

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
St Peter, Colchester

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 December 2019

Priest-in-Charge
Rev Mark Wallace

Associate Minister
Rev Aella Gage

Bank
Santander

Hon. Treasurer
Mr Richard Lawn

Independent Examiner
Mr Tony Allen

Registered Charity Number: 1163262

Aims and Purposes

St Peter's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, Rev Mark Wallace, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. St Peter's is a town centre church, with a gathered congregation and a valued heritage of evangelical and expository ministry. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the Church building and Church hall on North Hill, Colchester.

Objective and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St Peter's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the people that live within our parish, and beyond.

Our services and worship put faith into practice through study of God's word, prayer, music and sacraments. We also have a concern to provide practical help to those around us in particular need - especially the homeless, families and the elderly.

When planning our activities for the year, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish, and members of the congregation.
- Evangelistic, social and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St Peter's and its Hall.

Worship and Prayer

The PCC aims to offer services that will be beneficial to church members, the local community, and visitors of all ages and backgrounds. Attendance at services remains at a healthy level (although there is always room for more), and a wide range of ages is represented.

Our main Sunday service is at 11am, and up to the end of February there was a united evening service for the three town-centre churches, held at Castle Methodist Church. Starting in September, on every other Sunday evening, there has been a more informal service in our church hall, with the title 'Rock Solid'. These evening services are preceded by a light meal for those who would like it, and also provide opportunity to learn and sing some of the new Christian songs.

A (non-profit-making) bookstall runs at most Sunday morning services, providing a range of Christian books and other materials.

A good number of children of primary school age attend on Sunday mornings, and they have their own group - St Peter's Kids (SPK), which provides teaching and activities designed especially for them. There is differing provision for the different ages - the 'Spark' session is for the younger children, and the older group is called 'Ignite'.

Many of our secondary school-age children attend a regular youth event (named '421') on Friday evenings, run jointly with, and hosted by, the Fordham and Eight Ash Green church.

Monthly prayer meetings are usually held on the first Saturday of each month.

Between Ascension Sunday (30th May) and Pentecost (9th June), St Peter's joined a national initiative to pray, under the headline "Thy Kingdom Come". Twice-daily prayer meetings were held in church for those who could make it; others prayed wherever they were.

St Peter's has hosted two civic services in the year - one in April to celebrate St George's Day, and the Civic Carol Service in December.

Many courses have been run during the year, aiming to provide members and inquirers with the opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith. These have included:

- 'Getting to know the Bible' - an introduction to finding your way around.
- 'A walk through Acts' - a brief overview of this book.
- 'From Shadow to Reality' - a study of the book of Hebrews.
- 'Getting to know the gospels' - a more in-depth study of what is in the gospels.
- 'Firm Foundations' - examining the fundamentals of our faith.
- A Crosslands Ministry Training course.
- 'Christianity Explored' - for those wanting to know more about the Christian faith.
- 'Living by Faith' - a study of the book of Habakkuk.
- 'Everyday Evangelism' - learning more about how to share our faith with others.

Guest House Project

Sadly, we were not able to run our annual Guest House project for the 2018/19 or 2019/20 winters, due to damage to the church hall roof. This project makes the church hall available to provide overnight shelter, meals, friendship, practical and spiritual help, and sleeping accommodation for up to 12 homeless people at a time.

Mission

An initiative to promote the Christian faith, and to present it to those who may have little knowledge of it, has been *Christianity Explored* - a series of meetings explaining the basic concepts of the faith. This course was held in January 2019, and is normally held at least once each year.

St Peter's continues to sponsor two children via the charity Compassion UK. They are an 11-year old Brazilian boy, and an 12-year old girl in the Philippines. This has been possible mainly thanks to the generous support of church members at a Gift Day held on Mother's Day. Sponsorship money pays for the children to have access to education and health checks, plus the opportunity to learn about the Christian faith, and is provided in partnership with churches in their countries. There will be another Gift Day in 2020, to enable us to continue this sponsorship.

We have also supported:

- The Operation Christmas Child initiative, providing shoeboxes filled with presents for children in other areas of the world, who would otherwise receive very little.
- Essex University Christian Union
- Beacon House - a local charity working with the homeless.

Upkeep and Redevelopment of the Buildings

Our buildings have suffered various problems during the year. In addition to the hall roof damage already mentioned, repairs have been required to our churchyard wall (damaged following a collision), and to part of the church roof (with the repairs still in progress at the end of the year). Additional repair work may be required to the church roof, as further problems have been discovered, and although the hall roof has had a temporary repair, it is not in a safe enough state for us to let the hall.

Following the loss of heating oil late in 2018, various external agencies have been involved in checking the environmental impact of this. Part of our boiler had to be repaired (leading to very cold services early in the year whilst it was out of action), and improvements to the boiler room are due to take place in 2020, being paid for by our insurers.

On a more positive note, plans are well underway for major improvements to the church building (the St Peter's Project), including improved toilet and kitchen facilities, better disabled access, refurbishment of the vestry, improved heating, removal of some pews and installation of tables and chairs. These will provide both better facilities for our existing members and visitors, enable more mid-week meetings, and open up the church to the wider community so that it can be used by other groups. The vision is to provide a Community, Support and Christian Hub for Colchester.

The fund-raising campaign has started, and the initial appeal to the church congregation in September managed to eventually raise the £50,000 we were hoping to achieve. Applications to external grant-making trusts are ongoing.

Safeguarding

In addition to those church members working with children, all members of the PCC have taken and passed safeguarding courses run by the Chelmsford diocese.

Social Events

St Peter's has held a number of mid-week meetings for fellowship, study and prayer, mainly in the evenings, but there is also a group which meets at lunch time in our hall, for those who find a daytime meeting more convenient. These participants enjoy lunch together in addition to the rest of the activities.

A number of church picnics have been held for the whole congregation after Sunday morning service, and these provide opportunity for people to know each other better. Other events have included a Church family walk, and the regular strawberry tea on our Patronal Festival.

Our church was open for several days as part of the annual Colchester Heritage open days in September, and many visitors took the opportunity to explore our building.

Financial Review

Total receipts into unrestricted funds (General Fund) in 2019 were £71,880 (a welcome increase on the previous year), and are detailed in the financial statements. Total payments from the General Fund were £76,732, which includes the full payment of the Diocesan parish share (£35,180). The net result was an excess of payments over receipts of £4,862. After adding the balance brought forward at the start of the year, the balance of unrestricted funds at the end of 2019 was £2,487.

Our Church Hall was not used for hire in 2019, so has been a drain on our resources. Receipts from hiring of the hall (left over from 2018) were £355 - compared to nearly £5,000 in the previous year. At the end of the year payments exceeded receipts by £4,172, and £5,000 was transferred from our reserves to bolster the fund. Even so, the balance at the end of the year was -£496.

The Fabric Fund receipts were £4,539 (predominantly part of the insurance claim for the churchyard wall damage), and payments were £6,899 (primarily to pay for additional work not covered by insurance). £6,500 was transferred from reserves, partly to bolster the fund, and partly to pay for the additional work. At the end of the year the balance was £9,369, but this includes approximately £4,500 yet to be paid to the builders from the insurance claim.

The Additional Ministry Fund is for the financing of our Associate Minister, Rev Aella Gage. His employment has only been possible due to the very generous provision of an external Christian trust. Up until May, Rev Gage was employed and paid by the Diocese, and we in turn reimbursed them for his salary, employer's NI, Apprenticeship Levy and pension costs. Since May 2019, he has been employed and paid directly by St Peter's. The fund also pays for Rev Gage's housing costs, council tax, water rates and expenses. Fund receipts during the year were £57,530, and expenditure was £55,338, leaving £2,192 towards his ongoing employment.

The Guest House fund is for receipts and payments towards the provision of shelter and food for the homeless during the winter. As the Guest House has not been operating, receipts were £1,515, and payments £162.50 (administration costs), leaving a balance of £4,523.

Our only Investment fund is the Sears Fund, which yielded a good level of interest.

The Redevelopment fund is for the major work taking place to the church building. Receipts were £51,529, and payments £4,282 (retention on earlier development work, plus fundraising costs). The balance at the end of the year was £63,623, to be used for the St Peter's Project redevelopment work.

Reserves Policy

The PCC has no stated policy on the minimum balance of unrestricted funds. The end-of-year balance of £9,369 in the restricted Fabric Fund is to pay for improvements to the churchyard wall, and any urgent maintenance of the church building (for which our policy is to maintain a balance of £5,000). Any expenditure beyond this will involve raising additional funds.

The Guest House fund balance of £4,523 will be used towards our future care for the homeless in Colchester. The Redevelopment Fund balance of £63,623 is for the work to be carried out for the St Peter's Project. Our Reserve Fund has a balance of £64,396 - the majority of which will be used to pay for the church roof repairs.

It is our policy to invest our funds with the Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund.

Administrative Information

St. Peter's Church is situated on North Hill, Colchester. It is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, Balkerne Close, Colchester CO1 1NZ. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006).

The PCC was granted charitable status in its own right on 24th October 2015

In November the PCC passed a resolution requesting that, on grounds of theological conviction, as well as the need to support its clergy and maintain congregational unity, arrangements be made for it in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishop and Priests.

Our website is <https://www.stpeterscolchester.org>

PCC Members and Trustees

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected at the APCM according to the Church Representation Rules and serve for a three year term. PCC members who have served during this year are:

Incumbent	Rev Mark Wallace (Chairman)
Associate Minister	Rev Aella Gage
Churchwardens	Dr Daniel Watts (Vice-Chairman) Mrs Wendy Whitfield
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mr Duncan Breckels (also our Lay Reader) Mrs Julie Gallacher (to 24 th April) Mrs Bernice Watts (also PCC Secretary) (from 24 th April)
Elected Members	Mrs Geraldine Joslin (to 24 th April) Mr Richard Lawn (Treasurer) (to 24 th April) Dr Michael Kavanagh Mrs Anne Kavanagh Dr Matthew Cox (to 24 th April) Mr Peter Holden Mrs Elizabeth Wallace
Co-opted Members	Mr James Coe (to 24 th April, and from 13 th July) Mr Richard Lawn (Treasurer) (from 24 th April)

Approved by the PCC at their meeting on 7th March 2020 and signed on their behalf by Rev Mark Wallace (PCC chairman).

Mark J Wallace

7th March 2020