

Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)
Parish of Thetford
7.30 p.m. on Monday 28th April 2025 in St Cuthbert's Church

It will be assumed that the annual reports and accounts have been read in advance of the meeting.

- 1. Welcome, apologies and opening prayer**
- 2. Opening worship**
- 3. Minutes of the annual meetings of 2024 and matters arising**
- 4. Election of Churchwardens for the next year**
- 5. Electoral Roll report**
- 6. Elections and resolutions of the APCM:**
 - a) Election to Deanery Synod (2 people to serve for the remainder of the 2023-2026 triennium)**
 - b) Election to PCC (7 people)**
- 7. Rector's remarks**
- 8. Annual reports**

An opportunity to respond with questions, comments, encouragements and ideas. Please note that questions asked in advance are likely to receive a more considered answer on the evening.
- 9. Financial statements**

Please note that questions asked in advance are likely to receive a more considered answer on the evening.
- 10. Appointment of Independent Examiner**
- 11. Matters raised by the church membership**

An opportunity to raise questions, concerns, encouragements and ideas regarding the life of the church, and to request future PCC discussion of particular items.
- 12. Closing worship and prayer**

Parish of Thetford
Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024
Monday 29th April 2024 1930hrs @ St Cuthberts Church

In attendance: The Rev Dr Peter Herbert (**PH**), The Rev Tony Heywood (**TH**), The Rev Matt Houghton (**MH**), Mrs Sandra Phillips (**SP**), Mr & Mrs Mick and Karen Tobitt (**MT & KT**), Mr Gary & Mrs Louise Applin (**GA & LA**), Mrs Caroline Herbert (**CH**), Mrs Maggie Baldwin (**MB**), Miss Susie Bratby (**SB**), Mrs Jenny Bird (**JB**), Mr Josiah & Mrs Catherine Richardson (**JoR & CR**), Mr Jonathan and Mrs Steph Richardson (**JR & SR**), Mr Neil Glen (**NG**), Mr Keith & Mrs Sue Goldsmith (**KG & SG**), Dr David & Mrs Diana Galloway (**DG & DiG**), Mr Peter Thomson (**PT**), Mr Rod Back (**RB**).

Apologies: Mr David and Mrs Rachel Woods (**DW & RW**), Mr Colin and Mrs Dacia Orbell (**CO & DO**), Jean Rolph (**JR**), Helen Heywood (**HH**), Mrs Margaret Back (**MB**).

Minutes of last year's Annual Meetings: Proposed by **JR** and seconded by **TH** all for and none against.

Election of church wardens:

Sandra Phillips: Proposed by: Jennifer Bird, Seconded: by John Macpherson

Karen Tobitt: Proposed : Sue Goldsmith, Seconded: by Jean Barber

Electoral Roll report – verbal report: report from Colin Orbell, the Electoral Roll Officer, read by **PH**:

“At the time of the 2023 Annual Meetings, the number on Roll was 99. During the year 1 person (Pauline Bryant) has died and 4 people have enrolled. So the number on Roll is now 102.

I am aware that some people may not now consider themselves members of any of the churches in the Thetford Benefice, but none of these have informed me that they wish to come off Roll, so they are still included in the total of 102.

Next year, 2025 the Roll will have to be re-made. The existing one will be scrapped and everyone wishing to be on Roll will have to apply and fill in a fresh application form.”

PCC: Mick Tobitt proposed by **KG** and seconded by **DG**

Catherine Richardson proposed by **SR** and seconded by **CH**

Annual report (including statutory safeguarding statement):

- **Rector's report and St Cuthbert's (PH):** **PH** explained what the Benefice and Team Ministry means in the running of the church. **PH** read Ephesians 4: 11-13. **PH** thanked all present and those not present in all they do for the churches in our Benefice. **PH** went through the Rectors report and highlighted the weekend away as his highlight. **JR** did you want to make a comment on the church planting and rehabilitation programme? **PH** explained that more money has been available for sports ministry, but this needs to go through the PCC first before plans are made public.
- **St Cuthberts:** **PH** The Faculty for the next stage of the redevelopment project has now elapsed and we will need to go through a further faculty process. **DG**, what is happening with the wall where there is water damage, **PH** north wall water ingress Ashley our architect is going to visit in the next couple of weeks, South wall has an authorisation for list B work and **NG** has done some work making grant applications, National lottery no, 3 others have been asked 2 for meetings this month, 1 is awaiting for a decision, **NG** explained, **DG** asked if you were doing this on your own or as part of a group of people? **NG** no on my own, **PH** plea to those present if anybody offer to assist **NG**. **DG** does the church have a business plan? **PH** no we don't, and I haven't come across one in other churches. **DG** said perhaps the PCC should consider formulating a business plan moving forwards and perhaps adopting?

- **Cloverfield (MH): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Grace Church (TH): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none** **TH** explained about the academies trust and costs of people using their facilities.
- **PCC (GA): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Safeguarding (MB): CR** is there a deadline for people not doing there online training, **PH** there isn't at the moment, but it may come. **JR** is there a requirement of the charity commission to have done it, **PH** no there isn't. **CH** formal vote of thanks to **MB** for what she does.
- **Deanery Synod report (CH): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Fabric report (SP/KT): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Mission & charity giving (PH): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Sports Ministry (SB): PH** Any comments or thoughts, **none**
- **Café Cuthbert (Peter Thomson): PH** could you explain the financial status of the accounts **PT** did this, no corporation tax this year due to recent years statements, 5K net profit, spent on more equipment in the café, accounts not fully available **PT** not fully aware of the question so apologies **PH** we need to fully review. Gwyneth who is responsible for the Café, **PT** the PCC is responsible. **NG** the energy the café is using appears to be higher than the amount being paid **PT** we are going to speak with **PH** and discuss the amount to be paid in the future, **PT** I am convinced the profit is paid back to the PCC. **MB**, there isn't a regular payment to the PCC, **PH** yes there is monies coming back into the PCC. **JoR** what is the process of recruitment of Directors and what is the process the PCC is running the company under? **PT** PCC are given a name and then it is approved or not. **PT** we are guarded but are enthusiastic about the future of the café.
- **Financial report (including summary accounts) (KK/PH): PH** explained and went through questions from **RW**. **MB** no weddings and funerals payments **PH** yes correct, fees are paid into a separate account and is fed across to us these are done in lumps hence why there are large sums at different times. **DG** is there a need to have a treasurer **PH** yes there is without a doubt!!!! **JGomer** what are the plans for the pot of money received from the PCC from the café? **PH** no particular place for where the money goes but equipment wearing out would be a use. **DG** what are the plans with regards the parish share payments as this current level is a worry. **PH** the plan is to increase discipleships.

Appointment of independent examiners: PH propose ROBERT DABIN all present agreed.

Matters raised by the church membership: CR bring up energy costs at PCC.

Closing thoughts: song: I cast my mind to Calvary. End of meeting comments a thank you to all and closing prayer.

Meeting closed at 2120hrs.

Rector's Report

I look back on 2024 with gratitude to God for all that he has been doing in and through us, as we have sought to love God, grow together as disciples and reach out with the good news of Jesus. Please join me in giving thanks for all that was good last year and for all that we received from God's gracious hand.

Allow me also to express my sincere thanks to everyone across our parish and benefice who has poured so much time, energy, dedication and care into the mission and ministry of our churches in so many different ways. It truly is a team effort – so thank you.

Amongst the special events in 2024 were two very different but very inspiring film nights. First was the screening of *Against the Tide*, offering church members and guests alike a thought-provoking exploration of how the Christian faith intersects with modern science, on the one hand, and history and archaeology on the other. Then of course, with the Paris Olympics over the summer and the one hundredth anniversary of Eric Liddell's famous triumph at the 1924 Paris Olympics, we were treated to a showing of *Chariots of Fire*: not only great fun but also with an implicit challenge about what it means for us to put God first in every area of our lives.

Other special events included services to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day in June, and our United Service and picnic in July (even if the weather rather got the better of the latter). Of course, many important regular groups and activities continued apace: from Sunday and Wednesday services through children's, youth and family work, home groups, Café Cuthbert, enquirers' courses and outreach events like the Men's Breakfasts.

On the staffing front 2024 was, excitingly, a year of comings rather than goings. With funding for a year from the Diocese it was a great delight to welcome Josh Samuel onto the team as Associate Sports Minister to assist Susie as well as to develop new fitness ministries. As I write we are in the midst of raising funds to keep both of them on for another three years to continue the wonderful work that they do.

It has also been great to welcome Jonathan Richardson as our non-stipendiary curate. Whilst Jonathan and Steph have been members of the team for a few years, this is a new departure for Jonathan in ministry and indeed for them as a couple. We are very blessed to have Jonathan serving as an ordained minister with us in this way, on top of his 'day-job' as Children, Youth and Families Development Officer for the Diocese.

My huge thanks go to the staff team of Jonathan, Josh, Matt, Susie and Tony – and to their families – for their ceaseless, sacrificial and godly service for the sake of Christ, his people and his world.

As we look back on 2024 with great thanks to God, let us pray that he would continue his work in us and in our town, as expressed in our Team Vision Statement:

Loving God

Wholeheartedly loving, worshipping and following God

Growing Together

Growing together in our love and care for one another, and as disciples of Jesus who are rooted in the Bible and prayer

Reaching Out

Welcoming everybody as we serve our different communities with the good news of the Gospel through words and actions in the power of the Holy Spirit

Peter Herbert
March 2025

St Cuthbert's Church

Perhaps my single standout event in the life of St Cuthbert's in 2024 was the 'Together at Christmas' Community Carol Service in December. We were greatly privileged to be chosen to host just one of 15 such services taking place around the country in partnership with the Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and in conjunction with HRH The Princess of Wales' 'Together at Christmas' carol service at Westminster Abbey.

The organisation of the service was a frenetic collaboration between St Cuthbert's, the Norfolk Lieutenancy and the Diocese – but what an afternoon it turned out to be! St Cuthbert's was packed to the rafters, there was a wonderful atmosphere of joy, community and togetherness, we were treated to some wonderful musical performances by the Thetford Singers, Thetford Academy and Thetford Grammar School, and local primary schoolchildren decorated a tree with special decorations they had made in gratitude for others. The Lord Lieutenant, The Lady Dannatt MBE brought her own special message, as well as a message from HRH the Princess of Wales, and the Bishop of Thetford preached as, at heart, we celebrated the wonderful news of the birth of our Saviour – the one who came to be 'God with us' that first Christmas.

Beyond this special service, Christmas saw its usual wonderful and exhausting whirlwind of services and special events, including another highly successful opening for the town lights switch-on. Civic services such as the Mayor's Service and the Battle of Britain Service continued to be held.

Of course, regular services and events also continued – including The Gathering on the afternoon of the last Sunday of each month. Whilst working well and being deeply appreciated by those who came along, sadly The Gathering didn't experience the numerical growth or the drawing in of newcomers that we had hoped, prayed and worked for. More encouraging, however, was the gentle growth in the number of children attending with their families at the Sunday morning service, leading to Sunday Club becoming a weekly occurrence (apart from all-age service weeks) from the autumn. Thanks are due to Caroline Herbert, Karen Tobitt and the team of helpers for their dedication and service to Sunday Club.

Our two weekly home groups provide another opportunity for us to grow in our relationships with God and with one another. Thank you to Margaret Higgins for leading her group week-by-week with such dedication. Both groups are very welcoming of new members, so please have a word with me if you might be interested.

The ministry of Café Cuthbert has continued apace, and is hugely valued by loyal regulars and chance visitors alike. Its success is testament to the hard work of the whole team – not least Marie now installed as Café Manager and the café directors. We were grateful during 2024 to Gary Applin, Mick Tobitt and Jennifer Bird stepping up to serve alongside Sandra Phillips as café directors. At the same time, Sue Goldsmith and Peter Thomson stepped down as directors after sterling service in the role. Special mention must go to Peter: from helping to mastermind the redevelopment project through to getting the café off the ground, he has worked with unstinting devotion and diligence, and we are hugely grateful to him and to Audrey for all that he has poured into this ministry over the years.

More widely, allow me to conclude by thanking each and every one of you who has contributed in the ways mentioned above and in so many other ways: musically, reading and assisting in services, practical ministries, behind-the-scenes service and so much more.

Peter Herbert
March 2025

Cloverfield Community Church

What do you love about Cloverfield church? If you were to ask me that question I would answer by saying it is a church that is committed to bringing God's love to our local community. Every day of every week our building hosts a variety of community groups and activities. I have been particularly encouraged by the success of many of our events this last year and am grateful for the continued commitment and support of many of the church body in serving our local community.

The church would not function without what the Bible calls the 'priesthood of all believers'. Graham Tomlin clarifies the call of Christians in his book 'The Widening Circle'. Our work is one of mediation (representing Christ in the world), perfection (in drawing people to deeper communion with Christ), intercession (in praying for the world's needs), blessing (serving), evangelism (witnessing to Christ) and worship. I would encourage each of us to see how we can each fit into at least one of these categories as we work out our Christian discipleship. With our recent series on Ephesians, chapter 4 of Paul's letter usefully reminds us of the calling of each of us from the body of Christ:

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Finally, I encourage all group leaders to reflect on the mission and discipleship cycle of contact, nurture, commitment and growth (or the 4 P's of prayer, presence, proclamation and probing). Each of our groups is somewhere along on this journey and it's important to discern what steps we need to put in place to move the group onto the next stage of the cycle.

Special events; Light night, Easter and Christmas

Seasonal events continue to offer good outreach opportunities to our local community. At Easter we had our Messy Easter with the Sports Factory and again pulled in record numbers at our Light Night event. At Christmas it was wonderful to have good number of our community join us for Merry Messy Christmas, Community Carols and the Crib Service as we continue strengthening those community relationships. All these events wouldn't be possible without a willing team of volunteers.

Thanks

I would like to express my ongoing gratitude to the Leadership team. Shauna Peacock continues as Church Secretary, Maggie Baldwin as Parish Safeguarding Officer and Kirsty Houghton as Children and Families lead. Tim Peacock continues to head up managing our hall bookings and care of building and Geof Young has been a very supportive and valued member of the team. I am grateful to our increased giving by standing order over this last year and continue to be thankful for both Neil Glen who is our faithful treasurer and David Ramanos as gift aid secretary.

Heating grants and boiler system fundraising

I'm extremely grateful to Tim Peacock's continued work on our new heating system and especially all the tireless work he has done applying for grants. Much ongoing prayer is needed with raising money for the future proposed project with solar panels and heat pump.

Worship

I am grateful to our band and the sung worship music they lead us in each Sunday under Tim Peacock and those who operate the sound desk. I am also hugely appreciative of our AWA's, Shauna Peacock and Kirsty Houghton who support me in leading our worship and to all those who regularly serve to lead intercessions, bible readings, welcoming, refreshments and Corinne with our noticeboards.

Thetford Christians together

The churches continue to meet every couple of months and as well as providing a space to share news, they also help us to consider how churches can work together in initiatives such as the Foodbank, work with the homeless and seasonal events such as the Walk of witness on Good Friday.

Ecumenical Partnership

It was with deep sadness I, along with others from Cloverfield church attended the closing service for Earls St URC in 2024. As a local ecumenical partnership between the Church of England and United Reformed church we are now engaging with the URC's Mission Partnership plan along with several URC churches across the area. Please do continue praying for this process.

Pastoral care

Pastoral care is all of our Christian duty and responsibility, but we have taken a direction toward caring for those we have in our groups/communities under our care. I am grateful for those of us who have a concern and desire to care for others in our congregation and for many who show care of others.

Homegroups

Small groups provide an important place for building fellowship and support, Christian discipleship and enabling spiritual growth. David and Maggie Williams have kindly taken over leading our afternoon group, the evening group has ceased to make way for the Refresh ladies fellowship.

Schools

The Thetford team are engaged in several schools in Thetford. I continue to be a governor for Norwich Road school and regularly take assemblies and we are looking forward to hosting an Easter Experience for Year 4 pupils. Susie Bratby continues to engage with several schools including Bishops and Drake.

Youth work

Catherine Richardson heads up our fortnightly team Amplify group on Thursday evenings. Johnny, the new YFC worker, serves young people on our behalf with the Pulse youth café on Tuesdays as well as school assemblies and lunchtime clubs at Thetford Academy. Further funding is required to ensure Johnny's position can continue.

Good grief café

As a trained counsellor, Mal Turner of Turners funeral directors heads up this fortnightly group, alongside myself in church. Offering a place of support and solace for those facing grief and loss. It is a privileged opportunity to meet with people in their grief as we share our shared experiences of loss together. Please do pray for opportunities to invite folk to church events.

Rev Matt Houghton

Grace Church

It really is a great joy to be part of the church family at Grace Church! As I look back on this last year there is much to give thanks for; seeing many growing in their love for the Lord and for one another, seeing others just keeping going and persevering in the face of suffering, set backs and trials and yet others coming along to church and exploring the Christian faith. I see my role as that of a pastor teacher, as outlined in passages such as Ephesians 4:12ff "to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Grace Church may not be that big a congregation but it is a great blessing to preach God's word to fellow believers, who are hungry for the truth and seek to apply it in daily life. 1 Peter 2:9 describes the whole church as, amongst other things, a 'royal priesthood' and it does feel in our regular Sunday afternoon and Wednesday evening gatherings, that we do minister to one another. I certainly feel that I constantly learn from

the insights and wisdom of others and that as a group of believers we do love, care for and sharpen one another.

I love looking around after a service and seeing church in action and very much continuing after the formal end to the 'service'. I see people serving in all sorts of ways; clearing away the chairs, serving food that they or others may have made or prepared earlier. I see others praying together; sharing one another's joys and burdens. I see people enjoying getting to know fellow members of their church family, sharing their lives and enjoying conversation and humour over food. I see people looking out for others and making an effort to get alongside folk, including some kind soul playing football with a sports mad child!

Some more specific encouragements this last year have been hearing of God's saving and transforming power in the lives of Dave Carter, Stephanie Welch, Josh Samuel, Jonathan and Steph Richardson at some of our Testimony Services. It's always such a boost to hear of how God has been at work! It's also been a joy to see God growing our team of musicians and those able and gifted to lead our sung worship. It wasn't that long ago that Grace Church was virtually entirely dependent on having musicians come in from other churches to help out but now we have a wonderful home grown team.

In the children's group Helen has started using Faith Builders material which uses Lego to tell the Bible stories. It also has a strong emphasis on getting the children and their leaders to imagine themselves into the roles and mindsets of the various Bible characters they are studying. Finally, in home group, it was good to get our teeth into the strong meat of the book of Romans using the excellent Bible Society course.

For all these things and so much more besides I am very grateful and give praise to our loving, providing, gracious God. To Him be the glory!

Tony Heywood

Proceedings of the PCC

This is my report as PCC Secretary for the past year 2024/2025. I feel this year has apart from my own health issues been a fairly successful year for me as the Secretary of the PCC for Thetford Team Ministry, my only absence was due to my own ill health, and this was covered by Caroline Herbert so many thanks for doing that for me it is very much appreciated.

We have been quorate at all meetings, so this has put us in a position of being able to make decisions if needs be. The PCC has behaved itself and even though meetings have been long everybody has engaged with what we are trying to do as a group.

We have many challenges ahead as an example raising money for the much-needed floor and wall repairs, funding for posts in the Sports Ministry to mention but 2.

I want to thank the clergy for their support as well as the rest of the PCC and look forward to carrying on in the role of PCC secretary if those present wish me to continue.

Yours all in Christ.

Gary Applin
Thetford PCC Secretary
07955 402847

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with its 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.

All DBS checks have been renewed or applied for and the necessary Safeguarding training has been undertaken for the various roles within our Team churches. I renewed my Leadership Pathway with regard to Safeguarding in December.

It has been a difficult year with several failures of safeguarding nationally and the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury and we can only continue to be diligent locally and I have faith in our Diocesan Safeguarding Team and Bishop Ian as the Diocesan Lead. As a church we must remember that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and if anyone has any concerns at any time please do not hesitate to contact me.

I will be resigning from my position as Safeguarding Officer at the end of 2025 so if anyone is interested in finding out more about the position please speak to me.

Maggie Baldwin
Thetford Team Ministry Safeguarding Officer

Deanery Synod

Thetford and Rockland Deanery Synod met four times during 2024.

On the 25th January 2024 Rt Revd Ian Bishop, the Bishop of Thetford was the guest speaker. He shared about his journey of faith and ministry and spoke of his desire to be a missional Bishop encouraging growth in our churches in both numbers and discipleship.

The meeting on 24th April heard from Tim Sweeting, the Diocesan Secretary and Robert Culyer from the Generous Giving Team from the Diocese. Robert Culyer spoke about the advantages of the Parish Giving Scheme (which is already in use in Thetford). This enables giving via direct debit to be managed centrally, reducing the burden on individual parishes. Tim Sweeting introduced himself briefly and shared his desire that the Parish Support Team should be serving the parishes with all that they do.

On 23rd July the Synod heard from Frances Middleton about being a Church of Sanctuary as part of the Norwich City of Sanctuary Movement. This is about building a community of welcome for refugees and asylum seekers. She encouraged people to learn more about their stories through inviting them to speak, or through films, books, exhibitions and visiting the Church of Sanctuary website. She encouraged everyone to support events such as Refugee Week, Racial Justice Sunday, Refugee Sunday.

The final meeting of the year was held on 15th October, with Sue Brice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. She spoke about the changes she had seen since she started working for the Diocese in 2010: an increase in resources, ensuring that safer recruitment is practised and the development of training which is important so that people know what to do if they see or are told about something which is a safeguarding concern. She spoke about some of the national developments, including the Jay Report into the future of church safeguarding, and the change that Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors will become Diocesan Safeguarding Officers, with more independence in decision-making.

During the year the deanery was expanded to include the benefices of Hethersett, High Oak, Hingham with Scoulton with Wood Rising and Wymondham with Silfield and Spooner Row.

Caroline Herbert
Deanery Synod representative

St Cuthbert's Fabric

This is a relatively short report for the APCM which will just highlight the things that have been done:

- The Church lights have been replaced with a new system enabling changing the colour as well as dimming.
- The roof has been cleaned and the gutters are now to be cleared every six months.
- Shelves have been put into the cupboards in the meeting room.
- We now have a new desk in the tower vestry, giving more room to do clerical work.
- The north wall that had water damage from a blocked down pipe, has now dried out and the plaster has now been removed ready for re plastering.
- The largest and oldest bell in the bell tower has now been repaired. The bells are now safe to be rung.
- The problem with the rat who took up residence in the church has now been evicted. We have had no further problems.
- The hall outer door lock broke. To replace it with a fob system would have been very costly. It has now been replaced with a key system.
- Ashley Courtney our Architect has done the Quinquennial this month.

Church Wardens
Mrs Sandra Phillips & Mrs Karen Tobitt

Mission Giving

The policy of the PCC is to give 10% of the giving received into the General Fund in the previous year to external mission and charitable causes.

An additional £500 carried over from 2023, meaning that in 2024 a total of £2,260 was shared between our parish mission partners: Nicola and Graham Aylett (£875), Simon and Gillian Clegg (£510) and our mission partners in South Asia (£875).

In addition, Grace Church donated £500 and the General Fund £50 to the Thetford Youth Project, with whom we partner closely for youth work in the town, such as the Pulse Youth Café and schools work.

Furthermore, Grace Church donated £300 to the Bishop's School, in order to help with the severe budgetary pressures that they face at this time.

Peter Herbert
March 2025

Sports and Fitness Ministry

Thank you to each one of you who has prayed for the sports ministry since it started in November 2020. Last year I asked that we continue to pray for more people to encounter Jesus and give their lives to him. This year we have seen Josh Samuel come to faith through various TTM

events/sessions, including the adult social football group. As many of you know, Josh has been employed by TTM and it is exciting to see the adult social football group flourish under his leadership as well as the four new fitness sessions attracting many from outside the church/on the fringes. Please continue praying for this new ministry.

Like last year, in my role, much has remained the same with regular weekly sessions. assemblies at 2 local schools, lunch time sports clubs, after-school sports clubs, Active RE, sport at Pulse youth café and Stretch and Pray. This year we have started a new regular session 'SEND SPORTS' at Cloverfield Community Church which has been funded by 'Family Hubs'.

We have also had many one-off events, including a football quiz, family quiz, big screen sports match and the football cage at the light night and Christmas lights switch on. Legacy holiday club has grown in numbers again, with 30-50 children and young people attending at Christmas, Easter, and Summer holidays. It was also wonderful to run a 'Summer of Sport' programme with many different sports sessions for children, young people, adults and families throughout the Summer months in Thetford and Croxton.

Thank you to all of you who have made this possible by serving at events, helping behind the scenes, giving financially and praying. It really wouldn't be possible without you. Let's continue to pray in the verse from 1 Thessalonians 2:8 "...Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well", as we connect with children, youth, adults and families, share our faith, and pray for them to encounter Jesus.

Susie Bratby

Café Cuthbert

Café Cuthbert we are pleased to report is going from strength to strength this past year. Following last year's APCM a review was carried out and with the help of the then Directors in particular Peter Thomson and Sue Goldsmith and the further recruitment of 3 new Directors namely Gary Applin, Mick Tobitt and Jenny. We are now open on Saturday's church services permitting.

We have a very dedicated set of volunteers who work exceptionally hard and although we initially recruited a manager which didn't work out, we have now got Marie in place which has been a big success. Peter and Sue resigned from there position of Directors and although it was sad to lose the level of experience they both have we are very thankful for the work they have done to get the café to the position it is in currently so once again thanks to them both. We have a varied menu which is regularly reviewed and has been further added to recently and seems popular with our customers.

We have continued to make a small profit and have contributed to the cost of energy in the church as well as donations from the café to the fabric and maintenance and the Parish share as we were happily in a financial position to be able to do this. Unfortunately, we have had to increase the cost of food and drink in the café due to the rising cost of food currently and much as we didn't want to do this it was deemed necessary with regards the current economic climate. We have had to purchase some new equipment in the kitchen as well as the cost of repair and servicing of some of the appliances, for instance the rationale cooker, the barista machine and the dishwasher.

The Directors want to say a big thank you to all our volunteers with special recognition to Neil, Jane, Rachel and Karen as well as all the others and Sue Goldsmith who even though she is no longer one of our Directors continues to work taking orders etc in the café and her husband Keith who helps at the end of the café opening to set the church up for services on a Sunday which all helps to contribute to the success of the café, thank you.

Café Directors
Gary Applin, Sandra Phillips, Mick Tobitt, Jennifer Bird

Finance Report

This report highlights some of the headlines from the 2024 accounts. For the full picture, the accounts can be found online at <https://thetfordteamministry.org.uk/annual-meetings>, or there are some hard copies available at St Cuthbert's, Cloverfield and Grace Church.

The accounts cover the activities of the PCC, including Grace Church, but not Cloverfield Community Church, for which accounts are compiled and reported separately.

As usual, the **giving and donations** of church members, visitors and friends is the greatest source of income for the general ministries of both St Cuthbert's and Grace Church. Donations (including Gift Aid) to the General Fund saw a welcome increase of over £3000 in 2024 compared to 2023, whilst donations (including Gift Aid) to the Grace Church Fund saw a more modest increase of just over £400. For your joyful and sacrificial giving which this reflects – **thank you!**

In light of this, we were able to make a healthy increase in **Parish Share** payments to the Diocese to help cover the cost of stipendiary ministry in the parish, as well as other provision we receive from the Diocese. Indeed, accounting for the PCC's Parish Share payments, donations towards our Parish Share made by individuals direct to the Diocese, and contributions towards our Parish Share from the Church of England Evangelical Council's *Ephesian Fund*, payments towards Thetford PCC's Parish Share (i.e. St Cuthbert's and Grace Church combined) for 2024 totalled £32,247, compared to a total requested of £36,542. This is a huge and encouraging improvement on recent years.

At the same time, expenditure on **maintenance and repairs for St Cuthbert's** (both routine items and larger jobs) saw a significant increase, to over £14,100 in total. This will need to be monitored and managed going forwards.

Those inspecting the full accounts will see that the assets of the PCC are broken down into three types of fund (with the year-end balances for all funds given on page four of the accounts):

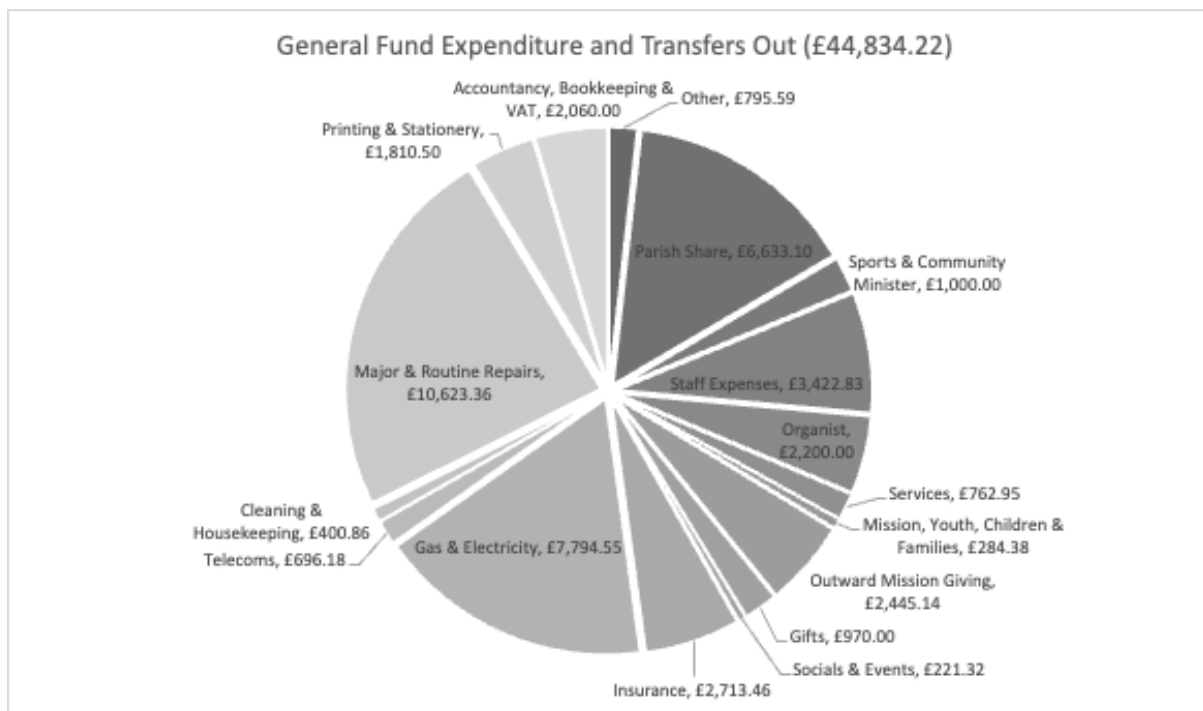
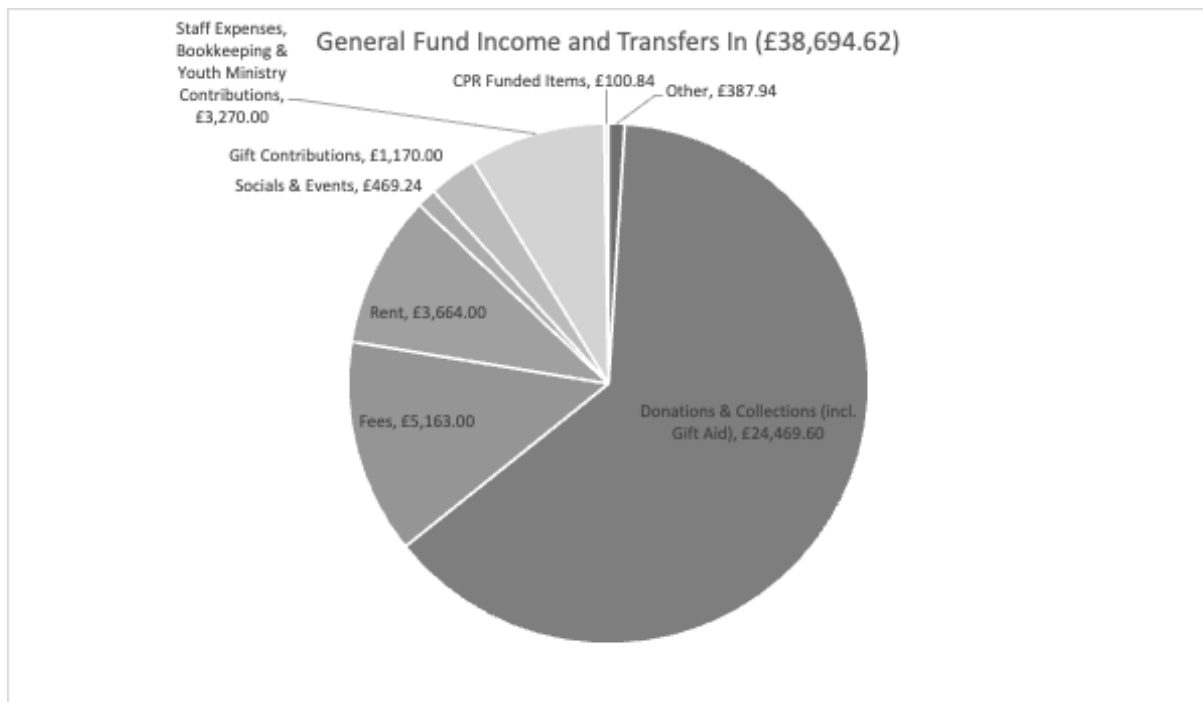
- **Unrestricted** funds; amongst these the General Fund represents the day-to-day operations of St Cuthbert's, the Grace Fund does likewise for Grace Church and similarly the Sports Ministry Fund for the sports ministry.
- **Restricted** funds have been explicitly donated for a particular purpose, and their use is legally restricted to that purpose.
- **Endowment** funds provide the PCC with investment income. The two Endowment Funds listed in the accounts (the Chapel Acre Share Fund and the Watts Legacy Share Fund) pay dividends into the CCLA Deposit Account (thus contributing to the Reserve Fund).

Two new restricted funds were created during 2024: the **Fabric Fund** to hold grants and donations made specifically for fabric works at St Cuthbert's (such as the pending work to the south aisle east wall and other associated repairs), and the **Restricted Sports Ministry Fund** to hold monies received from the Diocese and individual donors towards the Associate Sports Minister post.

General Fund

The charts overleaf summarise the breakdown in income (£38,694.62) and expenditure (£44,834.22) to/from the General Fund, allowing for internal transfers from/to other funds.

Fees income for 2024 included £3,493 in respect of 2023 fees, so this figure is unusually high for the year.

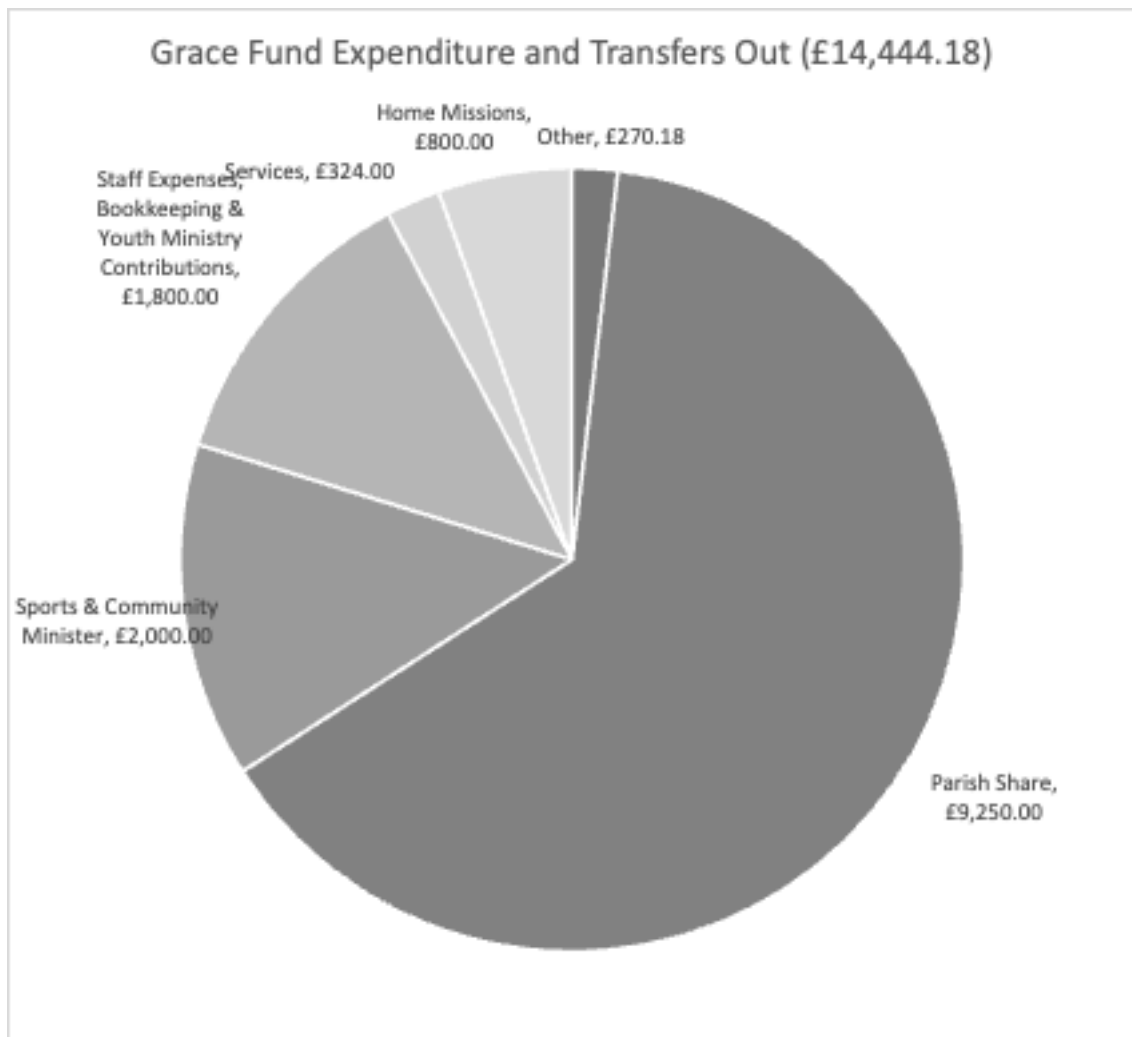


The General Fund Parish Share contribution of £6,633.10 compares to a 2025 request of £25,000.

The accounts show a year-end balance of £45,888.34 in the General Fund which, whilst less than the previous year, still appears relatively healthy. However, the General Fund (or other unrestricted funds) needs to be able to cover the deficits in other funds. If one were to subtract the Other Debtors balance (since this is not yet cash in the bank), the negative funds and fixed assets from the General Fund, we would be left with a deficit of just over £18,500 – which would need to be covered from reserves or other designated funds. The releasing of the EU contingent liability (see below, under ‘Development Fund’) would make a significant difference here.

Grace Church Fund

Income and expenditure to/from the Grace Church Fund is summarised on the below charts:



Note that £2,250 of the Parish Share contribution was made in anticipation of a donation which reached the bank account in the 2025 financial year. The total Grace Church Parish Share contribution of £9,250 compares to a 2025 request of £11,542.

Sports Ministry Fund

Income to the Sports Ministry fund is largely comprised of session fees (e.g. Legacy Holiday Club, after-school clubs and fitness sessions) plus payment for schools work. Expenditure covers items such as facilities hire, equipment and uniform, plus the costs of running payroll and bookkeeping for the sports ministry.

In 2024, Sports Ministry income saw a significant increase to almost £13,500. Expenditure also rose, although not by as much, to nearly £7,500. Of the c. £6000 profit, £3,080 was used towards the cost of the Sports & Community Minister post, as in the previous two years.

Development Fund

The Development Fund continues to contain a contingent liability of £30,527 in respect of redevelopment funding from the EU which will have to be repaid if insufficient paid staff posts are created, in accordance with the terms of the grant. Furthermore, the Development Fund includes the equipment in the kitchen at St Cuthbert's as a fixed asset, depreciating at 20% per annum. As at 31 December 2024, therefore, the Development Fund contained within it £9,088 worth of equipment – which obviously cannot be spent as if it were cash.

And Finally...

Finally, the scale of the full accounts indicate the amount of work involved in making all these payments and keeping track of all the incomings and outgoings. We continue to be grateful for a warm working relationship with Kieran Kenny, our bookkeeper at Emerald Accountants – and a huge vote of thanks for all the work done by Sandra Phillips and Mick Tobitt (as bank account signatories) and Karen Tobitt and Louise Applin (as the counting team). And to everyone else who helps in all manner of ways – thank you.

Above all, we praise God for his provision for us as churches throughout another year – bringing our thanks to the God who “will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

Peter Herbert
April 2025