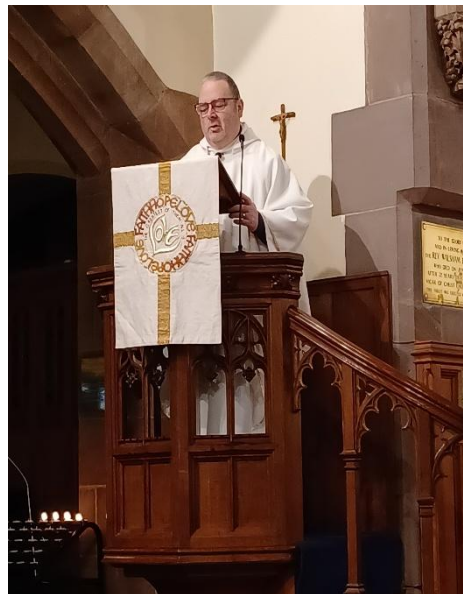


Christ Church Willaston

Registered Charity No.1210733

Annual Report 2024





2024 Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church, Willaston

Aims and Purposes

Christ Church PCC has a responsibility to promote in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. Additionally, the PCC is entrusted with the maintenance of the church and the churchyard although in 2024, the long – awaited re-ordering of the interior of the church building began. The aim of the re-ordering is to provide for the parish an inclusive, safe and flexible space to be used not only for worship but for community focused activities and private hires for businesses, meetings, and celebrations. Commenced in September 2024, the re-ordering is now well underway with handover anticipated in June 2025.

Objectives and Activities

Our services and worship practices embody faith through prayer, scripture, music, and sacrament. In particular, we strive to empower ordinary individuals to embody their faith within our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer, fostering knowledge of the gospel and developing trust in Jesus.
- Providing pastoral care for parishioners.
- Engaging in outreach initiatives.

The PCC is dedicated to ensuring that as many individuals as possible have the opportunity to participate in worship at Christ Church and become integral members of our parish community. To effectively facilitate this work, it is imperative that we preserve the integrity of Christ Church and its surrounding environment, whilst also striving to incorporate diverse groups in its mission.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and prayer

The PCC collaborated closely with Revd. Gordon throughout his tenure, and with Fr. Lyndon, to provide a diverse range of services throughout the week and year, which our community finds both beneficial and spiritually enriching.

The average weekly attendance was 62 (36 at the 9.00am service and 26 at 10.30am service), but this number increased at festivals, and special services. The timing of the 9.00am Sunday service has proved difficult for some members of the congregation and numbers fell slightly over the winter

For the majority of the year, the church continued to welcome new individuals to our **9:00am Parish Eucharist (Holy Communion) service** and our **10:30am All-Age Worship**, held each Sunday. We have been encouraging more families and young people to join our church so

that they may experience a more engaging worship experience with contemporary hymns and songs.

Morning Prayer provided a tranquil, intimate, and reflective setting for worship, with two Morning Prayer services held each week: one on **Mondays at 9:00am** and another on the **first Wednesday of each month at 10:30am**.

Bi-monthly Choral Evensong provided a popular and joyful worship opportunity. Scirard Lancelyn-Green and Colin Porter, the gifted organist, led their choir, and the services proved highly successful. For 2025, once the reordering is completed, it is anticipated that the regular service pattern will resume, and that Choral Evensong will continue.

Throughout the year, several festivals and special services were held, which are well attended and serve as a catalyst for newcomers to begin attending regular Sunday services, one of the most popular being our Taizé service, which offered the congregation a chance to worship God through reflection, silent prayer and chanting. We had a Taizé choir that provided chanting and singing prayers.

In 2024, we observed satisfactory attendance at Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday Services.

Since the initial indications of the need for an alternative venue for worship, Willaston Methodist Church consistently demonstrated exceptional hospitality. Every request was met without undue difficulty, and we showed deep gratitude for their unwavering support during the transitional period.

From the end of September 2024, we were responsible for organising the two Sunday services, ensuring equal time for both styles of service. Our service time is **9:00 am** each week. Given the limitations imposed by our absence from Christ Church, these arrangements have proved remarkably successful.

On Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Carol Service, the two churches collaborated on joint services that were well-attended. We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to these events. We hope that these positive experiences can be replicated in the future.

The Bishop of Chester presided over **Midnight Mass**. The **Christmas Day** services for both Christ Church and the Methodist Church were held independently and were well-received.

In addition to our regular services, we provided opportunities for our community to commemorate and express gratitude to God at significant life milestones. Eleven **Baptisms** affirmed the gift of life; Two **marriages** involved public vows exchanged with God's blessing; and seven **funeral services** offered a space for friends and family to express their grief and offer thanks for the life that has come to an end and commend the person into God's keeping.

Church Electoral Roll.

There were **103** parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll in 2024. The Church Electoral Roll figures are in line with the 2023 figures and in respect of average weekly attendance figures the numbers have been maintained.

Deanery Synod

Christ Church elected three members of Wirral South Deanery Synod for 2024: Helen Heath, Viv Ley and Anne Hughes (who replaced Ruth McElroy in the summer). Our new Rural Dean, Revd Vicky Barrett, was commissioned in April, replacing Revd Beth Glover, whom we thanked for the tremendous work she had done in leading the Deanery.

In the Spring, we heard from Revd Debbie Wilkinson, Mission Lead at the Wirral Waters development in Birkenhead. In the Autumn, Wendy Luxon, a Dementia Friends' Ambassador, talked about her work. Both evenings proved interesting and informative and offered new ideas for Worship and Work in our local communities. We finished the year with a Hymns of Praise Service. Meetings are open to all members of our local Anglican churches.

The Church

In 2023, Christ Church PCC welcomed Revd. Gordon MacLeod as its new Priest in Charge. During his tenure, alongside Fr Lyndon Bannon, Revd. MacLeod led the PCC as part of his responsibilities. Although Revd. MacLeod had to retire due to health reasons in September 2024, the PCC was able to continue making significant strides in the Church Reordering Project and was delighted to see the project officially commence in September 2024 in collaboration with the Re-ordering Project Group and the Re-ordering Project Fundraising Group.

Our connection with Weatherstones Care Home has remained steadfast, and monthly services were conducted there throughout 2024, led by both Revd. MacLeod and several lay church members.

During term time, Revd. MacLeod visited our local Church of England Primary School for a weekly school assembly. The relationship between the school and the church flourished, largely due to the efforts of Revd. MacLeod and our other Foundation Governors, Christine Smith and Anita Mitchell, in this area. The PCC was granted an opportunity to visit the school in the autumn, during which they were guided through the school by the new headteacher, Mr. Gary Graham. The visit proved to be both enjoyable and beneficial.

Successful Easter and end-of-year services were held in the church. The school Harvest service was held in the school and led by our Foundation Governors.

Revd. MacLeod served as a Foundation School Governor and on the Advisory Group of the Johnson Recreation Ground.

Home Communion visits were provided by both Revd. MacLeod and Fr. Lyndon Bannon to those in need, upon request and with the consent of the individual. Pastoral care visits were also provided to those in need.

Prior to the reordering, a rota ensured that the church was open on a Saturday morning for private prayer.

Since Revd. Gordon MacLeod's retirement, Fr. Lyndon Bannon ably covered the interregnum, for which the PCC gives thanks.

Regular meetings were held in church and elsewhere, including the Men's Group and the UpLIFT Ladies' group. Both activities were organised and facilitated throughout 2024 by Fr. Lyndon Bannon and his wife, Claire, to whom the PCC gives thanks for their providing a diverse range of enjoyable events throughout the year.

Other groups held meetings in various locations within the parish. The Mothers' Union and the Knit and Natter group continued to meet at the Methodist Church, while the Home Group met biweekly at Helen Heath's home to engage in a relaxed and informal exploration of the Bible.

A dedicated fund was established to cover any costs associated with maintaining our magnificent organ in optimal condition. The PCC gives thanks to our resident organist, Professor David Speechley, for his unwavering service and commitment to the organ's upkeep.

At the time of writing this report, the Scout Hut is in a state of disrepair, and demolition is pending to facilitate the space gained for further utilisation.

The Churchyard maintenance, supervised by Mike Smith, our Operations and Maintenance Manager remains at the time of writing the report, under the care of an external gardening service, which is supplemented by volunteer assistance.

Sacristy Team

During 2024 the Sacristy Team was privileged to serve Revd. McLeod, Fr. Lyndon and the Body of Christ in Willaston.

Sadly, we saw the resignation of Revd. Gordon McLeod. It was a delight for us to serve at the Eucharist and in many other ways. His support and encouragement aided those new to the team and recognised their Service and Witness. Our joy in service continues at the time of writing with Fr. Lyndon whose steadfast contribution and kindness is valued by all.

The members of the team, Chris Brown-Bolton, Alan Roberts, Chris Parry, Charles Hurst and Stephen Harrington performed a number of roles within the Eucharist. The training of the team was a vital element in ensuring that each celebration was fully served even if the full Sacristy team is not available. A strong camaraderie made the task more rewarding.

At the time of writing, we look forward to our return to Christ Church and to supporting a new vigorous Mission as instructed in Matthew 28:19-20 from the new facilities of the Community Hub, serving a new Incumbent and growing the Church family within our village community.

Sacristan

Operations and Maintenance

Throughout 2024, Mr Mike Smith guided us in compliance with current health and safety and fire safety standards, for which the PCC gives thanks.

This last twelve months were a busy and unsettled period for the church, which has had to prepare for and deliver an empty building to our contractors, so that they can carry out our reordering works.

The O&M report this year centred around the following:

A: The reordering.

1. The church reordering project.
2. Actions identified by the independent "Fire Safety risk assessment" of October 2022, (integrated into the reordering project).
3. Actions from the EICR1B.2C Electrical Installation condition report of December 2022, (integrated into the reordering project).

As can be seen above, the identified regulatory fire safety and electrical safety works, required for our compliance with HSE legislation, were incorporated into the reordering project to enable a fully integrated scope of work to be managed as one project.

It should be noted that the combination of the items defined above will provide a renewed, compliant and updated church building, ready for our full engagement with the community.

B: "Caring for God's Acre" Graveyard Management Plan.

The PCC approved the implementation of the Reordering Procurement Group's "*Caring for God's Acre*" graveyard management plan. The plan was discussed with our garden management company who expressed enthusiastic support and at the time of writing, is engaged in the implementation of the project.

The local church school confirmed its wish to be involved with the project when we begin the landscaping and when we are able to include the scout hut site after the building has been demolished. However, at the time of writing, this is still "work in progress" and is to be developed over the coming months with the contractor.

The plan provides an appropriate and beautiful setting for the building which will display to our community and visitors, our continued care for our site and the building, respecting those who have died, while allowing flora and fauna to thrive in a variety of informal settings.

Further Notes:

As a church, we still have significant work to undertake on the fabric of the building, due to the condition of the sandstone structure. The work will require scaffolding for access and significant costs to rectify.

Mike Smith.

Re-ordering Procurement Group

Work began on the re-ordering project in September 2024, although preparations began well in advance of the physical work commencing. For example, during July, we saw the removal of the congregation to Willaston Methodist Church so that the organ could be dismantled and removed to the contractors responsible for its refurbishment. The pews were removed in August together

with all other possessions and artefacts belonging to the church. Most items were then placed into storage so that the building, when it was handed over to the contractors, was empty. Work began in September with the contractors G Jones Builders Ltd. At the end of December 2024, we had to face additional costs for unknown problems with the building, although at the time of writing, we are still within our budget, which included contingencies for such possible problems.

- The weather is causing some difficulties and is slowing down the lime plastering process.
- The structural building repairs in the north aisle and northeast wing were on the way to completion at the end of December 2024. The rusted reinforcement bars and spalled concrete were being treated and repaired by a specialist sub-contractor (but we can only deal with it as best we can without taking the building down and rebuilding it from eaves level up. It is an ongoing risk for the future that cannot reasonably be avoided but we can minimise the risk by inspecting regularly for leakage and condensation and taking immediate and appropriate action when needed).
- The timber roof strengthening was completed, and new ceiling joists and insulation were being installed as at the end of December 2024.
- The existing exposed stud partition wall between the Sacristy and the Organ Chamber was being boarded ready to receive plasterboard.
- We sought a practical solution to the latest requirements for expansion joint provision in the engineered oak floor which required 20mm instead of 12mm. At the time of writing, we hope that we can deal with most of this around the perimeter.
- The external repointing and repair of stonework on the north and west walls of the north aisle was included in our Faculty and an extension to our Faculty to include the external walls of the Rear Entrance, Meeting Room and Sacristy was approved in readiness for when we have the funding available to do it. The contractor confirmed that he would like to quote for this and discussed with our quantity surveyor to see if his quotation makes it possible to incorporate all the stonework repointing and repair to the north aisle and northeast wing in his contract. We await the answer at the time of writing.
- We made three payments to the contractor and have made two applications for recovery of 96.69% of VAT under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, the payment of one of which has been received.
- The scouts have commenced on the demolition of the scout hut. They have stripped out the inside of the building ready for the demolition of the structure.

At the time of writing, work is continuing and entering its final phase, although the final handover date is anticipated in late May 2025, it has yet to be confirmed as the project moves through the winter months, when weather conditions can impact progress.

Bill Hardman on behalf of Christ Church Willaston RPG

Re-ordering Fundraising

Fundraising for Christ Church and for this project started nearly twenty years ago when we achieved Planning Consent that led to the sale of the Church Hall site. A key condition of that consent was that we would create Community space within our main Church building. It is no accident that the outline plan to achieve that goal very closely matches that which we are developing now.

To allow a start on the actual building works we raised over £66,000 from an anonymous committed donor, (Around £46,000 was match-funding the accumulation of proceeds from events and general donations)

- £40,000 (£20,000 each) from Benefact Trust and Garfield Weston Trust,
- £5,000 from Lord Leverhulme's Charity
- Significant sums from some of our current and former Church family members.
- We had support from our General Funds for items that properly were matters of maintenance and care of our building rather than a cost to the project.

The fact that access to additional funding from some of our current Grant givers may be time barred, makes it vital that our handling of current Grant resources is seen to be focussed on the

complete delivery of the project. To satisfy that expectation, at the time of writing this report, we are preparing a series of statements on progress for each of those bodies which hopefully will show significant actions towards delivery of the Community Hub as an operating entity. To that end I shall be seeking comment from each Sub-Group to demonstrate what we have done towards those ends.

Chris Brown-Bolton

Pastoral Care

Due to illness or age, several parishioners were unable to attend church services. Revd. Gordon MacLeod and Fr. Lyndon Bannon made themselves available to visit those who have requested it, offering communion either at their homes or in hospitals. They also extended visits to bereaved families, for which the PCC gives thanks.

Additionally, throughout 2024, we had a dedicated group of volunteers who continued to maintain contact with those who were ill or unable to leave their homes due to other reasons. Their efforts ensured that these individuals remain connected to church life.

Mission and Evangelism

Throughout the year, our mission at Christ Church remained steadfast in its commitment to assisting those in need, embodying the principles of our faith. The church continued to engage in fundraising efforts that supported various charitable organisations, including *Christian Aid*. Additionally, we actively encouraged our parishioners to contribute to the local *Food Bank*. Furthermore, we diligently collected donations, gifts, and presents for *Wirral Ark* and *Charles Thompson Mission*, which continue to provide support to the homeless population. Additionally, we supported *Teams4U*, a programme dedicated to empowering communities and transforming lives through education, health, and humanitarian aid.

Ecumenical Relationships

Neston & District Churches Together, a vibrant ecumenical committee, was chaired in 2024 by members of Parkgate and Neston United Reformed Church. Ecumenical services held during the year included a Service of Prayer for Christian Unity followed by the AGM (in January) and a Christian Aid Service (in May). In October, we welcomed visitors from Neston and District to Willaston Methodist Church for a Service of Hope for Creation and in December, we helped to organise the ever-popular Carols in Neston Market Square. The World Day of Prayer Service held at Christ Church Willaston attracted a large congregation and raised over £500, as we turned our thoughts to Palestine. Prayer Breakfasts and fundraising events for Fairtrade and Christian Aid projects were well-supported. Christian Aid Week collections raised £4,000. The annual Christian Aid Sponsored Walk raised over £1,500 and the Bucket Collection at Gordale Garden Centre, nearly £350. £140 was donated to the Christian Aid Gaza Appeal.

Christ Church and Willaston Methodist Church joined together for Pentecost and Harvest Services on the Green and for the annual Service of Remembrance in November and Candlelit Carols in December. Meet the Nativity Characters was enthusiastically supported by children and staff of Willaston CE Primary School.

From September 2024, Willaston Methodist Church has been outstanding in its generosity of providing the Christ Church congregation with the use of their building for formal worship at 9am every Sunday whilst the Christ Church building re-ordering takes place and the whole congregation extends its thanks and gratitude to the Methodist congregation for their generosity and welcome during this time.

Fellowship

The church actively engaged with the broader community through special services, such as Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Harvest, as well as organising events to foster a sense of community within the church.

In 2024, we successfully hosted an Open Day, inviting members of the wider community to visit and discuss our plans for church redevelopment. This was followed by a series of highly popular fundraising events, including a *Give and Bake sale*, a *Hidden Garden Day*, a *Summer Musical Concert*, and a *Murder Mystery Night*.

Our planned events significantly contributed to the church's visibility as a central hub within the community, attracting not only regular churchgoers but also newcomers who have not previously visited Christ Church.

Furthermore, fellowship opportunities, provided through various groups and gatherings outside the church, encouraged individuals to explore Christian beliefs and engage in shared experiences.

Safeguarding

Anne Hughes and Susan Schwab were elected Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and Lead Recruiter (LR) respectively for Christ Church Willaston in 2024.

A new email contact – aswillaston@outlook.com was created and monitored jointly by the PSO and LR. The contact email address was shared through Safeguarding (SG) posters in church and on the Christ Church website – christchurchwillaston.uk.

Both the PSO and the LR set up equal access to the Diocese SG Dashboard (which is an online tool that gives assurance to parishes that they are complying with the statutory requirements and Church of England policies, or else it explains what actions need to be taken. The dashboard comprises a list of statements, each accompanied by a coloured light: Green is good, Amber for action and Red means urgent).

Both the PSO and the LR completed the relevant mandatory Diocese SG training namely the Basic Safeguarding Awareness, Foundation Safeguarding Training, Safer Recruitment and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse. (These SG courses are online and repeated every 3 years and are accessed through the Church of England safeguarding portal). The PSO completed all requisite training and will be completing additional online training in 2025.

Our church adopted the Church of England's SG policy, and this policy was displayed in the Methodist church.

As a result of the SG Leadership Training, an action plan was written.

The action plan outlined the following points:

- To create an environment in which safeguarding is not feared but is spoken about openly. Safeguarding is now an integral part of the PCC agenda and its position within the agenda indicates its importance.
- For the PCC to have a transparent and united approach in meetings and for people to be able to voice their opinions in a safe place and be heard. A PCC Code of Conduct has been approved and will appear on our church website. Membership of the PCC (both present and future members) is conditional on acceptance of this Code of Conduct.
- For all members of our church in leadership roles to have completed the required SG training (this includes potential new roles when we reopen in summer 2025 such as those working with children) This also includes the safer recruitment as we are currently in vacancy. To date, All PCC members have completed the mandatory Diocese SG training namely the Basis Safeguarding Awareness, Foundation Safeguarding Training, and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse. These courses will be repeated every 3 years.
- To have a visual SG presence in our church when we reopen. Posters have been prepared and will be placed strategically around the church.

A communication policy was also written to safeguard our presence online and through the written word. (This will appear on our church website). A decision was made by the PCC to discontinue our X (Twitter) page and to restrict our Facebook page to advertising church services/ events and to disable the comments section.

At the time of writing, we are currently looking at how all communication is peer reviewed before going out to the wider community to ensure it represents our church correctly.

A photograph/video consent form, requiring signatures of all congregation members before photos/ videos are used online or via hard copies. (In future, this will be reviewed periodically).

Visitors/non-regular attendees will be asked to sign a consent form. These will need to be available at all church events).

Anne Hughes Parish Safeguarding Officer

Home Group

Home group met every first and third Wednesday evening each month throughout 2024. (It is an informal meeting that starts with a cuppa and fellowship together). We explored a bible passage or some verses of scripture and then talked about it sharing our own thoughts and interpretation. We shared our experiences and what we have learned from the passage and how to apply it to our daily lives. We ended with a short time of prayer together.

We studied the Bible Society Book of Romans Course. There was a film to watch, and it was unpacked and explained by Andrew Ollerton. There were questions to discuss and a section of Romans that was read and explored together.

For the future, all are welcome to join us and enjoy a time of fellowship, exploring our Christian faith, the bible and sharing and learning off each other.

Helen Heath

Men's Group

During 2024 the Men's Group ran a varied programme of events. The group meets once a month (usually on a Tuesday or Thursday), and alternates between a talk in church and a pub social.

The speakers at the group in 2024 were all 'in-house' and included: Chris Brown-Bolton, Charles Hurst, Alan Roberts, James Ayliffe and Paul Spivey. It was good to learn more about our fellow group members and talks included a description of an expeditionary journey to the Antarctic, as well as missionary work in Tibet! All meetings in church begin with either Evening Prayer or Compline (Night Prayer).

We have been very appreciative of the warm welcome given to us by Willaston Methodist Church, who have allowed to use their premises whilst the Parish Church has been out of action.

Our pub socials have included visits to Chester, Heswall, Childer Thornton, Liverpool, Bromborough and even Willaston! In the summer, we held an 'extraordinary meeting' on a Saturday afternoon, and travelled across to Liverpool to visit the Azvex Brewery and the Carnival Brewery Tap! What was even better, was that the sun shone!

The group continues to grow, now boasting twenty-five members, although we always accept and understand not everyone can attend everything all the time!

We look forward to welcoming you in 2025 - our 'rule' is simple: come to what you can and want, don't come to what you can't and don't!

Fr Lyndon

UpLIFT

In 2024, UpLIFT moved nearer to its tenth year, having formed in May 2016 in order to provide a space for both members and non-members of the church to come together for a time of fellowship and friendship.

The group met throughout 2024 monthly on the second or third Thursday evening and was free to all who wish to come (charges were made for tickets or materials as an event required). The group welcomed all ladies whether they are Christians or not. We participated in a very wide variety of events including walking, theatre visits, craft activities and meals together.

Since the last APCM, we have welcomed Anne Hughes in April 2024 to come and tell us about her visit to The Holy Land. We then had a very interesting visit to the RNLI Lifeboat Station in Hoylake in May, followed by a summer walk around Stanney Woods in June. We came together for a shared supper in the church grounds in July and met in Pollard's Inn in August. As autumn came, we held our final meeting inside our 'old' church building as we prepared to move out for the reordering work. This meeting was a joint event with the Men's Group where we listened to Fr Lyndon telling us about our church building and the importance of some of the key features inside. In October we met at the Liverpool Empire to see an outstanding performance of *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang* and we followed this by a visit to Gordale in November to view their Christmas shop. Christine Smith kindly led us in a super Christmas sing along in the Methodist Schoolroom

for our December meeting. As we come to write our report, we have a meal planned for January 2025 and further events throughout the coming year.

At the time of writing, we are unable to meet in our church building, although we have continued to facilitate a wide range of experiences each month and we still have more exciting activities booked and planned for the year ahead.

Details about our group and the events we have planned can be found by speaking to Helen Heath or Claire Bannon.

Claire Bannon

Mothers' Union

Throughout 2024, Mothers' Union supported work with families locally, nationally and internationally through prayer and practical action. Our strong, supportive group of members in Willaston enjoyed meeting monthly to hear about local initiatives and take part in fund-raising activities. During the year we heard from Methodist friends of their visits to charitable projects in Nepal and Zambia and heard about projects concerning the environment and local history. We enjoyed garden visits, quizzes and afternoon teas as well as church services for our annual MU Wave of Prayer and Deanery Advent Service, held this year at Neston.

All are welcome to join us.

Viv Ley

Parish Magazine

The 10 issues of the Parish News were distributed to all parishioners who subscribed, as a printed magazine with regular updates on the reordering project. The magazine kept parishioners informed of important matters concerning our church and community, both locally and more widely, acting as outreach. As ever we were extremely grateful to the village, both as readers and as contributors who made their submissions each month, as it kept many informed and interested in their activities. Contributions were welcomed. Willaston CofE Primary School's excellent use of their space in this year of change to alerting the village of their progress is a good example. Gratitude is due to all of the volunteer distributors who delivered, come rain or shine, and to Viv Ley who maintained the organisation of the volunteers, distribution and subscriptions.

We are now able to provide the magazine in a basic 'read aloud' version for any subscriber who may have a need for such a version and have an internet connection. The technology has improved to a level such that most computers' narration function, with Wi-Fi connection, will read in a pleasant voice. However, Willaston is beyond its accurate pronunciation capability! Away from an internet connection, but with a moderately up to date computer, narration will work although the voice may be mechanical.

Susan Schwab

Website and Social Media

Following the revamp and launch of the Christ Church website last year, the site, www.christchurchwillaston.uk aimed in 2024 to foster the integration of the church with the village community.

It provided comprehensive information about church and community activities, groups, and events held monthly and annually. The revamped website and the reintroduction of Facebook enhanced our reach and engagement with a broader audience.

The website proved useful for contact by the wider community through its 'Contact Us' facility and as a result, provided a streamlined process for booking funerals, baptisms, and weddings. It also provided information about various annual celebrations throughout the liturgical calendar, giving people the opportunity to find out more about faith.

The website proved a useful 24/7, 365 days a year resource for those who do not currently visit church or receive the Parish News to find out what's happening at Christ Church. It's blend of community information and prayer resources which linked to the Church of England website provided those seeking further information about formal worship and faith with a quick and easy

menu to browse and the opportunity to find out more by contacting anytime via the 'Contact Us' page or linking directly to the Church of England website.

Vital Safeguarding information was also made available on the site as well as links and QR codes which enable faster, electronic giving, which is a vital part of ongoing fundraising.

Jane Murray

Volunteers

A dedicated team of volunteers has worked tirelessly to make the church a vibrant and welcoming place of worship. As the church continues to evolve, it aspires to become a lively community hub, actively engaging with the broader village population.

Thanks should be given to the flower arrangers, cleaners, gardeners, hospitality volunteers, sides persons, the RPG, the fundraising group, finance team, social media and web hosts, school foundation governors, churchwardens, the PCC and PCC Secretary and last but not least, our dedicated and hardworking leaders, Revd. Gordon MacLeod and Fr. Lyndon Bannon.

Their unwavering commitment and expertise have been invaluable to the church's success.

The time and skills employed by this marvellous team on a rotated basis ensures the seamless operation of the church and the smooth delivery of all services throughout the year.

Special thanks also extend to Professor David Speechley and Mrs Christine Smith, our talented organist and pianist. Their weekly dedication and expertise are greatly appreciated.

Churchwardens

Wardens Report

The churchwardens reiterate as above and extend their thanks to to all those who have generously dedicated their time and expertise to maintaining our church and churchyard throughout the year. While it is impossible to name each individual, please be assured that your contributions have not gone unnoticed. Thank you all for your unwavering support!

The churchwardens are grateful to everyone who has contributed to church events throughout the year and eagerly anticipate future occasions that will foster a sense of community and tradition within the parish.

It is vital to record our profound indebtedness to Revd. Gordon MacLeod for his invaluable contribution to the life of the church during his tenure with us. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Fr. Lyndon Bannon and his wife, Claire, for their unwavering support during the current vacancy period. It is a privilege to acknowledge that for many years and in numerous ways, they have continued to support us.

In conclusion, the Churchwardens anticipate the continued growth and prosperity of the church community as the church expands to encompass a new community hub.

Churchwardens

Parochial Church Council – the P.C.C.

The current PCC comprises of 16 active members and regular meetings have been held, usually on the first or second Monday evening of each month. Members who have served at any time since 1st January 2024 to the date of this report are:

Ex officio members:

- Priest in Charge: The Revered Gordon MacLeod
- Assistant Priest: The Revd. Lyndon Bannon
- Warden: Mrs Viv Ley Warden and Representative on Deanery Synod
- Warden: Dr Martin Woodhead (Vice Chair)
-

Elected members (12 plus 2 co-opted):

- Mrs Helen Heath, Representative on Deanery Synod
- Mrs Ruth McElroy, Representative on Deanery Synod (until July 2024)

- Mrs Anne Hughes (from April 2024) and Representative on Deanery Synod (from June 2024. Parish Safeguarding Officer from September 2024.
- Mr Chris Brown-Bolton
- Prof David Cumberland
- Mr Bill Hardman (co-opted)
- Mr Tim Ley (Treasurer)
- Jane Murray (Secretary)
- Mrs Jean Porter (until August 2024)
- Mrs Susan Schwab (from April 2024), Lead Recruiter from September 2024.
- Mr Andy Smith (co-opted)
- Mr Mike Smith
- Prof David Speechley
- Mr Paul Spivey
- Mrs Christine Parry (from Sept 2024)

Structure, governance, and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England.

The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules.

At Christ Church the membership of the PCC comprises our Priest in Charge, Assistant Priest, Churchwardens, and members elected by those members of the congregation are on

the electoral roll of the church. 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 full PCC met monthly during the year, with almost full attendance and dealt with all aspects of parish life.

In 2024, the PCC became a Registered Charity (Number 1210733) and is answerable to the Charity Commission in terms of behaviour and operational procedures. As a Registered Charity, this places additional responsibilities with our PCC members, who are all Trustees [of the Registered Charity] and in terms of our Accounting, as accounts will be produced for the Charity Commission. It is hoped that as a Registered Charity, more fundraising opportunities will be accessible to ensure that our mission is achievable, and that income is maximised to ensure the safe and appropriate use of and running of the church by the PCC.

Administrative information

Christ Church is situated on Neston Road, Willaston. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is: -

Christ Church, Neston Road, Willaston, Neston, Cheshire CH64 2TL.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and is a Registered Charity (Number 1210733) under the Charities Act, 2011.

Approved by the P.C.C. on _____April 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

**Dr Martin Woodhead,
Vice-Chair, PCC,
Christ Church.**