



**ANNUAL REPORT
&
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

For year ending 31st December 2018

(As required by Church Accounting Regulations 2006)

**PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018**

Table of Contents

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION.....	2
AIMS AND PURPOSES.....	3
1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE	3
<i>1a Team Rector’s Report [Charles Miller]</i>	3
<i>1b Church Electoral Roll [Richard Kirby].....</i>	4
<i>1c PCC [M E Hallas].....</i>	5
<i>1d Abingdon Deanery Synod [Carol Worthington].....</i>	5
<i>1e Oxford Diocesan Synod [Carol Worthington].....</i>	7
<i>1f Safeguarding [Maria Gibson, Parish Verifier]</i>	9
2 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP.....	10
3 PROPERTY REPORT BY LINDA HOBBS.....	11
4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	11
PUBLIC BENEFIT	12
TREASURER’S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2018.....	13
STATEMENT OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PCC.....	15
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES.....	16
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES.....	17
BALANCE SHEET.....	18
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS	19
APPENDIX 1.....	28
REPORT FROM ST HELEN’S CHURCH	28
APPENDIX 2.....	49
REPORT FROM ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS’ CHURCH.....	49
APPENDIX 3.....	56
REPORT FROM ST NICOLAS’ CHURCH	56
APPENDIX 4.....	65
REPORT ON ST NICOLAS CofE SCHOOL	65

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018
(As required by Church Accounting Regulations 2006)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames is a registered charity, Charity Registration Number 1129833.

The Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames is situated in the town of Abingdon, Oxfordshire. It is part of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is:

The Hon Secretary, Abingdon-on-Thames PCC
c/o The Parish Centre, St Helen's Court, Abingdon OX14 5BS

The Parish comprises the churches and congregations of St Helen, St Michael & All Angels and St Nicolas.

PCC members

PCC members are the Trustees of the Charity. PCC members who have served from 1st January 2018 until the date that this report and the financial statements were approved are:

Stipendiary Team clergy:

The Revd Dr E C Miller
The Revd P A Smith

Non-stipendiary clergy:

The Revd Dr J Baun (until 29 July 2018)
The Revd M Williamson (house for duty)

Licensed Lay Minister

Mrs G Bevington (from 18 November 2018)

Churchwardens:

Dr C N P Gee
Mrs L Hobbs
Mr P Squire
Mr P Rast-Lindsell
Mr A Coker

Officers:

Chairman	The Revd Dr E C Miller
Vice Chairman	Miss A E Green
Secretary	vacant
Treasurer	Dr A R Birks

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Dr A R Birks
Mr P Penfold
Miss A E Green
Dr H Glennie
Miss A Scott
Ms S Scott
Mrs E Hallas

Diocesan Synod:

Mrs C Worthington
Miss A Scott (from 1 August 2018)

Elected PCC members:

Dr H Bishop
Dr J Burren (until 19 April 2018)
Mr J Clare
Mrs H Clare
Mrs J Collins
Mrs S Scott
Miss M Horton (from 19 April 2018)
Dr R Cox (from 19 April 2018)

Accountants (from 19 April 2018):

Mercer Lewin Chartered Accountants
41 Cornmarket Street,
Oxford,
OX1 3HA

Weblinks:

St Helen's: <https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/homepage.html>
St Nicolas': <https://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/>
St Michael & All Angels: <http://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk/>

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

AIMS AND PURPOSES

Under the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the parish of Abingdon-on-Thames Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Dr Charles Miller, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Each DCC is similarly required to co-operate with the minister in charge of the district church. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Parish Centre (in St Helen's Court) and Enock House (2 Musson Close).

1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

1a Team Rector's Report [Charles Miller]

2018 has been a challenging year. On a ministerial level it meant organizing and re-organizing clergy rotas and deploying my associate priest, Mary Williamson, widely in the face of Team Vicar Paul Smith's protracted medical issues (now happily resolved). Trips abroad for business and family matters took their toll on already depleted energy levels. The year included, shortly after Easter, the illness and death of my dog of sixteen years. Then in early October came the sudden death of my father, a mercifully quick and painless episode for him; but still, after 93 years, a gaping absence for his three children and surviving spouse. That required interruption of a long-awaited and much needed stretch and annual leave and annual retreat, making the 'run' to Christmas more taxing, not having had a 'pick-me up' before the momentum began to build. So, from that perspective it has been a year I gladly see the far side of.

A number of events stand out in my mind positively. First, the annual corporate Communion of the parish followed by lunch in St Helen's South Aisle. It was a well-executed, hospitable event, with our affirming preacher Fr Douglas Dales; and the lunch for 70-80 people was a fine occasion to renew friendships across the parish. Second, the PCC held its first 'away day' at St Mary's Convent, Wantage with the aim to reflect on what works well and what doesn't work so well in our parish, and how we can step forward together more effectively. Altogether, the forthright conversation and sharing, and the broad resolves we made, resulted in the sense of a day well-spent and a resolve to do it again. It's been hard for the PCC to make time at its regular meetings to return to the day and the perspectives it opened. But the PCC has agreed to form teams, composed of members of each of the three congregations, to develop these areas of our common life and witness:

- Catechesis & spiritual formation
- Finance (this group is already established)
- Communications (this group is already working)
- Outreach

The first-listed team has been formed and will meet in January 2019 to begin to articulate its understanding of its work. Teams two and three are already working, more or less well, and the fourth team has, at time of writing, yet to be formed. All of these teams are meant to serve the overall point of our team, viz., to strategize together to the up-building of the life of our parish and its witness in our town.

We agreed an important document guiding our interactions with one another both at PCC and DCC levels: 'Working Well Together'. It was prompted by some very unsatisfactory exchanges at meetings, and is meant as a tool by which all members of leadership within our congregations can

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

regulate themselves and help regulate one another so that our doing business together is up-building.

We continue to be blessed by the presence and ministry of Mary Williamson, whose license was renewed by Bishop Colin Fletcher for the final year of Mary’s ministry here (Oct 18, 2018-Oct 18, 2019). At the tail-end of 2018 thoughts began to turn to fashioning the process for Mary’s successor.

We said ‘farewell’ to Associate Jane Baun in July, and were pleased to hear of her appointment as Chaplain of Wadham College, Oxford. With her absence in mind Bp Colin kindly directed a clergy-person looking for a parish link to us. Conversations began very gently in December of this year and by the time this report appears we may well have a new Associate, taking Jane’s place, within the parish.

A big step was taken at St Helen’s, but with consequences for the whole parish, with the licensing of Gwen Bevington as Licensed Lay Minister (aka ‘Reader’) within our parish. That took place in mid-October. Gwen’s ministry in 2018 was focused at St Helen’s. But in the years to come we will see it branch out into all three congregations in some suitable fashion. Gwen’s licensing service was well attended; thanks to those from St Nicolas’ and St Michael’s who attended to support to the start of her ministry.

We continue to be richly blessed by the ministries of other honorary clergy in the parish: Bp Henry Scriven, Prof John Barton, David Bevington, Prof Keith Ward and, of course, the Seamans. It’s been good to see Team Vicar Fr Paul Smith operating at full energy after his months of medical issues.

Elsewhere in the report you can read of the PCC’s appointment of a new external examiner of our accounts. This annual report for 2018 will be the first including accounts which the new examiner will have dealt with. The change from our long-established accountancy firm in Abingdon intends to save the parish money; we will, of course, watch to see that we get ‘value for money’ with our new arrangement.

My energy levels have not enabled me to spread my wings as widely through the three congregations as some would wish. It’s difficult for me to predict whether than will change. Be that as it may, you *all* remain my pastoral concern, and I am always privileged to hear of your successes and failures, your sadnesses and your joys both personally, and as congregations.

Faithfully, The Revd Dr Charles Miller, Team Rector

1b Church Electoral Roll [Richard Kirby]

There is a Parish Electoral Roll Officer for Abingdon-on-Thames, but each of the three churches in the parish maintains a section of the Roll. The table below gives the changes from 2016 to 2017 for the three churches in the Parish.

Electoral Roll Numbers 2017-18

	2017	2018			% change	
	roll	deletions	additions	change		roll
St Helen	344	6	10	4	348	1.2%
St Michael	88	2	5	3	91	3.4%
St Nicolas	70	4	5	1	71	1.4%
Abingdon on Thames	502	12	20	8	510	1.6%

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Annual Report (continued)

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

1c PCC [M E Hallas]

The PCC of the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames met six times during 2018-9 (and the Standing Committee 5 times).

The business of the PCC concerns those issues best approached on a Parish, rather than Church, basis. It is also a useful forum for communications throughout the Parish, including details of Parish and Church sponsored events, staff updates and feedback on Deanery and Diocesan issues.

The PCC continues to review and approve faculty applications across the Parish, and consideration of Safeguarding and the finances of the Parish remain regular items on the PCC and Standing Committee agendas.

At the first full meeting (May) the composition and procedures of the PCC were discussed, and it was agreed that ProWardens should not be ex-Officio members of the PCC (but could be elected as Church PCC representatives). PCC members discussed the Rector's draft 'Working Well Together' protocol, and an amended version was adopted by the PCC at a subsequent meeting, and individually by the DCCs. This document has proved a useful tool in Parish workings and has been further amended during the year.

Parish compliance to the General Data Protection Regulations (which came into force in May) has been discussed at each meeting, as the Parish seeks to meet legal requirements. A Parish Privacy Notice and Consent Form have been approved, and procedures agreed are being implemented across the Parish.

A very successful PCC Away Day in June enabled PCC members to get to know each other and the activities of the three Churches better. The response to the day is covered in the Rector's Report.

1d Abingdon Deanery Synod [Carol Worthington]

Abingdon Deanery Synod meets four times a year on a Thursday evening. Meetings are hosted voluntarily by individual churches within the Deanery, who are all entitled to send both clergy and lay representatives to Synod. In our parish of Abingdon on Thames, we are well represented, with eight lay members, two of whom serve on the Standing Committee, where we also have a clergy member: details are given later.

Synod meetings follow a similar pattern:

- Opening worship
- Presentation or Report on a topic of common interest
- Business, usually concerning items such as clergy changes in parishes and financial matters, particularly the **Parish Share** (every church's contribution to the communal 'pot' to pay for salaries of clergy and other church employees). The Abingdon Deanery also sets aside money for **Mission Grants**, which parishes can apply for to help with outreach to the local community.
- News from individual parishes is circulated, often about successes in particular outreach initiatives supporting the Deanery Mission Action Plan (MAP), to which all parishes contribute.
- Closing prayer.

The presentations in 2018 included:

February: Generous Giving: Jonathan Farnhill (Generous Giving Advisor, Oxford Diocese) gave an informative and helpful presentation on the new *Parish Giving Scheme* initiative being rolled out across the Diocese, to enable people to give to their churches by direct debit, as today's culture

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Annual Report (continued)

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

moves ever nearer to being a 'cashless' society. In the areas where this scheme has already been introduced, there have been marked increases in giving.

June: General Synod: The Rev. Canon Sue Booy as Chair of the Business Committee of General Synod, gave an overview of General Synod (the church parliament) and some of the issues that were discussed at their meetings, and then answered questions.

September: Science Missioner: The Rev. Jennifer Brown, Diocesan Science Missioner for the past four years, gave an overview of what her position involved which included educating congregations, reaching out to science communities and working with the local communities. In answer to 'why we should care' Jennifer noted that science and technology featured in all of our lives, many churches had worshippers who worked in scientific/technological institutions/companies, and science presented us with ethical challenges. Results of a recent survey showed that those working in scientific fields had overall positive attitudes to religion (even those who were not religious).

November: Diocesan Synod Report: Carol Worthington reported back on the recent Diocesan Synod meeting attended by herself and the two other newly elected Lay representatives (Shirley Northover and Alexandra Scott). In brief the following points were outlined:

Bishop Steven gave an opening address on "How to be Human" following his invitation to the House of Lords Select Committee into Artificial Intelligence.

He followed this by his update on the *Common Vision* (becoming a more Christ-like Church - contemplative, compassionate, courageous), outlining a more ambitious funding for mission and outreach for the future.

Addresses at Synod were also made by the Chair of the Board of Finance on funding, and by the Archdeacon of Oxford on developing new communities and church planting. ^[11]_{SEP}

There were updates from General Synod on the *Renewal and Reform* and *Setting God's People Free* initiatives. The presentation at the first Deanery Synod meeting of 2019 would be on the latter, given by Andrew Anderson-Gear, as *Setting God's People Free* is to be discussed in Parishes at DCC and PCC meetings in 2019.

Business and financial matters in 2018

At the first 2018 meeting, in February 1st, the treasurer Martin Steele presented the Deanery Accounts for 2017, and asked the synod members to vote their agreement and acceptance, as legally this has to be done by March 31st.

As the Deanery reserves were higher than they needed to be, the Standing Committee had agreed that Synod representatives take two options back to their PCCs to establish how best to use the surplus reserves (circa £16k).

Option A was for the Deanery to add an extra 2% to the 2018 rebate share, to increase it to 5% when rebate is received in 2019 – all parishes would benefit from their pro-rata share.

Option B was for the Deanery to fund a transformational project – ideas were invited on this (this would likely only benefit a handful of parishes depending on the scope of the project).

It was agreed that, having been discussed in parishes, voting for this would take place during the June Synod meeting.

The treasurer also reported that the Deanery had achieved the 3% rebate on Parish Shares (by being paid on time and in full to the Oxford Diocese).

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Annual Report (continued)

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

In the June meeting, no suitable transformational deanery projects had been proposed, so the surplus reserves were returned to parishes as above.

In September, the parish share was again discussed; it was the first year when the transition arrangements, introduced to make it easier for smaller parishes to cope with a new way of allocating the parish share, were no longer in force. Although it was thought that percentage increases were likely to be much smaller in the future, some small parishes were already having to use their reserves to pay their share.

At the November meeting, it was reported that some internal allocations of Ministry costs had been discussed at length with some smaller parishes and agreements had been made which hopefully reflected a fairer future allocated percentage of clerical time in those parishes.

The Parish Share Proposal for 2019 was voted on at the November meeting and accepted.

Mission Grants had been successfully applied for during the year by several parishes for schemes involving materials for children, family and adults' outreach and discipleship groups. These were generally for sums ranging from about £50 to £300; the total yearly grant from the Diocese was £2000.

However, under the *Common Vision* initiative, the Diocese were looking at a bigger pot of funding towards Mission activities: the new system would make it fairly simple for parishes to bid for amounts up to £2000, but more complex for larger amounts. The Deanery Standing Committee will submit an application for future Mission Grant funding once official notification of how this would work was received.

News from the Parishes in 2018

Those most directly concerning our parish were the appointment of Rev. Helen Kendrick as Area Dean and Rev. Keith Dunnett as Vicar of Christchurch, North Abingdon.

Anyone wishes to know about the activities of the Deanery Synod in more depth, look on the website: www.abingdondeanery.org.uk. or, ask one of the parish representatives:

St Helen's: Hazel Glennie, Alexandra Green, Peter Penfold, Carol Worthington

St Michael's: Alexandra Scott, Sue Scott

St Nicolas': Andrew Birks, Eluned Hallas

The Revd Mary Williamson is the parish clergy representative.

Mary, Carol and Sue are on the Deanery Standing Committee.

Bishop Steven's full address to the Diocesan Synod can be found on the Diocesan website: <https://blogs.oxford.anglican.org/how-to-be-human/>.

1e Oxford Diocesan Synod [Carol Worthington]

The Diocesan Synod meets three times a year, on Saturday mornings in March, June and November. The Synod had two meetings at St Andrew's church in High Wycombe in 2018, on March 17th and June 16th, and one at the Green Park Conference Centre in Reading on November 17th.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Annual Report (continued)

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

The meetings require intense concentration, starting at 9.00am, and hopefully, finishing by 1.00pm. There is a lot of business to get through, but the administration is very efficient, and things tend to go very smoothly. They run to a similar pattern:

- Opening prayers and devotions,
- Bishop Steven's welcome and Presidential Address,
- Diocesan and Deanery business
- News from General Synod
- Guest speaker, presentation or a group discussion.
- Reflection on the morning's business
- Closing worship

There is always some Finance Committee business to be done, in for example, Annual Reports and Accounts of bodies such as Christchurch Cathedral and the Diocesan Education Board. The Chair of the Board of Finance presents the Diocesan Budget in both draft and final forms at successive meetings, important because of the setting of the Parish shares, so there is often lively debate!

Bishop Steven's first presidential address in March opened with 'The World has woken up to the dangers of single use plastic', addressing the response to Sir David Attenborough's Blue Planet 2 study of the oceans. He had consistently noted across the diocese the urgency of environmental care, the call to tend creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth. He noted how many churches were already engaged in such matters and leading by example.

At the June meeting, Bishop Steven showed slides entitled **Setting God's People Free (SGPF)**. This is a Church of England programme of change designed to enable the whole people of God, both ordained and lay, to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all aspects of life, throughout the week, not only on Sundays. He emphasised that to achieve this vision requires deep culture change in our churches, and the development of renewed and mutual relationships between ordained and lay people. His slides showed how this could be done through the diocesan common vision process, deepening our faith on a journey towards living the contemplative, compassionate and courageous Christian life.

Elections for the next triennium took place in Spring 2018 and so, on the afternoon of Monday, September 17th, an Induction for new members was held at St Aldate's church in Oxford, followed by refreshments and an inaugural Eucharist at Christchurch cathedral at 7.30pm.

In this Induction programme, we were reminded of, or introduced to, depending on our status, of the diocesan common vision process:

- We are a living, growing network of more than a thousand congregations, chaplaincies and schools
- Together we are called to be a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:
contemplative, compassionate and courageous:
 - To make a bigger difference in the world and serve the poor
 - To share our faith and grow the local church
 - To plant new congregations
 - To serve every school in our community
 - To put the discipleship of all at the heart of our common life and *set God's people free*
 - Engage in new ways with young people and children.

In the first meeting of the new triennium, held at the Green Park Conference Centre in Reading on November 17th, Bishop Steven's presidential address was entitled 'How to be human', based on his

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Annual Report (continued)

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

experiences on a House of Lords Select Committee into Artificial Intelligence. His address outlined some of the significant benefits of its future use in healthcare, whilst balancing it with some of the risks.

He also introduced an agenda item 'Update on Common Vision'. The session was in three parts:

- Update by Bishop Steven on progress so far
- Financial presentation by the Chair of the Board of Finance explaining how the key areas of work are to be financed over a five-year plan
- Presentation from the Archdeacon of Oxford, (Chair of the working group exploring 'New Communities and Church Planting'), which showed how diocesan attendance has declined over the past 25 years, particularly in the densely populated urban areas of Reading, Slough and Milton Keynes, which are designated Mission Priority Areas.

The plan is for a Mixed Ecclesial Economy to develop, with traditional parishes flourishing alongside new Churches and congregations. The Diocese wants to encourage and enable new centres of discipleship, service and growth, e.g. Messy Church, Café Church, Child-focused Church, Youth Church, or other forms of church not yet dreamt of... **there's a challenge!**

The Parish of Abingdon on Thames has two members of the Diocesan Synod:

Alexandra Scott (St Michael and All Angels) newly elected
Carol Worthington (St Helen's) elected for a second term

To find out more about the workings of the Synod visit the Diocesan Website:

www.oxford.anglican.org

Every Parish receives a summary digest of meetings a few weeks after they have taken place.

1f Safeguarding [Maria Gibson, Parish Verifier]

- *New DBS umbrella body, APCS (Access Personal Checking Services Ltd):* The new DBS umbrella body appointed by the Diocese has been fully and successfully operational since 15th September 2017.
- *DBS Status update:* In 2019 we expect some DBS renewals.
- *Safeguarding Officers within the Parish:* thanks to Katie Doney, who has been the Safeguarding Officer for St Nicolas'. A new officer has been appointed: Eluned Hallas.

St Helen's - Maria Gibson

St Michael's – Carol Bowman

St Nicolas' – Eluned Hallas

Training

Most people who volunteer on a regular basis within the Parish have completed CO and C1 training. A C1 course was held at St Helen's on 24th July which was attended by a good number of volunteers. Churchwardens and Safeguarding officers are required to attend C2S1 training course organised and run by the Diocese at their premises, Church House, Kidlington. I have attended the course in November 2018. Active members of the PCC are also required to attend C2S1 course. It is recommended that the C2S1 course should be booked directly by the attendee through the Diocese website www.oxford.anglican.org.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

2 *STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP*

The Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames is served by a Team Rector, based at St Helen's, and a Team Vicar shared between St Nicolas' and St Michael's.

Abingdon has a Local Ecumenical Project – the Church in Abingdon (CiA) – to which all the Anglican churches belong.

The Parochial Church Council of Abingdon-on-Thames is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure, and was formally registered with the Charity Commission on 27 May 2009.

Lay members of the PCC are appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Church Representation Rules, as originally authorized as Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 and subsequently amended by the General Synod. All eligible church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

In addition to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the parish of Abingdon-on-Thames, there are three District Church Councils (DCCs). The PCC has delegated to the DCCs responsibility for detailed implementation of most of its functions, in a continuation of a Scheme approved by the Bishop. The PCC is therefore able to concentrate on those matters which cannot be delegated, or are of common concern. It has only two committees:

The *Standing Committee* (comprising the team clergy, church wardens, the secretary, the treasurer, and the vice-chairman) has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC.

The *Finance Committee* (comprising the Parish Treasurer and the Treasurers of the DCCs) oversees the financial activities of the parish, and prepares the annual budget and financial statements for the parish. It meets as required. The budget and financial statements are approved by the PCC after individual church finances have been considered by individual DCCs.

PCC members (and DCC members) are encouraged to attend training sessions as appropriate. Most often these are courses organised by the Diocese of Oxford.

The PCC is exposed to risks associated with buildings, finances and availability of volunteer effort. Dealing with the secular aspects first: buildings are insured and regularly inspected, finances are managed by the parish treasurer, and DCC treasurers and volunteers are constantly sought to carry the administrative burden of the PCC and DCCs. The maintenance of ancient buildings is a heavy responsibility for the PCC, but this is not unusual in the Church of England. Health and Safety, Child Protection and other pertinent legislation is adhered to, and there are policies in place to this effect. DCCs operate within a budget and financial envelope determined by their annual income and reserves and approved by the PCC. Each church has an annual stewardship programme to invite donors to respond to the income targets. Special appeals are launched for special projects (typically capital projects) as appropriate. To say 'The Lord will provide' may not be an acceptable approach to financial risk management in the secular world; but seeking the Will of God through constant prayer and responding to His Will moment by moment are key instruments by which the PCC manages risk in labour and financial matters.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

3 PROPERTY

Report by Linda Hobbs

The property 2, Musson Close, Abingdon has been the home of our associate priest (house for duty) the Reverend Mary Williamson since October 2016. The property is a 3-storey town house situated in south Abingdon approximately 10 minutes' walk from St Helen's Church. As associate priest, the house is for the use of Mary Williamson for the duration of her Licence.

The property is required to be maintained in the same way as if it were subject to a normal tenancy agreement. There is the requirement for the property to be returned to the Church at the end of Mary's period of license.

As reported in the previous report no rent, water rates, insurance or council tax are liable to be paid by the occupant; all these costs are met by church funds. Any additional costs for maintenance and repairs are also paid directly by the church, including any costs claimed by the Associate Priest required to fulfil the post. The urgent repairs needed to Enock House in the year (kitchen plumbing, replacement fence, new back door, replacing rendering) are reported as a cost of £6,974 on the Parish Clerical Housing Fund.

The property continues to be managed by Linda Hobbs.

4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The following Vision Statement was agreed by the PCC on 22nd November 2000 and continues to apply to the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames:

“A single unified parish with a Team Ministry in which clergy and laity work together to serve interdependent congregations, within an active ecumenical organisation where:

- The Gospel of Christ is celebrated through worship and fellowship, with individual congregations providing a spectrum of traditions
- The life of the Church is built up through teaching, preaching, evangelism, pastoral care and ecumenical co-operation
- God's love is made known in mission and service to the community and society as a whole.”

The following objectives for the Team Rector appeared in the Parish Profile agreed by the PCC in November 2005.

- In liaison and collaboration with the Church in Abingdon, to refresh and progress the strategy for the development of a Christian presence in south Abingdon.
- To encourage, enable and release lay leadership and ministry to enable the Parish to be better equipped to respond to the changing patterns of stipendiary ministry.
- To continue to develop joint working within the churches and across the team, to ensure we use our resources effectively in the propagation of the gospel.

The activities undertaken to enable the PCC to achieve these objectives are described in the Review of the Year.

The PCC is heavily dependent upon the contribution of volunteers to drive forward the mission of the church and the Kingdom of God.

The PCC delegates to DCCs the matter of policy for making grants and donations from their income. The financial statements record donations made during the reporting year.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

Public Benefit

The PCC is aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in "The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit" and have regard to it in their administration of the Parish. The PCC believes that, by fulfilling its responsibility to work together with the incumbent in the Parish and co-operate in all matters of concern and importance for the promotion of the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, it provides a benefit to the public by:

- providing resources and facilities for public worship, pastoral care and spiritual, moral and intellectual development, both for its members and for anyone who wishes to benefit from what the Church offers;
- promoting Christian values, and service by members of the churches in the Parish to their communities, to the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.

Reports from individual churches and on St Nicolas CofE School are attached as Appendices to this report.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

**TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2018**

The consolidated accounts of the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames for 2018 incorporate the accounts of the three separate churches that make up the Parish; St. Helen's, St. Michael's and St. Nicolas'.

The Parish owns two freehold properties, as noted elsewhere in the Annual Report; these are the Parish Centre and the House for Duty property purchased during 2015. Both are beneficially owned by the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames (legal title is held by Diocesan Trustees (Oxford) Ltd. as custodian trustees on behalf of the Parish). The two properties are shown in the balance sheet as Tangible Fixed Assets and are held for the mission of the church. As such, their value is not available to support ongoing expenditure. No new sales or purchases of property by the PCC took place during 2018.

The accounts for 2018 show a deficit on unrestricted funds of £19,108 before gains on investments and transfers between funds. The corresponding deficit in 2017 was £11,743. When grants and legacies are excluded, the net unrestricted income of the Parish fell 2.5% from £276,190 in 2017 to £269,365. However, unrestricted grants and legacies almost doubled to £17,884 (2017: £8,292), and unrestricted income as a whole increased 1% to £287,249 from £284,482. Giving and collections made up some 82% of the net recurrent income, but fell slightly from £222,011 in 2017 to £221,670.

Unrestricted expenditure, excluding freehold depreciation, increased by 3.4% to £303,357 from £294,225 in 2017, although when major repairs and renewals are excluded, other expenditure fell by 1.2% to £282,962 (2017: £286,433). The Parish Share, net of the Deanery Share rebate, accounted for 52% of this expenditure, and rose from £143,476 in 2017 to £146,821. The increase would have been more but for an increased Deanery rebate for 2018.

The deficit in 2018 seems to result from an increase in non-recurrent expenditure, and the overall recurrent voluntary income seems to be stable. Even so, both St Michael's and St. Nicolas showed a decline in recurrent voluntary income of the order of 5%, and both churches have again presented deficit budgets for 2019, so each DCC must keep in mind the need to work towards restoring balanced budgets.

Investments and reserves

During 2018 the Parish investments showed unrealised losses of £7,774 (2017: gain of £22,239) or 2% of the initial total. Of this 58% was attributable to the unrestricted funds, which at the year-end made up 54% of the total of £384,433. Apart from one small historic fund, all investment funds are invested with the CBF and COIF funds, and it is the policy of the PCC that unused fund balances are invested with the CBF Church of England funds.

The PCC is required to operate on a going concern basis, and considers that each church should aim to maintain a minimum reserve of two months expenditure in hand against contingencies, together with a reserve, appropriate to each church, to cover the future demands of building maintenance.

The accounts show total funds at the year-end of £1,240,580. Restricted and Endowment funds account for £217,586 and £238,670 of this total respectively. We define the reserves as the total of general unrestricted funds excluding designated funds and fixed assets. The following table shows the distribution of unrestricted funds between these categories and between the churches.

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

	General Reserves	Designated Funds	Fixed Assets	Total Funds
St Helen's	100,964	24,162	383,552	508,678
St Michael's	204,027	2,822	0	206,849
St Nicolas	33,347	30,524	3,815	67,686
PCC		1,111		1,111
Totals	338,338	58,619	387,367	784,324

The reserves shown above satisfy the minimum criteria, and current budgetary projections are that this will be maintained throughout 2018. The lowest reserve is held by St. Nicolas, but here restricted funds of £63,448 are available for the demands of church maintenance. In the first instance it is for each DCC to formulate plans for the future use of any excess funds; the PCC will keep these matters under review.

Andrew R. Birks
March 2019

PARISH OF ABINGDON-ON-THAMES
Annual Report (continued)
FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2018

STATEMENT OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PCC

We are required under charity law to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements we are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

We are also responsible for:

- keeping proper accounting records;
- safeguarding the charity's assets;
- taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud.

The Annual Report and Treasurer's Report were approved by the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames on 11th March 2019 and signed on its behalf by

.....
The Revd Dr Charles Miller, Chairman