

The Parochial Church Council
of the
Ecclesiastical Parish
of
St. Leonard's Lexden
Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
for the year ending 31st December 2023
Priest in Charge
The Rev'd Matthew Simpkins,
2 Wroxham Close,
Colchester,
CO3 3RQ
Parish Office
St Leonard's Church,
Lexden Road,
Colchester,
CO3 4BL
Registered Charity number 1128302

Administrative information

The parish of St Leonard's, Lexden is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford, within the Church of England. The correspondence address is St Leonard's Church, Lexden Road, Colchester, CO3 4BL. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956 and Church Representation Rules 2017 and 2020). The charity number is 1128302.

Aims and purposes

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Leonard's, Lexden is responsible for co-operating with the Priest in Charge, the Rev'd Matthew Simpkins, in promoting within the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church. The PCC is specifically responsible for the church building and the church hall and manages the day to day life of the buildings and congregation. The PCC employs a Parish Administrator. The parish serves a population of approximately 6,445 and is mainly residential with three care/nursing homes, three schools, and some retail outlets.

Objectives and activities

We put Jesus at the centre of everything that we do; we try to be a force for good in the world and we believe nothing is impossible with God. Our vision is to serve the community, to proclaim and teach the Gospel through worship and prayer and to be a welcoming and inclusive church where anyone and everyone can feel welcome and accepted. This PCC is committed to living out our faith, both corporately and individually, in ways which serve the local community practically and pastorally.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Mission and evangelism

We believe that every member of St Leonard's contributes to mission and evangelism, and we nurture and support them in this. Church members continue to be actively involved across Lexden and Colchester through their everyday lives as well as initiatives such as Colchester CMA Debt Centre (CAP), Colchester Foodbank, Dr Bike, St Cedd's Community Café and school governance.

The PCC is committed to supporting mission to young people in the parish. We have an active Junior Church at each Parish Eucharist. All-Age Eucharists usually happened on the first Sunday of the month with young people taking roles in those services. Messy Church continues to expand. Many of those attending this 'fresh expression' are not regular members of other congregations and it is an excellent bridge to our Baby & Toddler Group, schools work and Brick Club. Messy Church forms a significant part of our outreach and remains our second best attended regular act of worship with an average of 23 children and 25 adults in the autumn and winter of 2023.

The Baby & Toddler group continued to flourish during this year. Approximately 70 carers, babies and toddlers attended each week. This continues to be popular with the community of Lexden and beyond, and is of substantial missional importance, attracting many from beyond the church. This group holds services at major festivals and also connects people with our other activities such as Messy Church and Junior Church.

The ministry team is actively involved in all three of the parish's schools through assemblies, visits, and carol services. Our outreach Brick Club continues – on Tuesdays during the school holidays and proved an excellent way of encouraging the non-churched to spend time in our building and among our community.

Our buildings were used by local community groups for gatherings, rehearsals, concerts, carol services and other events in 2023. We hosted 6 regular groups, which formed a key

aspect of our community engagement. In partnership with the ecumenical Colchester CMA Debt Centre, a number of CAP Life Skills courses continued across the town. The Bereavement Support Group continues to offer assistance to those living with grief. St Leonard's offered active support to the neighbouring Parish of Shrub End in continuing the St Cedd's Community Café – a community hub which meets twice a month. This includes the Dr Bike initiative, run by members of St Leonard's.

The Summer Fete took place as usual and was well received by the community, as well as raising funds. Our usual Remembrance Day service and Act of Remembrance was well attended.

Men's and Women's breakfasts continued to attract people from the congregation and beyond.

Other charitable service to the wider community involved church members in, and fundraising for, charities including Colchester Food Bank, Colchester CMA Debt Centre, Christian Aid, OMF international, Colchester YES, CYO, Colchester Refugee Action, English for Women, the Next Chapter, the Children's Society, Sheepfold Centre, Essex Integration, Beacon House, Colchester Korban Project, Operation Christmas Child, MacMillan Cancer Care, and the New Hythe. The PCC aims to give a proportion of income to charities, donating approximately £11,021 during 2023.

St Leonard's also reached out through during 2023 using social media including such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and podcasts.

Worship and prayer

Our pattern of worship is shaped by the Priest in Charge in consultation with the PCC. We are committed to enabling worship which resources those who share in it to live lives of faithfulness and service, is welcoming and attractive to newcomers, and helps to make God known to those on the fringes of faith. We strive to offer a variety of inclusive, thoughtful and high-quality services. St Leonard's worship centres on the Eucharist, and we aim to provide engaging and relevant preaching and maintain a living tradition of choral music. The music group continues alongside the choir at our All Age Services and proved a valuable way of engaging children in our worship.

Our worship draws people from beyond the parish. Our main act of worship is the Parish Eucharist each Sunday, with 8am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion twice a month, and Evensong and a Eucharist for Wholeness and Healing using once a month in the evening. On the first Sunday of the month there was usually an All-Age Eucharist. Eucharists also held at 10am on Wednesday, and at 8am on Thursday. The main Sunday morning service continued to be broadcast through Facebook.

Our average Sunday attendance was 71 adults with 4 children and young people. This does not take into account the number joining us online. By the end of 2022, usually 4 or 5 people would watch the service live online, with many more being engaged after the service. During 2023 there were 9 baptisms, 3 weddings and 1 marriage blessing, and 17 funerals were conducted either in church or at local crematoria. The provision of baptisms, weddings and funerals for the parish and community remains a critical aspect of the parish's mission, with new relationships being established and nurtured. Many of those families who approach us for baptism are not yet regular members of our congregations and we are delighted to be able to respond to their desire to bring new family members into the Church. We offer opportunity for further nurturing into the St Leonard's community through our many other activities and fresh expressions including Baby & Toddler Group, Messy Church, Brick Club, and our annual Commemoration of the Departed.

On the 7th May we held a Coronation Parade Service followed by lunch in the hall.

The Rev'd Viv Mendham, Rev'd Jacque Messinger and the Rev'd Maggie Whiteman continued to serve the parish as Associate Priests. Retired priest with PTO, the Rev'd Canon Hugh Beavan, and Readers Emerita with PTO, Rosemary Elden, continued to contribute to ministry at St Leonard's. Other visiting clergy and ministers, including the Rev'd Canon Martin Wood and Phyll Wood, made an important contribution during 2023.

Stewardship

Stewardships is used by the congregation to make donations to the church.

Pastoral Care

Much pastoral care within our congregation is informal and mutual. Our team of Pastoral Visitors supports a growing number of individuals in need or with mobility difficulties, and has been increasingly involved in offering home communion, and- with others- in visits and monthly services in our four local care homes. Regular pastoral visiting was usually organised by the Pastoral Co-ordinator.

Buildings

The year of 2023 was an interesting one with a water leak under the floor in the rear nave resulting in the whole of the wooden flooring needing to be taken up. The hall continues to be used most days of the week, which is very satisfying. All the regular maintenance has been carried out and the underfloor heating to the annex is currently under investigation.

Deanery Synod

Deanery Synod met three times during the year. St Leonard's was represented on Deanery Synod by three lay representatives of our allocation of four lay representatives, and by three clergy representatives.

Safeguarding

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church. At St Leonards we are committed to promoting a safer environment and culture, and supporting all those who come into our church. We ensure there is support for any member of the church who has particular responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults. The Parish Safeguarding policy is reviewed regularly and our Parish Safeguarding Officer ensures all those who need to have DBS checks are up to date, and that training for those who require this for their role is arranged. Safeguarding information is displayed in the hall and the church, and a safeguarding folder including the Parish

Safeguarding Policy, the *Promoting a Safer Church* booklet and the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook* is available. As the above measures and ongoing practices and policies make clear, the PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Financial review

The accounts this year show income of £153,974 compared to a lower £133,351 from last year. This increase is due to increased "income from activities for generating funds" (church hall lettings and summer fete/Christmas fayre) better returns from investments and an insurance claim. Claiming Gift Aid on donations continues to provide a significant income, in 2023 amounting to £17,302.

Expenditure for 2023 was £197,446 up from £172,410 in the previous year. The increased expenditure comprised church hall running costs and making repairs to the church nave flooring.

Additional expenditure also included PCC donations to charities of £11,021.

On 31 December 2023, the principle balances were £217,487 (excluding the £684,319 value of the church hall) and £221,483 in the restricted and endowment funds. This year the accounts show a deficit balance of £33,354.

Structure, Governance and Management

PCC members are elected and appointed according to the Church Representation Rules 2017. All members of our congregations are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and to participate in the annual elections. As of 31st December 2023 there were 202 names on the Electoral Roll. PCC members are responsible for all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including decisions about its finances. The PCC met six times in 2023. The PCC has a number of subcommittees (Standing Committee, Finance, Fabric and Hall, and Children and Young Peoples' Group) which report to the main Council for decisions and approval of major issues. The Priest in Charge and Churchwardens are ex-officio members of all committees.

During the year ending 31st December 2023 the following served on the Parochial Church Council:

Ex-Officio Members

Priest in Charge The Rev'd Matthew Simpkins

Associate Priest The Rev'd Viv Mendham

Assistant Curate The Rev'd Jacquie Messinger

Assistant Curate The Rev'd Maggie Whiteman

Churchwardens David Watkins

Esther Hepstonstall (Until January 2023)

Nick Allston (from April 2023)

Parish Safeguarding Officer Mrs Julie Hinchcliffe

Deputy Parish Safeguarding Officer Mrs Amanda Allston

Treasury Team Clare Cleverdon

David Burrows

Adrian Steward

Representatives to Deanery Synod Mrs Margaret Smith (Until April)

Mrs Maureen Watkins

Mrs Julie Hinchcliffe

Mrs Linda Firth

Elected members:

Judith Steele (Secretary)

Chris Newton (Until April)

Yvonne Romain

Nick Allston (until April)

Mike Firth

Janice Cocks (until April)

The Standing Committee members are: Priest in Charge, Churchwardens, PCC Treasurer and Secretary.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	General Fund	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022
Incoming resources						
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	£109,567	£1,000		£110,567	£116,296
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	£13,244			£13,244	£10,861
<i>Income from Investments</i>	2c	£13,582			£13,582	£3,141
<i>Church Activities</i>	2d	£4,046			£4,046	£3,053
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	£12,534			£12,534	
Total incoming resources		£152,974	£1,000		£153,974	£133,351
Resources expended						
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	£38			£38	£156
<i>Fund raising trading costs</i>	3b	£9,440			£9,440	£5,943
<i>Church Activities</i>	3c	£151,641	£35,257		£186,898	£165,248
<i>Governance costs</i>		£1,070			£1,070	£1,063
Total resources expended		£162,189	£35,257		£197,446	£172,410
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		-£9,215	-£34,257		-£43,472	-£39,059
Revaluation gains/losses on investments		£6,596	£3,522		£10,118	-£5,853
Net movement in funds		-£2,619	-£30,736		-£33,354	-£44,912
<i>Transfers between funds</i>	8					
Net movement in funds		-£2,619	-£30,736		-£33,354	-£44,912
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		£904,425	£241,927	£10,292	£1,156,644	£1,201,555
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023		£901,806	£211,191	£10,292	£1,123,289	£1,156,644

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5	£684,319	£684,319
Investments	6	£117,660	£107,542
Total fixed assets		<u>£801,979</u>	£791,861
Current assets			
Short term deposits		£308,786	£335,253
Debtors (Accounts Receivable)		£6,047	£5,012
Cash at bank and in hand		£12,689	£28,928
		<u>£327,522</u>	£369,193
Liabilities			
Agency collections		£1	£1
Accounts payable		£6,211	£4,410
Total Liabilities		<u>£6,212</u>	£4,411
Total assets		£1,123,289	£1,156,644
Parish Funds			
Endowment funds	7		
	8	£10,292	£10,292
Restricted funds	8	£211,191	£241,927
Unrestricted funds	8	£901,806	£904,425
		<u>£1,123,289</u>	£1,156,644

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 14 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by

David Watkins
David Watkins, Deputy Chair, PCC

Clare Cleverdon

pp. The Revd Matt Simpkins
Chairman

Clare Cleverdon
Treasurer

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1. Accounting policies

a Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. 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 affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members.

b Parish funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Designated funds represent monies set aside by the PCC out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

Endowment funds are funds the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from the investment of the endowment may be used, either as restricted or unrestricted funds, depending on the purpose set out in the terms of the original endowment.

c Incoming resources

Planned giving, collections and donations 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. Dividends are accounted for when receivable, interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

d Resources expended

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation to the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

e Fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.96(2) of the Charities Act 1993.

Movable church furnishing held by the Rector and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected. For inalienable property acquired prior to 2003 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts. Subsequently all expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year in which they were incurred.

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

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

2 Income & Endowments

	General Fund	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	FUNDS 2023	FUNDS 2022
a Voluntary income					
Planned giving	£84,425			£84,425	£82,909
Collections at all services	£3,838			£3,838	£2,932
Sundry donations and appeals	£2,377	£1,000		£3,377	£2,029
Stewardship Cheques					
Other funds generated	£595			£595	£2,136
Income Tax recovered	£17,302			£17,302	£16,824
Legacies	£175			£175	£5,466
Non-recurring one-off grants	£855			£855	£4,000
	£109,567	£1,000		£110,567	£116,296
b Activities for generating funds					
Church Hall and Church rooms lettings	£6,339			£6,339	£7,018
Fundraising events	£6,906			£6,906	£3,842
	£13,244			£13,244	£10,861
c Investment income					
Dividends and Interest	£13,582			£13,582	£3,141
	£13,582			£13,582	£3,141
d Income from Church activities					
Wedding and funerals fees	£3,176			£3,176	£2,423
Parish magazine (sales)	£114			£114	
Toddler Group	£756			£756	£630
	£4,046			£4,046	£3,053
e Other incoming resources					
Insurance claims	£12,534			£12,534	
	£12,534			£12,534	
Total income & Endowments	£152,974	£1,000		£153,974	£133,351

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

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

3 Resources expended

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
a Costs of generating voluntary income					
Fees paid to fund raisers	£38			£38	£35
Stewardship costs					£121
	<u>£38</u>			<u>£38</u>	£156
b Fund raising trading costs					
Church Hall running costs	£9,059			£9,059	£5,747
Fund raising events:	£381			£381	£197
	<u>£9,440</u>			<u>£9,440</u>	£5,943
c Church activities					
Missionary and charitable giving:	£10,481			£10,481	£9,196
Overseas:					
Church Overseas					
Relief & Development agencies					£180
Home:					
Home missions					£548
Secular charities	£180			£180	
CAP Partnership	£360			£360	£360
Charities					
	<u>£11,021</u>			<u>£11,021</u>	£10,284
Ministry Costs:					
Diocesan Parish contribution	£97,020			£97,020	£104,932
Church running expenses and administration:	£33,407			£33,407	£31,613
Church fabric and maintenance	£4,945	£1,116		£6,061	£3,872
Upkeep of services	£4,660			£4,660	£6,462
Training and Education	£235			£235	
Mission & Outreach	£12			£12	£289
Parish magazine & bookstall					
Junior Church and Youth Ministry	£35			£35	£200
Toddler Group	£306			£306	£301
Church Major Repairs - Installation		£34,141		£34,141	£7,296
Governance	£1,070			£1,070	£1,063
Total resources expended	<u>£162,189</u>	<u>£35,257</u>		<u>£197,446</u>	<u>£172,410</u>

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

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

4 Staff costs

2023	2022
£	£
<u>£16,475</u>	<u>£14,390</u>

During the year the PCC made payments to a choir director, organists, Church Hall cleaner and parish administrator; all part time. These amounts are included in the charge for "Church running and administration". See Note 3c on Page 9

5 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Total Fixed Assets
	£	£
Cost or valuation		
At 1 January 2023	£684,319	£684,319
At 31 December 2023	<u>£684,319</u>	<u>£684,319</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2023	-	-
At 31 December 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net book amounts		
At 31 December 2023	<u>£684,319</u>	<u>£684,319</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>£684,319</u>	<u>£684,319</u>

The freehold land and buildings comprise the parish hall in Lexden Road, Colchester. For accounting purposes the historical cost of this property is unknown and was valued in March 2007 for insurance purposes at £684,319. The property has now been included in the accounts in order to comply with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006.

6 Investments

	CBF of C of E Investment Fund	Sir Percy Sanders Trust	Total Investments
	£	£	£
Market value 1 January 2023	£82,625	£24,918	£107,542
Gain (loss) on revaluation	£7,774	£2,344	£10,118
Market value 31 December 2023	<u>£90,398</u>	<u>£27,262</u>	<u>£117,660</u>

7 Parish Funds

Analysis of net assets by fund

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment Funds	Total funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets for Church use	£684,319			£684,319
Investment fixed assets	£71,068	£9,072	£10,292	£90,432
Current assets	£146,420	£202,119		£348,539
Total funds 31 December 2023	<u>£901,806</u>	<u>£211,191</u>	<u>£10,292</u>	<u>£1,123,289</u>

7a Current Assets - Debtors

Total debtors (Accounts receivable) £6,047

7b Liabilities - Agency accounts

£1

7c Liabilities - Creditors (Accounts payable)

£6,211

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST. LEONARD'S, LEXDEN

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

8 Statement of funds

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund					
General Fund	£206,454	£145,830	-£152,824	£6,596	£206,056
Designated funds					
Hall Building	£684,319				£684,319
Church Hall	£3,872	£6,274	-£9,059		£1,087
Choir Robes	£285				£285
Parish Magazine	£1,301	£114			£1,415
Toddler Group	£564	£756	-£306		£1,014
Former Lexden Sunday School	£7,631				£7,631
Restricted Fund					
Fabric Fund	£1,257	£1,000		£1,177	£3,434
NS&I Investment/ Papillon	£2,375				£2,375
ChurchWM - Bequest MB	£208,377		-£35,257		£173,120
Sir Percy Sanders Church	£12,459			£1,172	£13,631
Sir Percy Sanders C Yard	£12,459			£1,172	£13,631
Religious and other charities	£5,000				£5,000
Endowment Fund					
Fabric Endowment	£10,292				£10,292
Total funds	£1,156,644	£153,974	-£197,446	£10,118	£1,123,289

The Restricted Funds comprising the Fabric Fund, the Papillon Bequest and the Sir Percy Sanders Trust may only be expended on the specific object for which they are given.

The Endowment Fund is a permanent endowment which requires the income to be spent on the church fabric.

The Hall buildings have been separated from the General Fund to give a clearer indication of funds available for running the Parish.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Leonard's, Lexden

Independent Examiner's Report to the Members of St Leonard's PCC Lexden

Year Ended 31st December 2023

I report on the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I 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.

PEYTON TYLER MEARS
Chartered accountant
Middleborough House
16 Middleborough
Colchester
Essex CO1 1QT



27th March 2024.

Electoral Roll Report April 2024

Following the 2023 annual review, the number on roll was 206.

Five names have been deleted since the 2023 revision.

No new applications have been received since the 2023 revision.

The current number on roll, following the April 2024 review, is 201.

55% of those on the Electoral Roll live in the parish of St Leonard, Lexden.

Electoral Roll application forms and storage of information comply with requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. The 'notes' section of the application form includes details of permitted uses of personal data.

Applicants are given a choice of application formats: an accessible electronic form or the paper version.

Church

- The main Lights in the Nave had replacement LED bulbs.
- The external Safety lighting (in the wall) has been replaced.
- A water leak under the floor in the rear nave resulted in the whole of the wooden flooring being taken up, the area dried out and the corroded pipework replaced, a new floor was then laid, and ventilation grilles provided to ventilate the floor void. Most of the cost of this work was covered by insurers. The necessary Faculty requests were sought and approved, in accordance with Church regulations.
- There was an issue with Rodents entering the church and subsequently flies, all of which have been dealt with
- The water heaters serving the hand basins in the church toilets have been replaced.
- The Heating / hot waters boilers have been serviced; a problem was found regarding the underfloor heating to the annexe. and this is currently under investigation. The radiator in the vestry requires bleeding.
- The annual servicing of the organ, clock, roof alarm and cleaning of the gutters and rainwater pipes were all carried out.
- The annual inspection and testing of the fire alarm system, fire equipment and emergency lighting has been carried out. The smoke detector in the Shepherd Room was replaced.
- A new telephone receiver was purchased for the landline in the vestry.
- The electricity meter was upgraded to a smart meter.
- Roof & Rainwater pipe; South-West corner of Tower
 - Fee proposals have been received from 3 firms of Architects for replacing the nave roof lead parapet gutters and the rainwater pipe to the south-west corner of the tower. It was decided to extend the scope of works to cover the repair or demolition of the redundant chimney over the organ loft and repairs to the Lady Chapel roof where there is a leak. It is hoped that an Architect will be appointed in early 2024.
- Wall along Church Lane - local Councilors and council have been contacted regarding the state of the wall. The diocese's advice and the precedent is, that this a matter for the City Council as part of its care, as the church yard for St Leonard's is closed.

Church Hall

- The two fridges in the kitchen have been replaced.
- The Waste pipe to the basin in the accessible toilet was replaced.
- A leak in the hall was dealt with.
- Some of the entrance lobby panes of glass were replaced with Perspex following a break in.
- The Male toilet had some pipework replaced following a leak.

Deanery Synod Report for 2023 for St Leonard's APCM

Clergy representatives and Lay representatives from all the Colchester Deanery, meet three times a year, to discuss matters arising from Diocesan, and General Synod and the wider Diocesan issues. Also, for feedback to the diocese from Denery level.

Below is a short synopsis of the Deanery Synod Meetings held during 2023.

15th March 2023 – At St. Botolph's Church, St. Botolph's Street, Colchester, CO2

- Our speaker for this Synod was Karen Loring from Night Stop Essex, a charity run by Korban which aims to prevent homelessness in 16–24-year-old age group. Karen talked about the charity and the work that it does here in Colchester.

- This was also the last Synod meeting of the triennium and the last Synod Meeting that Canon Roger Ennals was to reside as Lay Chair, following his decision to step down after 15 years of service. Revd Erwin Lammens, Area Dean, extended Synod's thanks to Roger for his service, commitment, and friendship to the Deanery.

- A welcome was extended to our new Deanery Treasurer – Adrian Jones, whom Revd Erwin Lammens also thanked for agreeing to take on the role.

5th July 2023 – At St. Matthew's Church, Harwich Road Colchester

- Prior to the main Synod meeting an election for the new Lay Chair took place. Following a unanimous election Lynne Gettings was duly elected as the new Lay Chair for the Deanery of Colchester.

- DSPC members from the Houses of Laity and Clergy were elected by postal vote.

- The main Synod meeting then took place. Our speaker for this Synod was Beccy Hills, Diocesan Parish Giving Advisor for the Diocese of Chelmsford. Beccy spoke about her role and also gave an overview of the Parish Giving Scheme. Beccy also informed Synod that the Chelmsford Diocese are making a £1.25million investment in supporting the rollout and adoption of contactless financial giving by bank card, with the aim of having this in place in 2000 churches by the end of 2024.

12th October 2032 – St. Leonards Church, Lexden, Colchester, we hosted this and provided refreshments:

- Our speaker for this Synod was Revd Canon Pauline Scott who spoke about the Tendring Border Colchester Garden Community – a major new development which will be constructed in the area to the East of Colchester, between Colchester and Elmstead Market, comprising of between 7,500 and 9,000 homes. The aim of this new development would be carbon neutral with little or no facilities for the use of motorised vehicles. There was a general discussion following the talk, and Maureen Watkins pointed out that there appeared to be no facilities for less able people living in this new Echo Friendly Community.

- Following on from Revd Canon Pauline Scott's talk, there was a short introductory talk by Karen Clifton, the newly appointed Environmental Advocate for the Deanery of Colchester.

Safeguarding

Annual Report for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church. At St Leonards we are committed to promoting a safer environment and culture, and supporting all those who come into our church.

The Parish safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and revised, along with the contents of the Safeguarding Information Folders held in Church

Full Safeguarding Risk Assessments have been completed for all Activities during the year and duly followed, there have been no incidents reported from these activities.

DBS Checks

The Church of England recommends (in line with National recommendations) that everyone working with Children, Young People and Vulnerable adults, should have a DBS check completed every 3 years.

- In response to this the PSO and Deputy PSO maintain a record of all members of the church who are required to have this check and when the update is required, ensure that this is undertaken.
- All those requiring an update have been duly processed.

Confidential Declarations; during the year, the Church of England requested that all Confidential Declarations are renewed every three years, a revised format supplied by the church of England, was distributed to all members to comply with this request, these have all been completed and are held on file in the Parish Office.

Training;

- **Leadership Compressed Pathway;** at the beginning of the year, the PSO and Deputy PSO facilitated, a group session of this Online Zoom teaching, thus ensuring all members requiring this training completed it.
- **At the end of the year we can report that all members requiring training are up to date.**

Safer Recruiting

The PSO and DPSO working with the Priest in Charge, have ensured all staff have been safely recruited following the Church of England Recommendations , including two new recruits for working with children. All completed paperwork for this process is stored securely in the Parish Office in line with Data Protection Act recommendations.

Safeguarding information is displayed in the hall and the church, and a safeguarding folder including the Parish Safeguarding Policy, the *Promoting a Safer Church* booklet and the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook* is available.

As the above measures and ongoing practices and policies make clear, the PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure, to have regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults,

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual>