

PARISH PROFILE

ST GEORGE'S BARKINGSIDE (DEANERY OF REDBRIDGE)



THE DIOCESE: A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GULI



Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse dioceses in the Church of England. We are home to more than 3 million people representing many socio-economic, ethnic and faith groups and a fantastic variety of cultures and traditions.

We have enormous opportunities for mission and service and considerable challenges to face and resolve as we continue to deal with the local, national and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches, schools, chaplaincies and the communities we serve.

It is within this context and following a period of listening and discernment that started when I became Bishop of Chelmsford in 2021, that we set out a future direction of travel as a Diocese with a focus on [travelling well together](#):

- Our purpose is to love God and to love our neighbour; to worship faithfully and empowered by the Holy Spirit, witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ as we serve the extraordinarily diverse array of local communities in Essex and East London.
- Our approach is to enable and empower parishes and worshipping communities to discern how they are to be God's people in their own very different local contexts and as part of one diocesan family.
- Underpinning our approach is an invitation to a way of being articulated by shared diocesan values which might shape how we travel together, support each other and provide mutual accountability.

Since I became Bishop of Chelmsford, I have witnessed people's great warmth and I have seen first-hand, the wonderful things going on in our parishes and schools. Any new priest joining us in the Diocese of Chelmsford does so at a time of challenge, a time of change and most significantly a time of hope for our Church in this most diverse and vibrant of dioceses.

+Guli

Bishop of Chelmsford

Find out more about our Diocesan Direction of Travel and Values:



www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together

Redbridge Deanery contains all the parishes within the London Borough of Redbridge. It is one of five London boroughs which together form the Barking Episcopal Area of the Diocese of Chelmsford, and it sits within the West Ham Archdeaconry. *London over the Border*, as it is sometimes colloquially known, has its origins within the old county boundaries of Essex. However, nowadays much of Redbridge feels solidly part of London: a hugely diverse area with excellent food options, a good transport network, and of-course, a vast range of people in various stages of wealth and poverty, often living not much more than a stone's throw away from each other.

Perhaps more surprisingly, Redbridge is quite a green borough, and protected space and parks can be found in almost every parish. The Central Line connects much of the borough which means that commuting into the City from Redbridge is relatively easy – whilst the M11 and A12 make getting out of London by car a fairly painless task. Cycling is also a popular option amongst several of the clergy in the deanery! The Borough boasts a range of good schools, both at primary and secondary level, along with opportunities for involvement in numerous clubs and activities. Music, drama and sport all abound here. Sadly, there also exists in Redbridge all the challenges of crime and social deprivation that one might expect from anywhere which seeks to pack 300,000 people into just a few square miles.

Our deanery is an active one, with 23 churches, the majority retaining their own incumbent, along with lay leaders and self-supporting ministers. Our youngest ordained member of Chapter is in their twenties and our oldest, in their nineties. Redbridge Deanery encompasses most traditions of the Church of England, and our churches have a good record of working together and supporting each other despite our occasional differences. The deanery also has a good rate of parish share payment and it is one of the largest annual contributors to Chelmsford Diocese's share collection.

We have Chapter meetings four times a year, plus a social event in the summer, whilst Deanery Synod meets three times a year. All clergy are encouraged to take an active role in the deanery. Smaller, informal groupings of clergy or parishes, exist to offer each other mutual assistance and new incumbents can be assured of a warm welcome from their colleagues, as well as support should they need it.

Statistics suggest Redbridge to be a religious borough. It is true that people here are used to seeing those of faith, albeit from a range of faiths, openly displaying their devotion to God. Faith is taken seriously here and although the Church of England may not be the majority religion in much of the borough, opportunities abound for the work of God to prosper.

I hope you will consider applying for this post within our deanery. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have any questions whatsoever.

Yours,



**Revd James Gilder,
Area Dean of Redbridge**
jbgilder@hotmail.com



PARISH PROFILE

ST GEORGE'S BARKINGSIDE



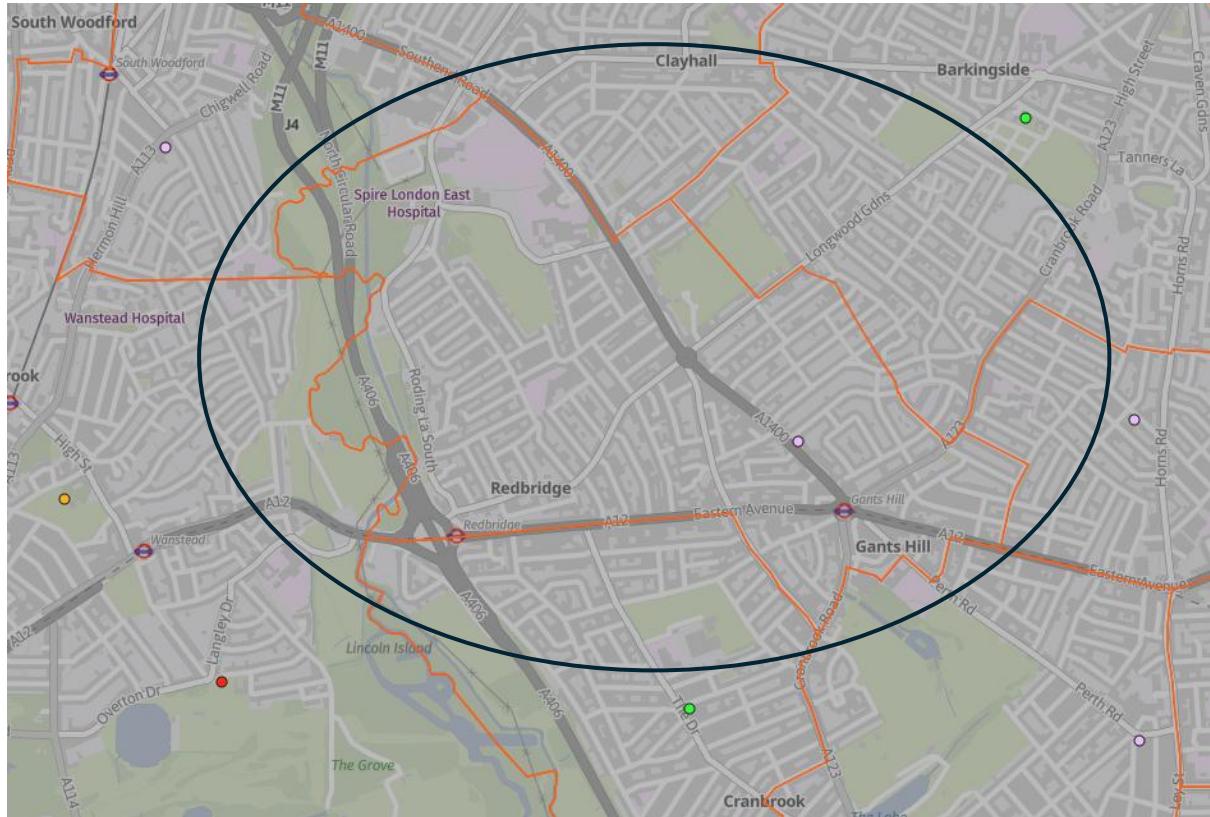
St George's dates from 1931-32 and was designed by Sir Charles Nicholson. It occupies a strategic location, close to Gants Hill underground station and central to the London Borough of Redbridge.

In recent years, the church has had a very small but loyal worshipping community. Sunday attendance averages just 10 people, and there are 4 people on the PCC.

At the 2025 APCM, the Electoral Roll was 7 people. This gives the parish one seat on Deanery Synod.

Following the resignation and retirement of the previous incumbent in June 2025, the parish seeks a new minister. It is recognised that, if the church is to remain open, change and growth will be required. It is likely that any priest appointed to the parish will be licensed as an Interim Minister whilst it is discerned whether there is a viable future for the church.

The Bishop and Archdeacon have requested that the church come into the “Minster” Mission and Ministry Unit (MMU), which is centred on the parish of All Saints’ Woodford Wells. All Saints’ would take a leading role in supporting the new incumbent in the work of renewal and revitalisation of mission.



Parish Boundary of St George's Barkingside (orange lines)

LOCATION:

St George's Church

Woodford Avenue

Ilford, IG2 6XQ

St George's is at the junction of Woodford Avenue and Gants Hill Crescent, just 5 mins walk from the centre of Gants Hill and Gants Hill underground station (Central Line). At subway exit 2, turn left and go straight up the stairs. At street level see the church and its green roof on the same side of the road ahead of you.

Buses 123, 179 and 462 stop in Woodford Avenue very near the church. 128, 150, 296 and 66 stop at Gants Hill.

The entrance to the car park is the top of Gantshill Crescent.

POPULATION DATA:

The specific population data for the **parish of St George's, Barkingside, is not publicly available** as statistics are typically recorded by the local government ward.

The population for the broader Barkingside electoral ward was **15,325 residents** according to the 2021 census data.

General demographic information for the Barkingside ward indicates:

- A diverse community with significant South Asian and Jewish populations.
- A total of 4,895 households with an average size of 3.1 people.
- A population density of approximately 9,403 people per square kilometre

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

The successful candidate will demonstrate a strong commitment to mission and will not be daunted by the challenge of revitalising the mission and ministry of St Georges.

They must be willing to work closely with the team at All Saints' Woodford Wells and – whilst the revitalisation of St George's proceeds – would be expected to share in much of All Saints' worship, staff meetings, and other activities. This would require them to be in sympathy with the vision and values of All Saints' (mission-minded, biblically based, open to the Holy Spirit, theologically conservative).

This will require a person of faith, who has great confidence in God and the gospel. They must be resilient and determined. They must be self-motivated, willing to lead by example, and always seeking to build the worshipping community. They will be able to disciple people, building on the gifts of the existing congregation and developing new leaders to share and extend the work.

Both church and hall need attention. The hall is not currently usable, but the upper hall has been renovated by the Life Interchange Christian Centre, who use it on Sundays.

Congregational giving increased in 2024 from £16,700 to £18,433 per year. However, the church only managed to pay £4,861 of the £58,336 parish share assessment.

SERVICES:



Sundays:

We invite you to share our Sunday life with God, loving God, neighbour and self. Everyone is welcome and we especially welcome newcomers and children of all kinds

9.30am Eucharist (great thanksgiving to God): meeting Jesus in the Good News, the breaking of bread and his people

After service: friendship, light refreshments, table tennis, snooker, relax

Midweek services:

Morning and Evening Prayer were said Sunday to Friday by the previous incumbent. In the interregnum, Evening Prayer is being said once a week (usually Tuesdays 7.30pm).



CHURCH INFORMATION:

Church Code: 608148

Archdeaconry: WEST HAM

Deanery: REDBRIDGE

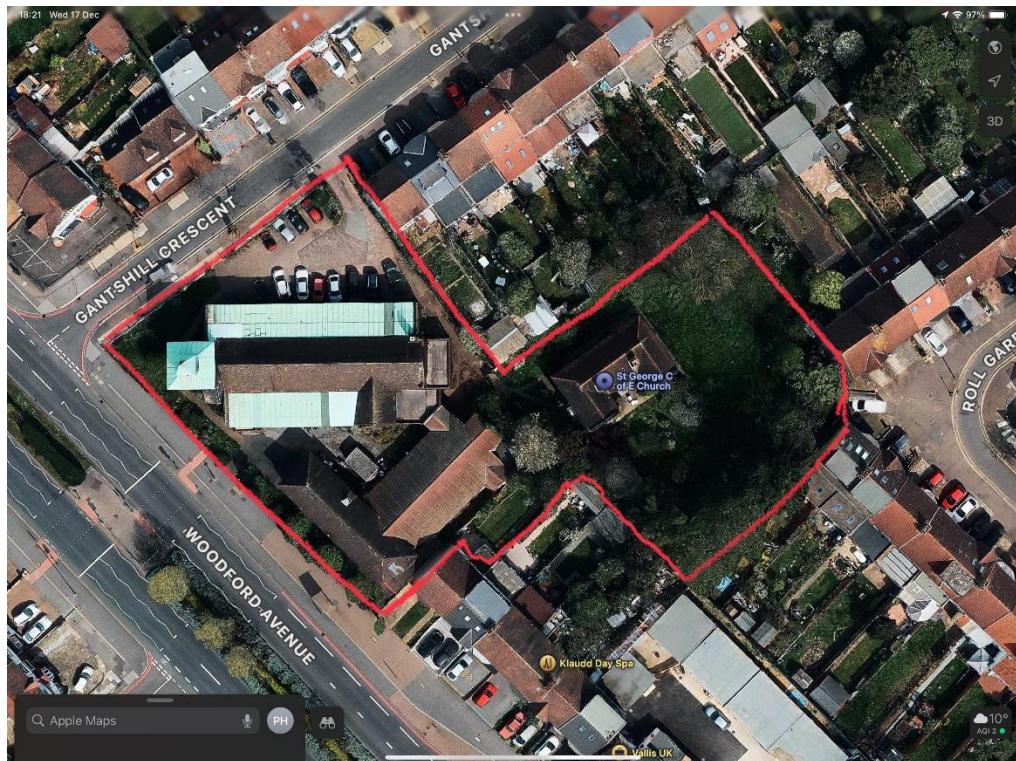
Benefice ID: 08-020J

Diocese: Chelmsford

THE VICARAGE:



The vicarage is extremely large, set in a sizeable area of land, adjacent to the church. It does however need significant work.



The Parochial Church Council of
Barkingside St George

Annual Report 2025

with
Financial Statements for the year ending
31 December 2024

Vicar

Benjamin Wallis

Churchwarden

Sanjay Kothari

Treasurer

Nicholas Goodman

Secretary

Amy Willcox

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH stands at the corner of Woodford Avenue and Gantshill Crescent, Ilford, IG2 6XQ and is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford in the Church of England. Correspondence can be addressed to the Vicar at St George's Vicarage, Woodford Avenue, Ilford, IG2 6XQ or by email to benjaminjwallis24@gmail.com

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Membership

Members of the council are either ex-officio (entitled by another office they hold – e.g. churchwarden), elected to the council at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or co-opted by the council in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Those who have served on the council during the period 1 January 2024 to 26th March 2024, when this report was approved, are:

Ex-officio members

Vicar	Benjamin Wallis <i>Chair</i>
Churchwarden	Emily Akanimoh (until 11 June 2024)
	Sanjay Kothari (from 11 June 2024 onwards)
Deanery Synod	<i>Vacancy</i>

Elected members

Vince Freyne
Nicholas Goodman <i>Vice-Chair & Treasurer</i>
Aida Ulickiene (until 26 May 2024)
Amy Willcox <i>Secretary & Parish Safeguarding Officer</i>

CHURCH SERVICES

The eucharist (Holy Communion) has been celebrated daily from Sunday to Friday. All are invited to refreshments in the local community after the Sunday eucharist. The average attendance at Sunday services during 2024 was 12. All are welcome daily at Morning Prayer, Midday Prayer and Evening Prayer which have been celebrated from Sunday to Friday.

I greeted him and was about to say something about a home being more comfortable when I suddenly realised this was his choice, which he currently prefers to the flats which have been provided for him over the years. Loving and accepting him now, as he is, seemed the better, harder thing God asked of us and so I tried to say simple words to him, expressing this. Talk of 'change' or 'improvement' can so easily become a dissatisfying way of evading loving.

An hour later a few young people came into the church during Morning Prayer and after exploring the building for a while, gathered round the drum kit where a young man, once he knew I was happy for him to play, began doing so skilfully. Prayers completed I went over to welcome them, and learned they came from Appulia (?) in southern Italy and had come to London for a few days to learn English (and have fun). As we talked, more of their group arrived and then suddenly a whole mass of denimed teenagers poured in and I was surrounded by the very age group usually missing in churches. I hope our rather different church interior communicated to them life and welcome. 'It is so welcoming', a whole series of people happily have exclaimed on coming into the church for the first time recently.

Not as different to the so-called 'homeless' as one might think are the 'uninvited' who use our car park. We sometimes ask them to give something towards the church and are grateful to the few that do. They help us accept the many who do not, yet our main help in not resenting them is the belief that our Lord gave and gives a billion times more to us and to all who gave him nothing but took everything, and that he calls us, his church, to share in his kind of loving and giving. (Even the takers give a sort of trust that they can take safely.) We have put up no more gates, barriers or bollards, though have thought about it. The broken, long abandoned barrier that lay beside the car park entrance when I arrived long ago stays in my mind - a warning of the futility of many such schemes, and of (literal) gatecrashers. A better way may be found.

Looking at 'some information of what has happened during the past year', kindly provided by our faithful administrator, Nicholas Goodman, makes me think a year is a long time, judging by how long ago some of the following seem.

Jasmine and Peter accompanying the services

After several years of singing unaccompanied - a good but hard training - it has been a relief and pleasure to sing to the lovely accompaniment provided with great sensitivity and accuracy by Jasmine, a skillful and sensitive local flautist. Less is more, people sometimes say, and though piano and organ provide a richer sound, the flute's clear unadorned melody line has seemed more helpful to our singing, as well as a pleasure to listen to.

Gifted Peter has drummed with increasing skill, subtlety and 'liturgical awareness' - being sensitive to the worship. Being a small and open-minded congregation, it has been easier for us to experiment. So, in the Spirit, on a few remarkable occasions, we discovered that the eucharistic prayer need not be a long, monotonous ordeal but, when wonderfully enriched by Peter's prayerful playing as well as more expressive, freer singing, can become a thing of wonder, pointing us to its riches and depths of meaning, mystery and life, growing in momentum and power before finally coming to its marvellous climax, the 'Great Amen', which for once seemed exactly that.

Saintsbury's

Sainsbury's we know, Singhsberrys, across Eastern Avenue, has fruit and veg, and we were Saintsbury's, just outside Sainsbury's, on Sundays between about 11.45am and 1.30pm. A motley crew of Christians, we offer free chat, coffee, smiles, hot chocolate, jokes, soft drinks, waves, sandwiches and prayers to any that want them: we are glad some do. All this is at the large public bench in the 'glades' of the Gants Hill roundabout - what a difference a few trees make - while people and traffic flow past.

Often there are just two of us to start with, sober but hopeful, amidst a wonderful diversity of people of all ages, genders, colours, classes, races and faiths. An hour or so later, find six or so of us, laughing and talking about the world, God and ourselves in a surprisingly intimate, fresh, harmonious and lively way: it is loving, really, with a God-given cast changing slightly each week and a surprising amount of peace. One of our regulars recently movingly confessed he had come round the corner the previous Sunday, hoping to find us there, only to be disappointed when we were not. Sorry, we told him, we were here earlier that day.

Any regret I felt at not being able to provide soft drinks and fresh bread, as I had done at a similar visit long ago, was more than offset by seeing the children 'drink' in what was, for many of them, the new experience of a Christian church, and seem to find as nourishing as I did our conversations and discussions. After gathering round the font and exploring baptism, one child asked if he could be baptised.

From there we went to the altar where I rehearsed, described and explained some of the words and actions of the eucharist which they seemed to grasp with a wonderful, natural - or supernatural - understanding. Describing how the bread of communion, while still being bread, is something way beyond - is Jesus himself - I suggested even a crumb is enough, as I learned when that was all left me once: 'even a few atoms would be enough', I dared know and say for the first time.

This they understood - I think - those fifty or so children and their ten or so teachers and helpers, a majority of whom were Muslim: they were spiritual people. Having anticipated many would be Muslim, I had willingly prepared to provide a modest picture of our faith and practice which I hoped would be accurate yet not offensive to them. To my happy surprise, I soon realised that neither teachers nor children expected any such dilution of our faith and that, inspired by their generous openness, I was able to offer them, if anything, a bolder and livelier expression of it.

Sanjay - new churchwarden.

Our new churchwarden, Sanjay, is not only a lone churchwarden but a lone - and the first - Christian in his family. Congratulations to him, and many thanks for his steadfast contributions during the year since he responded to my invitation to the congregation to consider serving in this way; warm thanks also to several past churchwardens who have guided and supported him

Several visits of teams of bellringers from other churches.

A whole series of bands, as teams of bellringers are called, from other churches have come, rung and enjoyed our eight bells while at the same time delighting those in our local community who love the sound of church bells.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

The year overall

Giving by the congregation, our main source of income, increased from £16,700 to £18,433 this year. We have only paid £4,861 of the £58,336 Parish Share the Diocese asked us to pay.

Gift Aid

Those giving to the church who are tax-payers are able to increase the value of their donations to the church by 25% at no extra cost to themselves through the Gift Aid scheme. Thank you to those who did so. This enabled us to gain an extra £5,000.

Giving to the church

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Regular giving	16,705	15,090
Other money given at services	1,728	1,610
Other	<u>828</u>	<u>2,986</u>
Sub-total	19,261	19,686
Gift Aid tax refund	<u>5,000</u>	<u>3,857</u>
Total	<u>£24,261</u>	<u>£23,543</u>

Life Interchange Christian Centre (LICC)

LICC, who worship in our Upper Hall, reimbursed us £3,073 for the cost of their electricity, gas and other expenses - details of which can be found on page 17.

Reserves

Three church funds contain reserves for flowers, roof repairs and bells that can only be used for their specific purposes.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF BARKINGSIDE ST GEORGE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Receipts and Payments Account

	see note	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	Total
		Fund £	Fund £	Fund £	2024 £	2023 £
Receipts						
Donations	1	24,261	--	--	24,261	22,118
Income from charitable activities	2	157	--	--	157	235
Trading activities and fundraising		--	--	--	--	723
Investment income		1,121	--	--	1,121	842
Life Interchange Christian Centre	3	3,073	--	--	3,073	2,185
Total receipts		28,612	--	--	28,612	26,103
Payments						
Church activities						
Donations to charities		--	--	--	--	--
Parish Share		4,861	--	--	4,861	14,583
Vicar's expenses	4	1,427	--	--	1,427	1,435
Totals		6,288	--	--	6,288	16,018
Expenses						
Church running costs	5	10,846	--	477	11,323	8,172
Halls running costs	6	7,045	--	--	7,045	7,554
Totals		17,891	--	477	18,368	15,726
Total payments		24,179	--	477	24,656	31,744
Excess of receipts over payments		4,433	--	(477)	3,956	(5,641)
Gains / losses in investment income		--	--	203	203	762
Cash at bank on 1st January 2024		10,455	8,195	16,385	35,035	
Cash at bank on 31st December 2024		14,928	8,195	16,110	39,233	

Notes

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<hr/>					
.1 Donations					
Planned giving (weekly envelopes and standing orders)	16,705	--	--	16,705	15,090
Loose collection at services	1,728	--	--	1,728	1,610
All other donations	828	--	--	828	2,986
Gift Aid tax recovered	5,000	--	--	5,000	3,857
Grants	--	--	--	--	760
Totals	24,261	--	--	24,261	24,303
.2 Church charitable activities					
Funerals	157	--	--	157	235
Totals	157	--	--	157	235
.3. Life Interchange Christian Centre - reimbursements					
Gas and electricity	2,875	--	--	2,875	2,118
Copyright and music reproduction licence (50%)	71	--	--	71	67
Annual servicing of gas heaters	127	--	--	127	--
Totals	3,073	--	--	3,073	2,185
.4 Vicar's expenses					
Vicar's internet and telephone	1,037	--	--	1,037	925
General expenses	390	--	--	390	510
Totals	1,427	--	--	1,427	1,435
.5. Church running costs					
Utilities (gas, electricity and water)	5,090	--	--	5,090	2,661
Insurance	1,980	--	--	1,980	1,874
Music licence	142	--	--	142	133
Maintenance	2,024	--	--	2,024	802
Roof repairs	--	--	--	--	228
Church repairs	--	--	--	--	--
Printing, stationery & copier maintenance	--	--	--	--	687
Cleaning materials	--	--	--	--	8
Upkeep of services (candles, sound system, etc.)	1,496	--	477	1,973	779
PAS Accounting fees	--	--	--	--	--
Examination fee	--	--	--	--	--
Upkeep of churchyard	55	--	--	55	--
Administration	59	--	--	59	999
Totals	10,846	--	477	11,323	8,171
.6 Halls running costs					
Insurance	1,980	--	--	1,980	1,874
Utility bills	4,301	--	--	4,301	3,609
Maintenance	764	--	--	764	2,071
Totals	7,045	--	--	7,045	7,554

.7 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments format.

.8 The CBF Investment Account is valued at mid-market rate at 31 December 2024 and the variation from last year is shown as an unrealised gain. These funds are moved to the Flower Memorial Fund (restricted).