early years education, its income is reasonably stable.
- There is always a risk of accidents in the church premises and churchyard with claims against the PCC. No specific financial contingency can be made. The risk can be reduced by ensuring adherence to Health & Safety regulations.
- The church is generally in good repair and the PCC has been diligent in ensuring the QI conclusions have been actioned. However, it is clear that some large ticket items such as the church window frames and the roof will need serious renovation in the next decade or so. The PCC will need to consider how best to raise a fund to support such renovations as this must surely be an intergenerational project – delivered by one for those who follow! In this current year some funds have been secured to deal with the 2021 QI recommendations.

Financial Summary

Although the church community is pretty much back to 'normality' after COVID life in terms of activity this year has been disrupted by the retirement of our Vicar. We have been extremely fortunate to have been the recipient of legacies and a substantial gift which transformed our medium term financial position in 2023 together with the forgiveness of the majority of our Diocesan debt in 2024. Because of a reduction in planned giving income we have come in with a small deficit on the general fund though there is a surplus overall from our restricted funds of just over £13,000 for which we thank God and our friends, through their gifts, and the fund-raising efforts which have made an immense difference to our financial outlook. However, our long term goal remains to put together a fund to enable the restoration and repair of the church window frames and the roof over the coming decade (a project in this coming decade for those that follow on!), and to improve our planned giving so that run a surplus from the General Fund.



12. Independent Examiner's Report

This report on the financial statements of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ended 31st December 2024, as set out on pages 13 to 20, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 144(2) of the Act do not apply, and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2013 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

D Sprot, ACMA



13. Financial Statements

		Unrest- ricted	Desig- nated	Restrict- ed	<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Incoming resources from donors	2a	70,646	0	1,021	71,667	83,773
Other voluntary incoming resources	2b	36,878	0	0	36,878	42,514
Income from charity & ancillary trading	2c	125,473	0	0	125,473	114,436
Income from investments	2d	19,107	0	21,466	40,573	25,136
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		252,104	0	22,487	274,591	265,859
RESOURCES USED						
Grants & donations	3a	2,893	0	3,123	6,016	5,420
Activities directly relating to work of the church	3b	216,939	0	0	216,939	180,885
Fund-raising and publicity	3c	5,927	0	0	5,927	6,858
Church management and administration	3d	32,507	0	0	32,507	33,015
TOTAL RESOURCES USED		258,266	0	3,123	261,389	226,178
NET INCOMING RESOURCES/RESOURCES USED		(6,162)	0	19,364	13,202	39,681
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD		129,335	265,335	69,357	464,027	424,346
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD		123,173	265,335	88,721	477,229	464,027
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>						
Tangible fixed assets	5				250,000	250,000
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>						
Debtors	6				6,233	11,112
Short Term Deposits					66,968	63,593
Cash at Bank and in hand					157,342	164,993
					230,543	239,698
Liabilities Falling Due within 1 year	7				(3,314)	(25,671)
Net Current Assets					227,229	214,027
<u>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>					477,229	464,027
<u>LIABILITIES FALLING DUE AFTER ONE YEAR</u>						
					0	0
					477,229	424,346
<u>REPRESENTED BY FUNDS</u>						
Unrestricted					123,173	129,335
Designated	10				265,335	265,335
Restricted	9				88,721	69,357
Total					477,229	464,027



The financial statements on pages 9 to 20 were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 6th April 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Professor Mark Cross, Chairman and Outgoing Treasurer

Andrew Munnings, Incoming Treasurer

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities as revised 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

Restricted funds represent donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object and can only be expended on the purpose for which they were given. Any balance remaining unused at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

Designated funds are part of the unrestricted funds set aside by the PCC for a particular purpose. Unrestricted funds are general funds, which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes.

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.

Incoming Resources

Planned giving, collections, donations and fees are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Rental income from the letting of church premises is recognised when due. Interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when it is receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Resources used



Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is an operational (though not a legal) liability and is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Church Workers Pension Fund (CWPF) - FRS102 Statement

Crookham PCC participates in the Pension Builder Scheme section of CWPF for lay staff. CWPF is administered by the Church of England Pensions Board, which holds the CWPF assets separately from those of the Employer and other participating employers.

CWPF has two sections:

1. the Defined Benefits Scheme
2. the Pension Builder Scheme, which has two subsections;
 - a. a deferred annuity section known as Pension Builder Classic, and,
 - b. a cash balance section known as Pension Builder 2014.

Pension Builder Scheme

Both sections of the Pension Builder Scheme are classed as defined benefit schemes.

Pension Builder Classic provides a pension, accumulated from contributions paid and converted into a deferred annuity during employment based on terms set and reviewed by the Church of England Pensions Board from time to time. Discretionary increases may also be added, depending on investment returns and other factors.

Pension Builder 2014 is a cash balance scheme that provides a lump sum which members use to provide benefits at retirement. Pension contributions are recorded in an account for each member. Discretionary bonuses may be added before retirement, depending on investment returns and other factors. The account, plus any bonuses declared is payable, unreduced, from age 65.

There is no sub-division of assets between employers in each section of the Pension Builder Scheme.

The scheme is considered to be a multi-employer scheme as described in Section 28 of FRS 102. This is because it is not possible to attribute the Pension Builder Scheme's assets and liabilities to specific employers and means that contributions are accounted for as if the Scheme were a defined contribution scheme. The pensions costs charged to the SoFA in the year are the contributions payable **(2024: £4,587, 2023: £4,444)**.

A valuation of the Pension Builder Scheme is carried out once every three years. The most recent valuation was carried out as at 31 December 2022.

For the Pension Builder Classic section, the valuation revealed a surplus of £34.8m on the ongoing assumptions used. At the most recent annual review effective 1 January 2025, the Board chose to grant a discretionary bonus of 6.7% to both pensions not yet in payment and pensions in payment in respect of service prior to April 1997; and a bonus on pensions in payment in respect of post April 2006 service so that the pension increase was 2.7% (where usually it would be calculated based on inflation up to 2.5%). This followed improvements in the funding position over 2024. There is no requirement for deficit payments at the current time.

The next valuation is due as at 31 December 2025.



For the Pension Builder 2014 section, the valuation revealed a surplus of £8.5m on the ongoing assumptions used. There is no requirement for deficit payments at the current time.

The legal structure of the scheme is such that if another employer fails, **Crookham PCC** could become responsible for paying a share of the failed employer's pension liabilities.

Fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the financial statements in accordance with section 10(2)(a) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property unless consecrated, and are not included in these financial statements. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice property and inalienable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which it is incurred.

The PCC includes other buildings and properties at cost, with revaluation taking place when the PCC determines there has been a material change in value. No depreciation is applied to these properties, and any costs related to maintenance or improvements are expensed as incurred.

The property on Gally Hill Road, owned by the School House Trust, is not included, as it is not considered an asset of the PCC.

Other fittings and equipment used within the church premises, including assets acquired under a finance lease, are depreciated on a straight line basis over 5 years. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current assets

Amounts owed to the PCC at the year-end less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectable are shown as debtors.

Short-term deposits are cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds or at the bank.

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF CROOKHAM
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**



	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	2024 Total	2023 Total
2 INCOMING RESOURCES					
a Incoming resources from donors					
Planned giving	51,709	0	0	51,709	61,429
Collections at all services	3,671	0	0	3,671	2,146
Sundry donations	4,054	0	1,021	5,075	7,500
Income tax recoverable	11,212	0	0	11,212	12,698
	70,646	0	1,021	71,667	83,773
b Other voluntary incoming resources					
Grants & donations	24,976	0	0	24,976	27,190
Fetes, Bazaars and other fund raising events	11,902	0	0	11,902	15,324
	36,878	0	0	36,878	42,514
c Income from charitable & ancillary trading					
Magazine	1,648	0	0	1,648	1,412
Vestry contributions	3,775	0	0	3,775	2,956
Pre-School	110,399	0	0	110,399	98,847
Fees	9,651	0	0	9,651	11,842
	125,473	0	0	125,473	114,967
d Income from investments					
Interest receivable	3,375	0	1378	4,753	1,975
Funds of School House Trust	0	0	20,088	20,088	6,489
Rent on Jubilee Drive	15,732	0	0	15,732	16,672
	19,107	0	21,466	40,573	25,136
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	252,104	0	22,487	274,591	266,120
3 RESOURCES USED					
a Grants & donations	2,893	0	3,123	6,016	5,420
Missionary & charitable giving UK	2,893	0	3,123	6,016	5,420
b Activities directly related to the work of the church					
Ministry:					
Parish share	91,981	0	0	91,981	83,752
Clergy expenses	4,046	0	0	4,046	718
Vicarage expenses	1,073	0	0	1,073	516
Visiting Clergy	0	0	0	0	0
Church - running expenses	28,779	0	0	28,779	21,706

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF CROOKHAM
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**



Professional fees	1080	0	0	1080	1080
Upkeep of services	2,365	0	0	2,365	2956
Expenditure on magazine & library	0	0	0	0	0
Upkeep of churchyard	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-school Salaries & Pensions	82,548	0	0	82,548	64,725
Other Pre-School expenses	5,067	0	0	5,067	5,432
	216,939	0	0	216,939	180,885

c Fund raising & publicity

Costs of fetes & other fund raising events	5,927	0	0	5,927	6,858
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d Church management & administration

Telephone & internet	1,340	0	0	1,340	1,716
Computers & Photocopiers	3,789	0	0	3,789	5,644
Other administration expenses	2,573	0	0	2,573	1,568
Staff pay	23,581	0	0	23,581	19,082
Investment property expenses	926	0	0	926	4,726
Bank charges	298	0	0	298	279
	32,507	0	0	32,507	33,015

TOTAL RESOURCES USED	258,266	0	3,123	261,389	226,178
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4 STAFF COSTS

Remuneration	101,542	79,364
Social security costs (included above)	0	0
Pension costs	4,587	4,444
	106,129	83,808

5 FIXED ASSETS FOR USE BY THE PCC

Tangible fixed assets

Gross book value

	2024			2023
	FHL&B	Leased	Total	Total
As at January 1st 2024	250,000	0	250,000	250,000
Additions	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
As at 31 December 2024	250,000	0	250,000	250,000

Depreciation

At 1 January 2024	0	0	0	0
Charge for year	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
As at 31st December 2024	0	0	0	0

Net book value

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF CROOKHAM
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024



As at 31st December 2024

250,000	0	250,000	250,000
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6 DEBTORS

Prepayments and accruals	3,811	1,612
Tax recoverable on covenants	2,422	9,500
	6,233	11,112

7 LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

Amounts due under finance leases	0	0
Parish Share	0	(23,635)
Other accruals	(3,314)	(2036)
Other creditors	0	0
	(3,314)	(25,671)

8 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Designated</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Fixed assets	0	250,000	0	250,000	250,000
Current Assets	126,487	15,335	88,721	230,543	239,698
Liabilities : amounts falling due within 1 year	(3,314)	0	0	(3,314)	(25,671)
Liabilities : amounts falling due within 5 years	0	0	0	0	0
Fund balance	123,173	265,335	88,721	477,229	464,027

9 RESTRICTED FUNDS

	<u>End 2023</u>	<u>Incoming</u>	<u>Outgoing</u>	<u>End 2024</u>
Christ Church Community Project	(9,265)	0	0	(9,265)
Funds of School House Trust	53,004	21,466	0	74,470
Parish share debt reduction	883	0	0	883
Organ maintenance	17,805	0	(469)	17,336
Flowers	415	0	0	415
Library - Joan Blundell bequest	275	0	0	275
Pastoral care	474	0	0	474
Supporting children of the Parish	5,766	0	0	5,766
Collections - UK charities	0	1,021	(1,021)	0
	69,357	22,487	(1,490)	88,721

10 DESIGNATED FUNDS

	<u>End 2023</u>	<u>Incoming</u>	<u>Outgoing</u>	<u>End 2024</u>
Investment properties	250,000	0	0	250,000
Building and Fabric	15,355	0	0	15,355
	265,355	0	0	265,355



Notes

2a – The vast majority of donor income arises from our planned giving programme where approaching 100 folk either have standing orders or give regularly through envelopes in the plate.

2b - The receipts for Churchyard Upkeep include £15 for the upkeep of a family grave and £30 from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for the maintenance of the war graves in the cemetery.

2c – Our income from ancillary trading comes principally from our Pre-school serving our young families, in the community use of our spaces, and major community events (e.g. the Arts Festival).

2d – Our income from investments arises principally from the rental of our two properties that we are responsible for – one on Jubilee Drive and the other on Gally Hill Road, both in Church Crookham.

4 - During the year the PCC employed organists, cleaners, a parish administrator, an assistant, and Pre-school staff, none of whom earned more than £60,000 p.a. (2023: Nil). Together these employees equate to 5 full time employees (2023: 5).

Payments to PCC members and persons related to PCC members: The expenses paid to various members of the PCC may have included an immaterial proportion relating to their specific function as a member of the PCC.

No payments were made in 2024 to persons closely connected to members of the PCC (2023: Nil).

5 - An investment property fund was set up by the PCC in 2013, to buy the freehold property, which is held as an investment, and is let.

There are no endowment funds to report.

There are no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2024 (2023: Nil)

The registration number of the Crookham PCC with the Charity Commission is 1132174.



Part B: Committees & Groups Reports

14. Infrastructure

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee serves the PCC to coordinate the operation of the 'business' of the church on a day-to-day basis. It is normally chaired by the incumbent, and its members include at Christ Church include the wardens (Briony Allen and Eric Barnfield), the treasurer (Mark Cross), our LLM (Ros Fox) plus at least two other PCC members (David Pooley, Andrew Munnings as the incoming treasurer and Kevin Fox as PCC secretary). It generally meets fortnightly over Zoom and lasts for about an hour, and is focused on delivering the issues of the day. It prepares the agenda for PCC meetings, follows up on actions agreed at its meetings and deals with the day-to-day issues in running the church operation. As is appropriate the governance of the church is in the hands of the PCC and they agree all significant issues of substance, but much of the delivery and consequential aspects are dealt with by the Standing Committee reporting back to the PCC.

In the middle of the year our incumbent Rev Steve Franklin retired and so I was asked to chair both the Standing Committee and PCC until a new incumbent was appointed. For a few months from the middle of the year the Standing Committee met every week to ensure that it kept on top of business that arose due to the vacancy. The process to appoint a new incumbent was quite time consuming. We completed the Parish Profile for advertising in October, however, there were no candidates suitable for interview on this round, and it was agreed to go out again early in 2025. A not insignificant issue here has been the work required to make sure that all of our services are covered by visiting clergy, our LLM Ros or occasional preacher Mike Gibbons. We are making more use of recorded music as our access to an organist is now somewhat limited since Derek Canfield retired after decades of faithful service. We are grateful to Briony and Ros for managing these tasks over the Vacancy period.

There have been myriad issues that seem to have arisen since Steve retired, including:

- Finally securing the Faculty for the (not so) new church chairs
- Dealing with the consequences of the Diocesan adviser in reviewing the Vicarage who essentially condemned the fete store which has subsequently been removed and is in the process of being replaced in 2025.

Mark Cross, interim chair of the Standing Committee of the PCC

Pre-school Management

The Early Years Foundation stage statutory Framework (EYFS) breaks the areas of learning into seven educational programmes: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are the prime three areas and Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design make up the specific areas. At Christ Church Pre-School, we come together as a team to design a curriculum that encompasses everything we want the children to learn whilst they are with us. We work in collaboration with local schools and parents to make sure that the curriculum is responsive and suits the needs of our current cohort.

This is where our strengths lie. We are a small, dedicated team that know our children extremely well. We want our children to be little R.I.C's – Resilient, Independent, Communicators. Without these building blocks, children may find it difficult to access their learning. We have the same aspirations for



every single child to be the best they can possibly be. Everything we do in our daily planning reflects this and more.

This year has seen a full take up, with many new parents coming to join us following recommendations from other families, you can't get better than that. We love to hear that our name is out in the community and we are spoken of so highly.

We continue to be thankful for the unwavering support from the Church and its members. Mark Cross and Andrew Munnings are wise counsel. Briony Allen and Eric Barnfield are always on hand to deal with any unexpected issues and the Administration team, Jenny and Ruth are always there to help us should we need it. A particular thank you goes to Katherine Gibbons, who, every Wednesday, before Pre-School starts, opens the church doors for the children and parents to come in and stay and play – there is also some running involved!

The Pre-School really is a fantastic support to the residents of the Parish of Crookham. I always welcome new children and parents "to the Pre-School family" I know I speak on behalf of the whole team when I say we are very proud to be a part of their child's very first stage of their learning journey at this fabulous Pre-School.

Tracy Jarvis, Pre-school Manager

I would like to endorse all that Tracy says above – it is clear to anyone who visits the Pre-School they are a dedicated team who are devoted to the well-being of the children in their care and very professional in delivering their educational programme. It is no coincidence that the team have been rated as outstanding for the last three OFSTED inspections. We are grateful to Tracy and the staff team for all their efforts over many years. This is my last year as chair and I would like to say what a pleasure it has been to support the whole team in their endeavours over this past decade.

Mark Cross, Chair - Pre-school Management Committee

Buildings and Churchyard Committee

We have had a busy year, with many repairs and improvements work carried out in the vicarage and church buildings. The windows in the Vestry Hall were replaced in November, being double-glazed are a considerable improvement, particularly for our pre-school as the main user of the hall. We also replaced the curtains with blinds.

The vicarage needed a new boiler which was fitted in February, and we have had improvements made to the stairs which were considered unsafe by the Diocese. The old fete store in the Church carpark was demolished by the Diocese and we have ordered a new fete store/mower garage which will be erected in 2025.

Eric Barnfield, Briony Allen

Health & Safety

Inspections of the Church and other building were carried out on the 4th March and 27th July 2024, and found the cleanliness to be of a good standard. Rooms were clean and tidy and the appliances were all in date for PAT testing. I replaced two lamps that were dimming. The fire appliances were all present and in date. Inspections carried out on the 9th November and 1st March 2025 discovered that the driveway lighting approaching the Vicarage was not working. Keens were contacted and subsequently repairs made.



I am pleased that we have only had one minor incident recorded in the accident book for the last year.

Eric Barnfield

Data Protection (GDPR)

I am pleased to report that there have been no GDPR or DPA issues raised this year.

We are in the process of requesting permission from the parishioners for the church to hold their contact details. This will be done initially online via the new 'ChurchSuite' software that was been installed last year. Once this has been done, we will review the old list and contact anyone who has not given permission via email and post.

David Pooley

Job Squad

Jan and Ian Coward, who have headed up and organised Job Squad for many years, have had to take a step back for health reasons. We miss seeing them regularly, but hope they will dip in and out as they can, and are very grateful for all their effort, time and dedication which has kept the churchyard in good order over many years, and established the tradition of coffee and buns!

Job Squad continues meet about every three weeks and it does a remarkable job despite the small team and our increasing ages. This is owed in part to members of the team that come along during the week and spend an hour or so doing a bit extra. We are also grateful to Allie Timms, who though not a church member loves the peace and sanctuary of the churchyard, and is a whizz with lawnmowers, trimmers, hedge trimmers and leaf blowers. She has taken on responsibility for keeping the shed tidy, writing operation instructions and providing petrol and two-stroke. John Coombes has worked tirelessly to keep the war graves trim, and singlehandedly cleared paths through the long grass for the children from Crookham Infants School to come and place crosses on the graves all around the church on 11th Nov, an experience teachers and pupils alike appreciated.

There was a good display of wild flowers in the summer. There were also toads hiding in some of the tall grass around the graves. There were not so many butterflies this year, but meadow browns and the occasional small tortoiseshell were in evidence, plus a small blue butterfly or two, we wait to see if there are more next year to get an identification! Mining bees built a colony around the flag pole in the bare sandy soil and were very busy in and out of their nests; they are not aggressive, so welcome visitors. There are areas in the churchyard where coarse grass is dominating, and brambles have taken a hold, swamping the graves, so these areas will be kept mowed this year to allow finer grasses and flowers to come through. Finally we are waiting to see if any orchids appear from the seeds Sarah Smith planted, which were donated by an orchid conservation group.

Briony Allen

Administration

The church requires a wide range of administration tasks to function smoothly, not just during normal working hours but also sometimes weekends and from home when required. Until May 2024 the office had one administrator, Jenny Baker, but when we moved into vacancy in June it was decided additional hours were required. Ruth Rose joined the team to help with the increased workload and also to provide holiday cover.



Jenny works Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and at weekends when events are taking place, while Ruth works Monday and Friday mornings on a flexible hours basis. The office is open during from 11am-1pm, providing a welcoming place to those requiring administration assistance and information.

Key responsibilities are summarised here:

- Phone calls, emails and in-person enquiries.
- Production of the service sheets for the 9am and 11am services, plus special services such as at Christmas and Easter. Also sending these in advance to presiding clergy.
- Ordering of items such as stationery, office supplies, items for church services, and general supplies.
- Organisation and liaison for weddings, funerals, interments and baptisms.
- Parish Magazine distribution, co-ordination, printing and subscriptions.
- Fire alarm testing.
- Venue hire (bookings, documentation and access).
- Printer and office equipment management.
- Parish returns.
- Venue hire bookings and documents.
- Invoices for hall hire, funerals, interments, weddings, monuments and memorial services.
- Assisting with the co-ordinating and promoting events.
- Liaising with Blucando for support of the church IT systems.
- Using ChurchSuite, a new systems for contact information, the parish diary and venue bookings.
- PCC meetings minutes.
- Numerous ad hoc tasks.
- Co-ordinating and briefing the cleaner.

Jenny Baker

15. Worship

Bell Ringers

The Christ Church Crookham Handbell Ringers continue to enjoy meeting once a week to practise our change ringing and our tunes.

We continue to ring for a Sunday Service most months, and last year also enjoyed playing carols before the start of the Carol Service. Last May, Ros Fox arranged for us to play a few extra changes in addition to a hymn tune to mark Bell Sunday.

Local groups sometimes ask us to ring for them, and these can be old favourites or Christmas carols, depending on the time of year. We have played for Bourley Grange, Fleet Hall Care Home and Basingbourne Road Baptist Church, in addition to our own Pre-School.

We also offer to play for weddings, when we do change ringing as the bride and groom leaves the church. Folk who have taken advantage of our offer are always grateful, and we are looking forward to playing for a wedding here in October.

Sometimes we are given a donation for Christ Church when we play away which we gratefully accept.

Diana & Peter White



Church Choir

The choir has continued to lead the singing during the 9am Eucharist service on the second and fourth Sundays each month, and also a number of weddings and funerals. Due to other commitments, rehearsals are generally only possible immediately before the Sunday service. The exception being the preparation of anthems for both Easter Sunday and the Christmas carol service. We were especially delighted to welcome Malcom Hicks to play the organ for us at the carol service which was very enjoyable and successful.

In the past 12 months we have seen a number of changes. Ros and Kevin have kindly provided recorded music to support us, and the congregation, during the services. This presents its own challenges as the available recordings are rarely identical to the music/words in our hymn book, but it's definitely a big step forward.

Another significant development is having Matt Stapleton playing the organ on occasional Sundays. The choir is so pleased to sing with him that we shall be flexible on the Sundays we sing to tie in with his availability.

Martin Dakin, Choir Leader

Flowers

The flower team has continued to enjoy providing flower arrangements for regular services & special occasions in Church. We remain a team of fourteen, but always welcome for more to join us.

For the festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas we all meet together in the Church on the Saturday before to decorate it. There is always coffee, cake & plenty of chatter.

We provided some lovely Christmas arrangements for the Church Christmas Fair, held a Christmas wreath workshop and a Christmas table arrangement workshop, all of which raised considerable funds for the Church.

Thank you to my team for all the time & effort they put into making the flower arrangements. It really is appreciated. We look forward to a flowery year ahead in 2025!

Angela Clarke

Live Streaming

In 2024 we live-streamed 22 Sunday 9am services, following the pattern of 2nd and 4th Sundays, plus services at Easter and Christmas. Generally there are only few 'live' views, but after a day or two the figure usually increases to over 20. The Christmas Midnight Service had around 40 views. We also live-streamed two funeral services including that of Les Knipe.

The laptop, audio mixer, cameras and cables are beginning to show wear-and-tear since the equipment has to be setup every time. It will be necessary at some point soon to decide whether a permanent system should be installed or we stop live-streaming.

We continue to use a second camera using a mobile phone as a 'droid-cam'. We continue to create a document containing the order of service, readings and hymns for displaying alongside the camera view.

My thanks to Mike Gibbons for his support as an additional live-streaming operator.

Kevin Fox



Music Group

The Music Group has continued to provide live accompaniment for the 11am service on the third Sunday in the month, and has also played for the two Christingle/Crib services on Christmas Eve. Despite lower numbers of players available on some occasions, we have kept the tradition of live music at the Family Service going throughout the year.

As intended, the number of new hymns has been reduced so as to consolidate our knowledge of the ones introduced last year. Our singing group continues to provide a strong lead in services.

My thanks go to all the players and singers who contribute to our worship.

Ros Fox

Sacristans

The Church Wardens and Sacristans continue to work together to ensure the church services run smoothly. We look forward to working with our new vicar and continuing to support worship at Christ Church, however, we are in need of additional people to join our team. Please consider volunteering to help for this important role.

I would like to thank all who have helped in the past year.

Pam Selwood

Cake Church

Cake Church is an informal gathering for families with children at primary school. We meet on the second Sunday of each month at 4:30 pm in the Vestry Hall, with around a dozen adults and ten children attending. Each session starts with food, folk bringing a contribution of something sweet or savoury, and then a Bible story while everyone is quiet as they eat! We then have activities linked to the theme which include craft of various types.

The theme for the sessions usually comes from the season: in June we made medals for Father's Day, in September we celebrated Harvest by making apple crumble and in November we thought about the people who have died or been injured in wars to protect us. The craft for November was making our own soldier silhouettes, similar to the silhouettes we see around the town near to Remembrance Day.

Sometimes the theme is obvious: in December we thought about the messages angels gave to people when Jesus was born, and in January we looked at the visit of the wise men to Jesus. For other months, the theme is less obvious; in February, inspired by Valentine's Day, we looked at what Jesus said when people asked him which was the most important commandment. On both occasions he said that people should love God and love each other, so we made cards with the words "Love God and love each other" in a heart shape, decorated with LED lights.

I am very grateful to Sue, Marion, Briony and Katherine who make the sessions possible, and to Laura for helping with the Bible story.

Please pass on an invitation to Cake Church to anyone who might be interested. It's great fun, includes something thought-provoking from the Bible, and brings people together. And, of course, it includes cake!

Mike Gibbons



16. Fellowship

Coffee & Conversation

We continue to meet most Thursdays in the Lefroy Room from 10 am for an hour and half of chatting and laughter and it is heart-warming to see friends spending time being able to support each other in a relaxed environment. The choice of biscuits has widened and on special occasions we have been known to indulge in birthday cake. Some days ladies have brought along crafts or magazines to share, one lady brought in a fabulous cross stitch of a dolls house which sparked all sorts of memories for many of us. Another faithful coffee drinker brings her knitting which again acts as a helpful conversation starter for some of the quieter people, as do the wonderful quilted wall hangings so generously designed and created by Sarah Smith and her sewing group.

Following a successful visit to the Arts Festival in the autumn we now welcome visitors from Freelands Croft Nursing Home once a month. It is a privilege and delight to serve members of our community in an accessible and gentle way.

Do bring your mug from home and come and join the fun.

Katherine Gibbons, Pam Selwood, Norma Inglis

Coffee Drop

Coffee Drop is now an established part of the Wednesday morning routine for many of the pre-school children and their parents. Whilst most of the families come in via the South door after dropping children at school, some of the earlier arrivals have learnt that once the North door grill is open I am in church and happy to welcome them. The children enjoy helping set up the teddy bears picnics or looking for 'their number' in the hymn number box if I don't move it in time! Tea and coffee is always available but generally the parents want a listening ear before going on to work or back home for breakfast.

Twice a year I join the children in pre-school as they share their toys with their parents. It is lovely to support the pre-school staff and has been wonderful to see the confidence of the parents and children grow as they enjoy the relaxed space and beauty of Christ Church on Wednesday mornings.

Katherine Gibbons

Face to Faith

Face to Faith is a relaxed gathering that meets for mutual support and encouragement. We look at various passages from the Bible and see how they inform, challenge and help us. Over the past year we have thought about Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, how our faith lifts us up, and how our church liturgy uses verses from the Bible. We also looked in detail at a chapter from Isaiah, admiring the beauty of its poetry and its startling relevance, and finally in July we went on a pilgrimage around the church. The evenings are fun as well as thought-provoking, and we are delighted to welcome friends from other churches amongst the six to ten people who attend.

Face to Faith meets every fortnight on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm in the Vestry Hall. All are welcome, and each evening is complete in itself so folk are welcome to come along for a single evening. We hope to welcome you to Face to Faith soon – please contact me if you would like to be added to the email invitation list.

Mike Gibbons



Pastoral Care

This past year there has been an increasing need to support our church members by visiting, phoning, giving lifts etc. Those that are able to offer help on a regular basis are very few, but we have kept a presence and a listening ear and are grateful to the network of church members and friends who keep in touch and support one another.

The focal point of the group is Coffee and Conversation, following the Thursday morning Prayer Circle which is open to all. Requests for prayer are welcomed. Events such as plant sales, the Arts Festival, the Memorial Service and Christmas services have continued to provide opportunities for welcoming visitors and having conversations.

Marion Foreman

17. Community

Christian Aid

It has been an exciting year as representative for Christian Aid on behalf of Christ Church Crookham. I attend planning meetings regularly with other church representatives, currently there are no representatives from either of the Baptist Churches in Fleet so I act as liaison with those churches keeping them abreast of events.

It was my pleasure to invite Anitha Santharaj, the then newly appointed, Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer to visit Christ Church on the Sunday 12th May 2024. She was able to deliver an interesting summary of the work of Christian Aid, informing us of the huge numbers of people they are able to reach out to individually and as a partner charity. Anitha was able to present to both services and enjoyed a time of fellowship over coffee. Fleet and Church Crookham raised £3,700 during that Christian Aid Week. The annual plant sale at P&J raised further funds.

The Fleet Rock Orchestra kindly agreed to put on a concert on 30th November. This was generously hosted by Elvetham Heath Church with Baptist church members servicing the refreshments. We have to thank all those parties for giving of their time, premises and refreshments all free of charge, thus adding to the total sum raised of £3,470.

The Christmas Carol concert was hosted by P&J and Graham Hix kindly gave his time, talent and arranged for guest singers to make the annual concert a pleasant informal afternoon of singing interspersed with entertaining poems selected by the Christian Aid team, the retiring offering took over £1,000.

As a community Fleet and Church Crookham churches raised an amazing sum of £9,831 for the work of Christian Aid in 2024. The Rock Orchestra have chosen to support another charity this year so we do not expect to reach such a sum in 2025 but would ask that all support the Christian Aid events planned as we continue to see the amazing work Christian Aid continue to do.

Dates for your diary: 17th May, Plant Sale at St Philips & St James, 30th November, Christmas Carol Concert at St Philips & St James. 2025 is the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid this year so the balloons will be out!

Mel Trundle



Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

The mission and outreach work of the Christ Church Christians Against Poverty (CAP) team has continued in 2024. As well as the core Cooking and Money coaching workshops, we have provided the Feed a child parcels and have spent a lot of time networking.

Networking

Throughout the year we have had to opportunity to attend community events to promote our CAP activities at Christ Church (eg at Crookham Park community centre) and we have been invited to be part of the Hampshire Food Alliance which is an initiative from Hampshire County Council to reduce food poverty. We continue to advertise the workshops through many sources, and we have gained interest following adverts in the local Round and About magazine. Every six weeks we report to the Christians Together projects team to share our activities and learn from Foodbank and Food pantry.

Feed a Child

In 2024 we ran the Feed a Child programme as part of our wider service to the community. We support three schools associated with the church, Crookham Infants, Crookham Juniors and Tweseldown Infants, providing food parcels to families whose children receive free school meals. We sourced, bought, packed and delivered food bags to the schools for 48 families and 118 Children helping with the additional costs of an extra meal a day through the school holidays.

Cook Well for Less workshops

These are the most popular outreach activity, and six were held in the past year and we cooked for 35 people and lots of kids! As we network with other community-based organisations in the area referrals to the workshops are from multiple sources. The workshops are held in Vestry Hall and are for people from all walks of life who want to gain skills cooking budget friendly tasty and nutritious meals from scratch, giving confidence to folks struggling with a tight budget and by learning a new skill the workshops help improve well being too.

Then we all get together to eat the meal, which provides companionship and gives attendees a chance to bond. It has been joyous to welcome people to the Church, and we invite them to other community events taking place at the church for example Christmas fete and Pancake tea, one of our attendees has also attended church services and is getting to know God.

Money Coaching

Another activity we provide is the provision of CAP Money Coaching sessions, where we have met 8 learners. One course was in person at Crookham Park Community centre at the start of the year, and we trialled an online course which proved popular with 6 attendees.

Stretch the budget

We trialled another session in the year to combine elements from both the CAP Money and Life Skills programmes. These are informal daytime drop-in sessions and it's a place for folks to sit unburden and share and learn some ideas on spending less and living well – and for us it's a place to build hope. Two drop-in sessions were held in May at Christ Church with two attendees.

Our work is achieved due to a great team of volunteers. We praise God for His guidance and open our hands and hearts to follow His lead to provide community workshops in 2025.

Jan Drummond



Fleet and Crookham Churches Together in Schools (FACCTS)

Christ Church supports the work of Fleet and Crookham Churches Together in Schools, working with the FACCTS team of 4 and volunteers from the 11 other churches in Fleet.

Mike Gibbons is one of the directors of FACCTS. Mike helps to deliver the Outdoor Club at Courtmoor School. During term time, a small team goes from Christ Church to take an 'Open the Book' Bible story into Crookham Infants School. Volunteers from Christ Church occasionally help with other activities such as the Crookham Junior School Lunch Club, Reflection Spaces in the junior schools in Fleet and Church Crookham and the Nativity scenes at the Fleet Christmas Festivities. Christ Church hosts the FACCTS Christmas and Easter Presentations to Crookham Junior School's Year 6.

It is gratifying that children from the local schools are brought into Christ Church and feel at ease here. They are happy to come back bringing their parents to see the church or to attend a service.

Marion Foreman

Events

The Events team co-ordinates the calendar of events throughout the year. Events for the year included:

- Gift your gift table top sale
- Plant sales
- Arts festival
- A quiz
- Graham Hix concert
- Autumn and Christmas fayres
- Christmas wreath making

The Arts Festival, run by Andrew Munnings and Heather Bailey, was a great success again. This is the third year the event has taken place and was a great community event. Huge thanks again to all who helped.

Communications/Publicity

We inform our community about church services and events in a wide variety of ways:

- Notice boards (inside and outside).
- Leaflets.
- Notices in the weekly sheet and service booklet.
- Parish Magazine. This is available either as a traditionally printed booklet or as an emailed PDF document. In 2024 around 110 regularly received the magazine by email, and about 50 as a printed book. Thanks to the team of magazine editors for putting each edition together, and to all the contributors, who together make the magazine an interesting and informative publication.
- Website. On average this has about 20 visits per day but with over 100 around the Arts Festival and at Christmas. The church administration team now uses the software system "ChurchSuite" for all calendar entries including events and bookings. The website displays church services and the next six 'featured' events with the information automatically coming from ChurchSuite. The



website has information about the PCC, church groups, a daily prayer cycle, links to our on-line streamed services, links for online donations and a 'members' area showing rotas, documentation and APCM forms.

- Facebook. Our Facebook Group "Christ Church Crookham" has over 240 members, and is used regularly to inform of services, specific events and special notices. Any group member is able to make postings. We have started to use our Facebook Page "Christ Church Church Crookham".

The PCC have decided to rearrange the area inside the north door once a suitable table has been acquired. This will mean leaflets, notices and other materials will all be in one place.

Our thanks go to everyone involved in the communication of all aspects of our church.

Kevin Fox

18. Children & Youth

Little Bells

There has been a big change in 2024 with Sarah Griffiths moving away. She built up the Little Bells with a lot of time, effort and imagination. Her help and advice on all things toddler and baby were a help to many who came along. We are so grateful to her for keeping it running through the first months of vacancy, and dropping in to support the group and see old friends whenever she is working in the area. Angela Clarke is now helping when she can, and parents are very good at helping pack away, ably 'assisted' by the children.

The group underwent a drop in numbers after the summer break, as many of the children moved up to school. The timing of the group was extended to 2.30 as it allows mums to stay on until they needed to pick up children from school. Little Bells has a regular core of five or six adults, who have formed a friendly supportive group of mums, childminders and the occasional dad or grandparent. They appreciate the sense of community, with some opting to place children in the church Pre-School and Crookham Infant School. We haven't done art and craft since the summer as the new cohort of toddlers are too young, however, we did have a Christmas Party on the last day of term which was good fun, with lots of food, and presents for all.

Briony Allen

JAM and Jelly (Jesus And Me & Jam not yet set)

The age group for the year has been between two months and 16 years old. The older children are now part of the helpers team, which is enabling us to have 1-1 help for the younger children.

In 2024 we held our Pancake tea, which around 14 children attended. In December we were able to do the Nativity in a slightly different way. For the first time in several years the children are predominantly at the age where they have the confidence to read the Nativity script themselves. So five confident children read the Nativity play whilst also acting out certain scenes and we had the two younger children in the supporting roles of shepherds and Baby Jesus.

In future we hope that children will continue to join in and with a greater cross-over between the 9 and 11 o'clock services.

Laura Roberts



Crookham CE Aided Infant School

The past 18 months has been a time of change for the school, with a period of headteacher absence and interim leadership arrangements. Despite the time of change, the school secured a very positive Ofsted inspection in February 2024. I was invited to join the school as interim Headteacher for the summer term 2024 and from the moment I entered the school, I could feel the nurturing ethos through the warm welcome of the staff, children, parents and governors. As a result, I applied for the permanent headship and was delighted to be appointed to the role. Later in the summer term 2024, Mrs Cathy Garvey was appointed as Deputy Headteacher. Mrs Garvey and I feel privileged to be leading the school on the next phase of its journey. We are supported by a committed team of governors, led by the Chair of Governors, Mrs. Marianne Smallman.

We are in the process of seeking a fresh expression of our school vision, to reflect the current needs and context of the school. Children, parents, staff and children have been involved in the process and we have identified a very fitting parable to form the theological roots for our vision: the parable of the mustard seed. This parable is an ideal metaphor for the infant-aged children we serve. It recognises that great things can grow from tiny seeds and that with the love and encouragement of expert gardeners (the nurturing, skilled staff team), children can grow and flourish in every way. Just like the kingdom of heaven described by Jesus in the parable, Crookham Infant school is a place where everyone is welcome; where children can feel safe, loved and can grow in every way. We look forward to sharing our full vision statement with our community over the coming weeks, via our new school website <https://www.crookhaminfants.co.uk/>.

The school and wider community play such an important part in the life of the school and we thank everyone involved in this work. The Open the Book team from Christ Church and FACCTS visit us fortnightly to present Bible stories to the children, in a way which brings so much fun and joy to the children. There are always a few children who are selected to become part of the story and children from across the school really look forward to these special times. Our FOCIS (Friends of Crookham Infant School) team bring so much to the school through organising enrichment events and funding new resources. Last year FOCIS funded our new trim trail equipment, which the children love using everyday. This year, they have funded our new school library: a magical enchanted wood including an indoor reading tree!

It really is a very exciting time for our school. We look forward to forging even stronger links with the church through their current team, and also with the new vicar once appointed. Thank you to everyone involved in this really important work.

Hannah Inglis, Headteacher