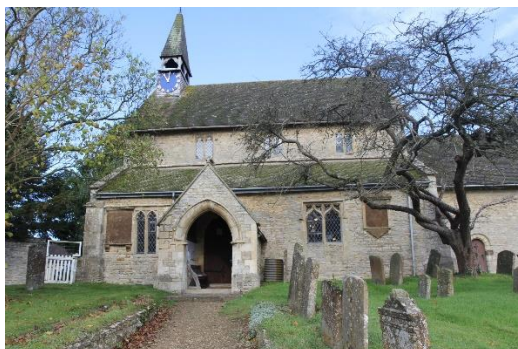


2023 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St Edmund and St George, Hethe



Aim and Purposes

Hethe Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This is achieved with the assistance of the Shelswell Benefice team under the direction of the Rector, the Revd Alice Goodall. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church of St Edmund and St George in Hethe.

The Church of St Edmund and St George is part of the Shelswell Benefice and works with other parishes in the Benefice to provide a variety of worship opportunities and other events.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of the church community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the Parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve all who live within our Parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We are also committed to being fully part of the community and taking our place in the building of good relationships with all who reside in the Parish.

To facilitate this work, it is important that the church building is maintained to as high a standard as is financially possible.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

The PCC, as part of the Shelswell Benefice, is keen to offer a range of services over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. For example, early morning communion provides a quiet, intimate and reflective environment for worship whilst opportunities are provided for families with younger children to worship in a more relaxed style, this included a lay-led service held every second month. A revised order of service had been adopted during the year.

Nineteen regular Sunday services were held in our church in 2023 with an average attendance of eight. Other services held were on Easter Sunday (twenty-two attended), Remembrance Day (nineteen in the church), an ecumenical Carol Service (thirty-six attended) and Christmas Day (twenty-six). A Harvest Festival was held in a neighbouring church in conjunction with other churches in the benefice.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. At present there are fifteen parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll. As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. There were six baptisms (with an average attendance of forty), one wedding (with an attendance of sixty) and one funeral for a parishioner conducted at the crematorium by our Rector.

The church was open for private prayer and reflection throughout the year.

The Church Building

Church Exterior. There had been further deterioration to a coping stone installed during the 2017 works and parts of the stone had fallen from the roof in January and damaged some roof tiles. This had now become the highest priority. There were more signs of damp in the church over winter. It was suspected that the soakaways at the northern end of the church may be the problem.

Church Interior. The heating controls had failed and been replaced together with the switch for the lights in the porch and by the gate. There were insufficient funds for further outstanding works – i.e. west window repairs including stonework (£14,995) and redecoration of the nave (cost of £13,389 including re-plastering). Long term plans to provide a space by moving pews, improvements to the heating and installation of a water supply would be considered after repairs and redecorating had been completed.

Churchyard. The long-term vision is to preserve the churchyard as a special, sacred place, remembering that if we turn it entirely over to nature, we forget the work of past generations who cared for it, and we could impede access to graves and for on-going burials. Some areas of the churchyard were cut early in the year by local people. An arrangement is now in place with the Probation Service, through the Parish Council, for further cutting.

Eco Church. The church has a bronze award under the A Rocha UK Eco Church scheme. The electricity supply is 100% generated from renewable sources through the Parish Buying Energy Basket. Fairtrade supplies are used wherever possible. Prayers and hymns relating to God's earth were included in regular services.

Quinquennial Inspection. The last inspection took place in January 2020 and the next is due in 2025. Priority one repairs have been completed. Other repairs had not been undertaken due to lack of funds.

Pastoral Care. Where members of our Parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age, a member of the Ministry Team has been available to visit all who have requested it, either at home or in hospital and where appropriate and possible, communion is celebrated.

Safeguarding. The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. There had been no safeguarding issues raised during the year. All PCC members have been given Basic Awareness Training.

Mission and Evangelism

Monthly Community Coffee mornings are continuing with the location alternating between the Village Hall and St Philip's Hall at the Roman Catholic Holy Trinity Church in the village. PCC members took part in a "Community Tea" in January, with other village organisations, at which we publicised the work of the PCC and how others in the community could help. A PCC member continued to act as a "Referral Agency" to Bicester Food Bank for the issue of vouchers and food was being collected in the church for those in need. Books and music were available to borrow. The monthly Benefice magazine keeps parishioners informed of the important matters affecting our Church and communities. Church services and news for the parish are also recorded on the benefice, village and "A Church Near You" web sites and village Facebook pages and details of the church are included on the Explore Churches web site.

Financial Review

Unrestricted Funds

Total receipts were £11,825 consisting of £5,313 from regular giving schemes, £2,332 from collections at services, £814 from donations, £1,985 tax refunded from the Gift Aid scheme, £724 from fund raising, £622 from a wedding and memorials and £35 interest on a CCLA investment account.

Total expenditure was £10,799, consisting of £5,905 in Parish Share; £1,578 in Benefice Expenses; £1,622 insurance premium, Fire Appliance inspection and gutter cleaning; £1,294 electricity; £175 for electrical repairs; a £25 donation to the OHCT; £200 moved to the Restricted Fund for the 2025 QI.

In comparison with the 2022 Financial Year:

- Donations through Planned Giving decreased by 3% (£35).
- Donations through the Parish Giving Scheme decreased by 1% (£23) with the loss of one donor.
- Collections at services decreased by 9% (£230).
- One-off donations increased by 9% (£67).
- Payments for weddings and funerals decreased by 30% (£262).
- Electricity charges increased by 182% (£875) against the last comparable year in 2019.

Restricted Funds

Total receipts were £750, consisting of £200 transferred from the Unrestricted Fund for the 2025 QI and £550 received for 100 Club prizes.

Total expenditure was £1,192. This consisted of £600 in fees paid to our Church Architects and £592 for 100 Club Prizes.

Deposit Account

A total of £1,134 is held in an unrestricted CCLA Investment Account.

Summary

The net result for the year was a surplus of £990 on Unrestricted Funds and a deficit of £600 on Restricted Funds. Adding bank and cash balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances to be carried forward on 31st December 2023 on Unrestricted Funds totalled £11,523 and on Restricted Funds £1,421, a total of £12,944.

The PCC have an on-line giving page for donations.

The PCC are grateful to members of the parish who continue to contribute through regular giving, one-off donations, collections at services and the 100 Club.

Reserves Policy

The PCC aims to keep in reserves approximately three months running costs and a contingency for future maintenance of the fabric and contents of the church, totalling £9,855.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Edmund and St George, the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our Rector), a churchwarden, a Deanery Synod Representative and members elected by those who are on the electoral roll of the parish. All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and if appropriate to stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC held four regular meetings during the year, in addition to an Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The PCC has no sub-committees.

Administrative Information

The Church of St Edmund and St George is part of the Bicester and Islip Deanery in the Archdeaconry of Dorchester which is part of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is c/o Mr Michael Green, Greenhill Cottage, Main Street, Hethe, Bicester, OX27 8ES.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2023 are:

Ex Officio members:

Revd Alice Goodall (Chair)
Mrs Flora Skinner (Vice Chair, Churchwarden & Safeguarding Officer)
Mrs Helen Pritchard (Deanery Synod Representative)

Elected members:

Mr Michael Green (Secretary, Treasurer & Electoral Roll Officer)
Mrs Pauline O’Gorman
Mrs Helen Wood
Mrs June Nisbet

Thanks

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our church a special place in the community. They undertake varied roles from helping to maintain the churchyard, to church cleaning, to providing flowers, to raising funds, to being members of the PCC – all are to be thanked for their work. In particular we wish to mention our churchwarden, Mrs Flora Skinner, who has worked so tirelessly on our behalf.

Approved by the PCC on

and signed on their behalf by the Revd Alice Goodall

Revd Alice Goodall

Chair of Hethe PCC