

The Parish of Staple Fitzpaine

**In the Seven Sowers Benefice (United Benefice of Beercrocombe, with Curry Mallet,
Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, Stoke St Mary (with
Thurlbear) and West Hatch)**

Annual Report and Accounts

St. Peter's Parochial Church Council

For the year ended 31st December 2024



Incumbent

The Revd. Joanna Porter

Independent Examiner

Alison Horsey
Fairways
West Hatch
Taunton
TA3 5RS

Introduction

The parish forms part of the Seven Sowers Benefice, comprising the parishes of Beercrocombe with Curry Mallet, Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear) and West Hatch. The parish is part of the Deanery of Somerset South, which in turn is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commissioners.

The PCC is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Grade I listed church building in Staple Fitzpaine and the surrounding churchyard. It is also responsible for the churchyard of Neroche Village Hall and the churchyard at All Saints, Curland.

The life of St. Peter's continued to be enriched by the activities of volunteers who support the church and our wider community. The Flower Guild, St. Peter's Singers and all who serve uncomplainingly on the rotas for cleaning, coffee etc continue to enhance the church's welcome with their wonderful work. In 2023 The church finally had a toilet.

The Pop-Up Café and the Lunch club have built on their long-established popularity in 2024. Both provide a very important focus for companionship and community.

Mary Bell, our treasurer, has diligently compiled the comprehensive financial review and statement, at the end of the report. The reports give clear details, breakdowns and analysis of the church receipts and expenditure in 2024.

At the end of 2024 PCC funds totaled **£28,992**, in a year of high expenditure, receipts exceeded payments by £4,217.

The Ministry Team

The Revd Joanna Porter was Rector of the Seven Sowers Benefice throughout the year.

Within the ecclesiastical parish Joanna's team is comprised of: Sue McKen, a licensed lay reader, Rev. Sue Hounsell, and Revd Julie Kimber who was ordained during the year. Holly Stevens continues in the role of the Benefice's Children's, Schools and Families Worker.

Sarah Hampson is well established as the Benefice Administration Assistant and in 2024 she also assumed the role of Benefice Treasurer.

Brian Crudge serves as Reader Emeritus.

The PCC continued to support the Ministry Team in promoting the whole mission of the church – pastoral, social, evangelistic, and ecumenical. Many of our PCC members contribute to the ministerial work of the benefice through leadership of a variety of non-communion services for St. Peter's. Nicky Baxter, Alison Brown and Mark Porter completed the Diocese directed Lay Worship Assistant's course.

PCC Membership

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation rules. Members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll. The PCC met on four occasions during 2024 and conducted other pressing business by email correspondence.

PCC members who served in 2024 were:

Incumbent & Chair: Rev. Joanna Porter (*Appointed Rector 19th April 2021*)

Churchwarden: Mark Porter

Elected Members
Nicky Baxter (*Re-appointed 2 years to APCM 2026*)
Mary Bell (Treasurer) (*Re-appointed 3 years to APCM 2027*)
Tami Boden Ellis (*Re-appointed 3 years to APCM 2027*)
Alison Brown (*Re-appointed 3 years to APCM 2027*)
Rebecca George (*Re-appointed 2 years to APCM 2026*)
Sheila Green (Secretary) (*Re-appointed 1 year to APCM 2025*)

Deanery Synod Rep Helena Young (*Appointed 3 years to APCM 2026*)

PCC members are responsible for and committed to providing a safe place for worship and community involvement at St. Peter's. Safeguarding processes and training has been a particular focus for the PCC year as engagement with the Diocese dashboard system has indicated areas for improvement, which we are now addressing.

The Electoral Roll

At the APCM in 2024 there were twenty-two people registered on the church electoral roll.

Regular Worship

The service rota for 2024 was as follows: -

Sunday 10.00am Parish Communion follows a seven-weekly rotation through the benefice.

3rd Sunday 8.30am – Book of Common Prayer Communion

1st Sunday of the month – Morning or Evening Worship – lay led non-communion services



Attendance at the 7 weekly parish communion averaged 21.

The monthly 8.30 am BCP Communion services had an average attendance of 7.



In 2024 a new pattern of services was adopted for lay-led services at St. Peter's. A 10.00am service of Morning Worship or 7.00pm Evening Worship was held on the first Sunday of the month (in months that St. Peter's was not hosting the Benefice Communion service). The average attendance at these services was 10.

Festival Services - Attendances

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Good Friday	30	20	22	-	*	18	-	14	14	14
Easter Sunday	*	25^^	46	50	*	50	56	61	46	64
Harvest Festival	29	34	30	40	28	49	31	37	40	38
Remembrance Sunday	46	50	58	34	50**	65	72	64	48	64
Carol Service	85	110	85	65	50**	86	94	106	128	99
Christmas Day	55^	43^	42^	47	38	67	66	54	55	79

*No service, ** Service held in the churchyard, ^Midnight Communion, ^^ Easter Saturday service of Light

In addition to these traditional Festivals 'fresh expression' services were added to the programme of services in 2024.



A Wassail service was held in the orchard at Winterwell in early January with 50 attending.

In August, 12 attended the Saturday Lammas service of bread baking to celebrate the first grains of harvest.

Dave Knight led our café-style Harvest service.

The St. Peter's Singers and the BSB have been integral to our worshipping experience.

In 2024 St. Peter's hosted no weddings or baptisms. There were six funeral/thanksgiving services.

Sidesmen

Sidesmen are appointed for the year and are organised by Alison Brown. They prepare the church for worship, welcome attendees, facilitating worship, reading and handling the collection. Thanks are given to Mary Bell, Henry Heath, Mike Nicholls, Rebecca George, Sheila Green, Alison Brown, Helena Young and Mark Porter for carrying out these duties so assiduously.

Church Property, Fabric and Churchyard

In 2024 the diocese conducted their triennial inspection, the previous one was in 2018. The purpose of the inspection was to make sure that all church documents, property and processes are in place and up to date. This was found to be the case.



The leaves were cleared from the church rooves by contractors. They attempted to repair a leak above the heater in the south west corner of the church, however were not able to.

Maintenance of St. Peter's churchyard and of the churchyard at the Village Hall was carried out by volunteers. Some areas continue to be left uncut until the autumn encouraging greater biodiversity.

The compost toilet, commissioned in 2023, is proving a popular addition to the church's facilities – used by a wide community. An initial issue relating to the fitting of the loo was quickly remedied by the manufacturer at no charge.

The Mission Hut is to be a venue for various events in the 2025 Music and Flower Festival. In preparation for this, and wider community use, volunteers, led by Mark Porter, have cleaned,

repaired and redecorated the interior. The hut has been re-wired, and a compliant electricity supply reinstated.

The church clock received its second annual service after automation in 2022. The clock continues to be in good order with Paul Hart correcting the time as necessary.

Fundraising

Three principal fundraising events were held this year organised by the St. Peter's Fundraising Committee and the Fete Committee. These events, as well as being crucial to the financial security of St. Peter's, have as their focus the engagement of our wider community.

A Murder Mystery production, Tower Jumping Teddies and the Church Fete met all the requirements perfectly. Helpers were drawn from far and wide to put on these well attended and much enjoyed events.

Who Killed our Rector? – 17 Feb 2024

Emily Pope, supported by Lottie Michaels, directed the players, bringing excellent experience as well as youth.

The play was set in Steeple Chase with a cast of thinly disguised local characters. Our rector gamely played the Rector Carrie Johannes who was murdered with blood curdling screams at the end of Scene 1.



The audience, which packed Neroche Hall, gamely tried to follow what was going on and work out who was responsible for killing the rector, for a chance to win a real trophy. On a memorable and hugely fun evening only one team correctly identified the killer and accomplice.

Thanks to the **cast**:- Mike Michaels, Nicky Baxter, Chris Baxter, Emily Pope, Dave Knight, Carole Wensley-Dodd, and Mark Porter. **Food and kitchen** – Kath Michaels and Sheila Green. **Bar** -Alex Porter and Emma McDaid.

Teddy Bear Parachuting St Peter's Church Tower – April 6 2024

Our fifteenth century church proved to be a perfect launching pad for teddies of the parish.

We had a busy morning with parachute making workshop, Bash the Rat, Operation Buzz and Paul Hart's exquisite and restored Scalextric hill climb. Human sustenance was provided by the wonderful Pop-up Café team.

Each bear was assessed as fit to fly by Dr Mike, and issued with a special certificate. The best dressed bears were judged and received prizes. Each bear was tagged, numbered and lined up ready to fly.

34 brave teddies were hauled to the top of the tower before being ceremoniously launched to their destiny. In blustery conditions teddies flew, sailed, circled, or dropped (some quite quickly) to the ground, or into a nearby tree, and even into the allotments next door. Rosettes were awarded to those bears which flew the furthest.



St Peter's Fete and Family Dog Show June 2024

Lessons learnt in 2022 were put to good effect. A June date, enlarged dog show and the bar and barbecue at the centre of the retail/games area enhanced everybody's experience.

We were blessed with amazing volunteers throughout – on the committee doing the planning, sorting publicity and online advertising (especially for the dog show), helping source tables and chairs, make signs and banners, assemble all the floats, run the stalls and games, provide food and drink and tractors and stocks – and much else besides. We simply could not put on a fete without the people who gave their time, donated to the cause, contributed their ideas and cheerfully carried out random instructions at short notice before, during and after the day. Special thanks to:

- Grounds maintenance and prep - led by Mark Porter
- Family Dog show - Nicky Baxter
- Afternoon cream teams led by Pauline Phelps
- Chris Baxter- superbly managing the PA system and commentating throughout
- Kath Michaels who did so much organising in the weeks leading up to the big day
- Raffle super seller extraordinaire Allan Covey

On a happy, busy day, filled with children and dogs and people who were looking for, and getting, a good day out for the family we raised £4500 for St Peter's Church.

Rebecca George CBE



Music and Flower Festival 2025

Kath Michael's meticulous preparation for the 2025 Festival includes a number of fund raising activities. We had two Christmas wreath making events at St. Peter's. Initially only one was planned but popular demand led to another. We are hugely grateful to Holly Jane Harris for her knowledge, expertise and patience; and to all who helped provide and prepare for this joyful event. Profits from the wreath making join the fund for the festival.

An additional £1 per person entry fee for the monthly village quiz (introduced by Quizmaster Paul Hart and generously donated to this cause) accumulates to pay for the flowers for the festival.

Neroche Thursday Lunches 2024

Under the auspices of the Friends of St Peter's, Neroche Lunches have taken place monthly throughout the year. Our guests, now numbering around 40-45, are provided with a good homecooked lunch and a welcome social occasion. Guests now come from throughout the Benefice and occasionally from further afield, our fame having spread. A great team of cooks, helpers and coordinators make this happen each month and the skill of the cooks is much appreciated by all.

Some new recruits have joined the workforce, and we hope they will enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done. New volunteers are still needed as we are all getting older.

Thanks go to the team that make this possible and I know the lunch is much looked forward to by our guests. Through the year surplus funds have been donated to the church, Neroche Hall, the Food Bank and the Royal British Legion. Donations are also given to the Open Door charity for the Homeless in Taunton.

Alison Brown

St. Peter's Singers (and BSB)

The choir has had a good year, under the continued leadership of Emma McDaid. We usually have around 16 people at choir practice and between 20 and 24 for performances. Sally Newberry, our accompanist, is patient and good humoured with us and continues to donate her time which is very generous. We rehearse at the church at 7.30 on a Monday and are always looking for new members, so do get in touch if you are interested in joining us.

The Badger Street Band, which has an almost 100% attendance by choir members, played for a barn dance birthday party in March, and played at the Fete in June. Members of the band turn up to help out with accompanying at events like carols in the church when the tree is being decorated.

St Peter's are a Community Choir, based at St Peter's. This means that we support the church – singing for festivals and special events – and we also perform a variety of secular music as well.

During the year we have sung at the major church festivals and either the band or members of the choir, or both, have supported the Wassail in January, St Peter's fete in June, Harvest Festival at the end of September, Remembrance Sunday, one wedding and two funerals. Also we sang for lay led worship and Taize services. At Christmas we had a busy time as we sang at the Advent service at St Thomas's Thurlbear, sang carols for Christmas Tree decorating on December 14, had our Carol Service on December 18 and went carolling around the villages on December 21. We are very happy singing for our church and our community and although we do sometimes wonder whether we will ever be ready, it's usually OK on the night!

The strength of community in the choir continues very strong and we really benefit from getting together to sing each week. Singing makes people feel good and we all feel uplifted at the end of our rehearsal.

Rebecca George CBE

Bell Ringers

The tower at St Peters continues to be an active part of the Church. Practices on Tuesday evening have been generally well attended, and there are eleven ringers, all capable of ringing safely and doing Call Changes and, when numbers of experienced ringers allow, we are now involved in learning the basics of Method Ringing. Other churches are supported if ringers are needed for services or weddings and in turn we can call on ringers to help us from other towers.

The bell installation is generally in good order, the only problem is that four of the six headstocks (large pieces of wood that hold the bell) were installed in the 19th Century and are beginning to show their age. The wood can be affected by long spells of hot dry weather. Frequent inspections of the large bolts that hold the bell to the headstock are very important to make sure they are tight. All the ropes are in very good condition, and are occasionally adjusted up or down slightly to extend their working life.

The clock is working very well and only needs a slight adjustment about every two to three weeks. This again can be affected by ambient temperature.

Finally, I would like to pass on my thanks to all the ringers for their enthusiasm and reliability, especially in certain weathers when the belfry can be either freezing cold or like an oven!

Paul Hart – Tower Captain

Community Pop-up Café

The Friday Community Pop-Up Cafe was established in June 2018 and has become a regular weekly feature in Staple Fitzpaine ever since.

Frances Alford, Carole Wensley-Dodd, Jacqueline Kolkowski, Wyn Ballance, Lisa Knight, and Peta Trott work tirelessly to provide a very valuable service to the community and we thank them for their baking skills, generosity and friend ship.

Working on a rota basis two volunteers run the cafe each week. The volunteers provide one home prepared savoury (usually cheese scones!) and a choice of four delicious home baked cakes including a gluten free option, served with tea or coffee. All our bakers have a Food Hygiene certificate and are very conscience of possible allergens – all our ingredients are highlighted on each item.

The café provides an important community amenity with the opportunity for conversation, friendship and diverse social interaction. Activities for children are included at Easter and Christmas as well as occasional plant sales, all coordinated by Jacqueline.

Profits from cafe donations are shared evenly between the church and the WI.

The café raised almost £1200 for the church in 2024. Additional fund raising mornings were held for Macmillan Cancer Care, The RNLI and School in a Bag.

Pauline Phelps

Flower Guild

The flower guild is made up of volunteers: Jacqueline Kolkowski, Alison Brown, Karen Morgan, Carol Wensley-Dodd, Kath Michaels, Peta Trott, and Tina Warren.

The guild produces floral arrangements every month on a rota basis, trying to use local flowers and greenery from their own gardens and hedgerows for their arrangements. The guild also receives donations of greenery and produce for Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas. These donations from the parishioners enhance the large displays produced by the guild. Harvest is always a wonderful celebration in our rural local area, with all our farm crops, fruits and flowers in the colours of autumn. We decorated the church with flowers in autumnal colours, adding local produce. Peta made some superb harvest bread as well as decorating the pew ends. Dianne Hood excelled, as always, with her wonderful selection of squashes and spindle berries.

Karen's beautiful poppies were on display for our Remembrance Service. This time they were on the entrance to the church. We had other poppies arranged along the path up to the church.



In December we ran our "come decorate our Christmas tree event". This year was a hive of creativity as we invited the WI, Cafe, Bellringers, Choir, and the Badger Street Band to decorate their own window, each featuring a Christmas tree. The children (and grown ups) decorated the large tree with elaborate masks, stars and paper chains with a carnival theme. This event brings together people from our Church and from across local communities for a most enjoyable and uplifting morning.



The Benefice nativity trail ended at St Peter's church and stars were decorated, taken home or placed on our tree. Many of the guild members also supported the Taunton Flower Show in volunteer roles which gave us ideas for displays and flowers to grow.

I would like to thank the team for all their wonderful efforts, and we look forward to the next year, designing and producing displays for the Music and Flower festival as well as a wedding in June.

Jacqueline Kolkowski

Approved by the PCC on 22 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by Mr Mark Porter (Church Warden)

Financial Review 2024 PCC of Staple Fitzpaine

At the 31st of December 2024 PCC funds totalled **£28,992**:

£9,339 held in **Lloyds** instant access on-line accounts

£19,653 invested in **CCLA** Church of England Deposit fund accruing interest (4.7% at the end of 2024).

General Fund	£26,718	(Unrestricted)
Fabric Fund	£1,093	(Restricted for building maintenance)
Flower Festival Fund	£569	(Designated for 2025 Flower Festival purposes to keep track of receipts and payments. Profits will be transferred into General fund when the Flower Festival is over)
Choir Fund	£612	(Restricted for choir use only)

Receipts totalled £27,669 in 2024.

As in previous years the PCC's reliable income came from regular bank giving by 9 parishioners totalling £5,420. Service collections and donations contributed a further £4,997 to general funds. An additional £2,159 of Gift Aid tax relief from general donations in 2023 and £190 from Fabric fund donations was received from HMRC. Tax relief on Gift Aid donations made in 2024 will be submitted to HMRC in Jan 2025, with anticipated reclaim of £1,927.

During a very successful year of fundraising over £7,900 gross was raised, including:

- Murder Mystery Play £1,537
- Teddy Parachute Jump £191
- **Winterwell Fete** **£4,290**
- Village Carol Singing £120
- Wreath Making Workshops £284 (Flower Festival fund raising)
- Quiz Night contribution £285 " "

A large amount of parochial fees was received from 6 church funerals, a crem service, 3 burials, 2 burials of ashes and memorial stones totalling £4,465, of which £1,078 was passed on to the diocese of Bath and Wells and £2,553 retained by Staple PCC.

To benefit from rising bank interest rates a new Lloyds online instant access bank account was opened giving some interest (1.3%). An additional £8,000 was transferred into the church CCLA deposit account with rates of over 5.2%, reduced slightly to 4.7% by the end of 2024.

2024 Payments totalled £23,452

The largest expenditure was **£11,470 for the Parish Share**, paid to the Diocese of Bath and Wells to 'support local ministry, specifically for clergy stipends and housing'.

Electricity costs totalling £1,949 was the 3rd largest regular expenditure, approximating £20 per hour to light and heating the church.

The PCC spent £2,224 to electrically rewire the Mission Hut to enable full all year round use, the mission hut has been fully restored and redecorated by our churchwarden with no costs claimed. £543 contributed towards the cost of the Seven Sowers Benefice youth worker, and an additional £728 given to charities including the Taunton Food Bank, The Open Door and the Royal British Legion. [The PCC is pledged to donate a minimum of £400 per year to charitable/outreach causes.]

In 2024 Receipts exceeded Payments by £4,217, approximating the proceeds of the Winterwell fete.

The PCC aims to hold sufficient reserves equating to approximately 6 months of annual expenditure, plus additional funds to cover unforeseen emergency building work.

Looking ahead to 2025

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme which offers VAT refund on certain building works was due to cease in March 25. Fortunately, parliament has announced an extension to this scheme (with reduced funding) until the end of 2026.

Neroche Parish Council annual Churchyard grant was not received in 2024. This was given to the PCC, funded by Somerset Council, towards the upkeep of our parish churchyards (£875 paid in 2023). No grant was received in 2024. We have since been informed that the council churchyard maintenance grant has now ceased.

Report on Safeguarding – Seven Sowers Benefice 2024

There have been no serious matters of safeguarding in the seven parishes across the Benefice that have been referred to other relevant bodies or to the Diocese Safeguarding Team during the year.

Safeguarding remains an item on every PCC meeting agenda to encourage discussion, review policies and raise issues.

Parish Dashboards

Dashboards are now diocesan policy and must be completed by all parishes, although there is no requirement to have completed details to a specified level. However, it is one of the best ways to keep up to date with safeguarding matters and requirements of parishes for reviewing policies and other actions. It also helps you easily evidence the work you are doing as it complies with national guidance, reminds you when reviews of policies are due in your particular parish, and what training is needed and by whom. This helps make safeguarding practice a more locally tailored subject for Parishes to engage with. All parishes in the Benefice now have at least one member of the PCC as an editing member of their Parish Dashboard. Thank you very much to all have volunteered for this.

DBS checks and Safer Recruitment

I continue to carry out DBS checks for new volunteers who require one, and track and initiate DBS renewal checks when they are due. There has been some debate at Diocesan Safeguarding level of the requirements for PCC members to have a DBS check (currently at least 2 for every PCC regardless of any activities held). As yet there has been no clarification so some PCC member renewals are on hold pending the outcome.

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding training – at the appropriate level – is important for all of us and will help protect all those in our church communities and provides PCC members, activity leaders and volunteers with the knowledge and skills to carry out, uphold and advocate safeguarding practice in the parishes. Bath and Wells is one of the best Diocese nationally for completing online training and we encourage everyone to complete the training they are required to do.

Safeguarding Audit

In preparation for the national safeguarding audit of Bath and Wells in March 2025, an anonymous and confidential survey was launched at the end of the year for all people holding different roles across the diocese, including, clergy, church volunteers, church staff, parish safeguarding officers and diocesan staff, to complete if they wished. The survey will close at the end of January 2025.

Safeguarding is a matter for us all and is an ongoing and continual part of all we do. I would like to thank all those who have completed safeguarding training and DBS applications and renewals over the past year.

Helen Hossell Parish Safeguarding Officer

**Independent Examiner's Report to
The PCC of St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine For
the Year Ended 31 December 2024**

I report to the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the PCC (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on Accounts Pages 1 to 6.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's trustees (i.e. the members of the PCC) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached, although the following procedural issues came to my attention:

1. PCC member elections:

The maximum number of elected members to the PCC is six, excluding Clergy, Churchwardens, Readers and Deanery Synod Representatives, who all serve on the PCC as ex-officio members and are not therefore subject to election or re-election to the PCC. Therefore your Churchwarden and Deanery Synod Representative should not have been included in the elections of PCC members in item no. 6 (b) of the APCM. Deanery Synod Reps are elected to that role every three years, in a set cycle, currently to APCM 2026.

2. Omission to approve minutes of short PCC meeting appointing Officers:

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 21st April 2024 were not approved by 31st Dec 2024.

Mrs Alison Horsey
Fairways,
West Hatch, Taunton.
TA3 5RS

Date:

The Parochial Church Council of Staple Fitzpaine

Receipts and Payments Account

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted General Fund	Restricted Fabric Fund	Designated Flower Festival Fund	Restricted Choir Fund	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS						
Receipts from Donors						
Regular Giving:						
Giving via bank (Gift Aided)	3,520	600			4,120	3,980
Giving via bank (non GA)	1,300				1,300	1,250
Total Regular Giving	4,820	600	0		5,420	5,230
Collections from GA envelopes	1,305				1,305	1,094
Collections eligible for GASDS	4 1,083	115			1,198	1,593
Donations received	5 2,609				2,609	5,590
GA Income Tax recovered	2,159	230			2,389	2,660
In Memory of Chris Dunn					0	1,821
Total Receipts From Donors	11,976	945	0		12,920	17,988
Other Voluntary Receipts						
VAT reclaim from lpwgs					0	2,955
Churchyard grants	6 9				9	1,734
Fund Raising Events (gross)	7 8,534		1,151		9,685	3,489
Receipts from wedding/funeral fees	8 2,753				2,753	1,803
Duplicate funeral fees received-for refund in 20:	694				694	0
Parish magazine surplus	767				767	756
Receipts from investments	9 49	506			554	134
Choir Member Subscriptions				285	285	327
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£24,782	£1,450	£1,151	£285	£27,669	£29,186

PAYMENTS

Church activities

Diocesan parish share	11,470				11,470	9,944
Insurance	2,109				2,109	1,988
Electricity	10 1,949				1,949	1,288
Water rates	73				73	54
Clergy expenses	11 493				493	72
Benefice Admin	12 698				698	0
CSF Youth worker contributions	13 543				543	535
Organists	14 250				250	250
Church repairs & maintenance	15 784				784	943
Mission Hut electrical rewiring	2,224				2,224	
Churchyard upkeep	16 350				350	290
Fundraising expenses	7 1,199		583		1,782	527
Donations to Charities	17 728				728	957
New Compost Toilet & path Installation					0	10,824
Temporary Toilet hire Jan 23 (costs donated)					0	125
Clock Automation					0	5,258
DBF roof loan repayments					0	2,066
GiftALittle SumUp 2023 collectin Seven Sowers share					0	11
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£22,085	£784	£583	£0	£23,452	£35,132
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS	2,697	666	569	285	4,217	(5,946)
Amount in funds at 1 January	24,021	427		327	24,775	30,721
Amount in funds at 31 December	£26,718	£1,093	£569	£612	£28,992	£24,775

The Parochial Church Council of Staple Fitzpaine
Statement of Assets & Liabilities
at 31 December 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£	£
ASSETS			
Cash funds			
Bank Accounts:			
Lloyds Treasurer online Current Account		1,791	13,628
Lloyds Commercial instant access Account opened Jun24		7,549	
CCLA CBF Church of England Deposit Fund	9	19,653	11,147
		<u>£28,992</u>	<u>£24,775</u>
 Monetary assets			
<i>Made up of</i>			
General Fund (Unrestricted)		26,718	24,021
Fabric Fund (Restricted)		1,093	427
2025 Flower Festival Fund (Designated) opened Nov 24		569	0
Choir Fund (Restricted) Opened Dec 23		612	327
		<u>£28,992</u>	<u>£24,775</u>
 Other Monetary Assets			
Debtors			
Income tax reclaim on Gift Aid and GASDS donations Jan-Dec 2024 (£1,737 General Fund, £190 Fabric Fund)	4	1,927	2,387
CCLA interest for 4th quarter of 2024 received in Jan 2025	9	183	
Advance for clergy expenses made to benefice treasurer	11	250	250
		<u>£2,360</u>	<u>£2,637</u>
 LIABILITIES			
Creditors			
Electricity usage Dec	10	200	220
TDBC floodlight electricity charges since Oct 2017 approx		1,200	1,000
Clergy expenses 4th quarter of 2024	11	171	330
Benefice Admin; 4th quarter of 2024	12	189	198
Dignity funeral directors duplicate Fee payment		694	
		<u>£2,454</u>	<u>£1,748</u>

Signed on behalf of the PCC by

Mr Mark Porter
Churchwarden

Date

The Parochial Church Council of Staple Fitzpaine
Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 31 December 2024

Note 1. Presentation of financial information

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

Note 2. Accounting Policies

The financial statements include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of informal gatherings of Church members - temporary exception Choir Fund as per note 3 below.

Receipts are included as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

Note 3. Funds

General funds represent unrestricted money that can be used for the general charitable purposes of the PCC.

Restricted funds must be used for the purposes for which the money was given or donated.

Designated funds represent money that has been earmarked for a specific purpose by the PCC. This money may be undesignated by the PCC at any time.

The origin and purpose of each fund are given below:

General Fund **Unrestricted money for the general purposes of the PCC.**

The PCC is committed to donating at least £400 per year to charitable and/or outreach projects from the General fund.

Fabric Fund **Restricted fund** for church maintenance & repairs.

Flower Festival Fund **Designated fund** for fundraising costs and proceeds in preparation for 2025 Flower Festival

Choir Fund **Temporary Restricted fund.** Solely for choir receipts and payments - Opened Dec 2023

Note 4. Gift Aid Income Tax Recovered

Gift Aid (GA) income tax is recoverable from His Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) at the rate of 25p per £1 donated.

GASDS (Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme) enables loose cash donations, of £30 or less, to be eligible for gift aid tax relief up to a maximum of £8,000 per year, includes Loose Church Collections and Fabric Fund Box Donations.

A further claim has been submitted to HMRC in Jan 25 for GA and GASDS donations made in 2024.

Note 5. Donations Received

	Unrestricted General Fund	Restricted Fabric Fund	Designated Reordering Fund	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Portman estate donation	1,000			1,000	1,000
General parishioner donations	658			658	458
Thursday Lunch club donations	500			500	550
Verger fees donated	150			150	125
Grass Cutting donations	175			175	145
In memory of Trish Dryden	119			119	
Eggs	7			7	
T Maybery donation of Portman book fee				0	2,000
Donated cost of toilet path repairs				0	612
Legacy from estate of Di Grabham				0	500
Organist donated fees				0	100
Toilet Hire Expenses donated				0	100
Total donations received	2,609	0	0	£2,609	£5,590

Note 6. Churchyard Grants

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wayleave - electricity pole stay	9	9
Neroche Parish Council Churchyard grant - 2023	-	875
Neroche Parish Council Churchyard grant - 2022	-	850
	£9	£1,734

No Neroche Parish Council Churchyard grant was received in 2024.

Unfortunately it has been announced that Somerset Council has withdrawn funding due to financial cutbacks.

Note 7. Fundraising Events

	Receipts & Donated Expenses	Less Expenses	2024 Net Surplus	Receipts & Donated Expenses	Less Expenses	2023 Net Surplus
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fundraising						
Murder Mystery play (£1,481 Net proceeds)	1,707	170	1,537		55	(55)
Teddy Parachute Jump	191		191			
Winterwell Church Fete	5,318	1,029	4,290			
(NB May Pop up Café proceeds £117 offset for Church Fete WI Tea costs)						
Pop up Café proceeds 50% split with WI	1,198	electric costs	1,198	1,336		1,336
Carol Singing	120		120	167		167
Pancake Supper			0	695	120	575
Scarecrow Festival			0	920	352	568
Alan Marsh book sales			0	200		200
Jubilee Mug surplus			0	170		170
General Fundraising Total	8,534	1,199	7,336	3,488	527	2,961
Flower Festival Fundraising						
Wreath Making workshops	866	582	284			
Quiz nights share	285		285			
Total fundraising events	9,685	1,781	£7,905	3,488	527	£2,961

Although some fundraising expenses have been included in the accounts, in many cases fundraising expenses have not been claimed by parishioners, or have been donated back to PCC funds.
Electricity costs approx £20 per hour when using heating, lighting and hot water.

Note 8. Fees

2024 PCC received fees for 6 funeral services, 4 burials, 3 burial of ashes, 1 crematorium service and a memorial stone, totalling £4,465 (2023 £2,886). Payments were distributed according to the Church of England Parochial Fee guidelines: £1,078 (2023 £1,083) passed to the Bath & Wells Diocesan Board of Finance towards the stipend of the incumbent. £94 payment made to retired clergy, £375 to organists, £15 for clergy travel expenses passed to the Seven Sowers benefic **£2,553 of fees (2023 £1,803)** retained by Staple Fitzpaine PCC, plus £200 towards church heating costs.
£150 vergers fees donated back to PCC funds.

Note 9. Receipts from investments

	Unrestricted General Fund	Restricted Fabric Fund	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
CCLA deposit account interest		506	506	129
Lloyds new Commercial Instant Access savings account	49		49	5
Total receipts from investments	49	506	£555	£134

CCLA deposit account interest rate increased to 5.26% at the end of 2023, falling slightly to 4.7% by the end of 2024. £8,000 was transferred from Lloyds current into CCLA account in Nov 24 to benefit from interest rates.
New Lloyds Commercial Instant Access savings account opened on line in June earning 1.3% interest with accessibility

Note 10. Electricity

Electricity supplier British Gas. Costs have reduced slightly since peaking in 2022 and early 2023. 2024 church usage remains largely unchanged on 2023, the apparent increase in 2024 costs is due to a rebate received in Jan 23. In reality costs have decreased by 18%.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Electricity paid in year	1,949	1,288
Opening creditor	(220)	(204)
Closing creditor	200	220
Rebate re 2022	0	1,060
Cost of electricity used	<u>£1,929</u>	<u>£2,364</u>

Note 11. Clergy Expenses

It is PCC policy to reimburse all out of pocket expenses in full. Clergy expenses are reimbursed centrally from a separate Seven Sowers united Benefice account, travelling expenses reimbursed at the rate of 45p per mile. In 2024 the PCC of Staple Fitzpaine paid 18.1% of the total United Benefice clergy expenses (2023 17.8%). The expenses recharging fell behind in 2023, so payments in 2023 included just the final qtr of 2022. In 2024 the PCC paid for the whole of 2023, and 3 qtrs of 2024. Hence the payments in 2024 are a lot more than the payments in 2023.

Note 12. Benefice Admin Support

Sarah Hampson became Benefice Administrator in Sept 2023, on a self employed basis. She is paid from the Benefice Expense account and then recharged to the PCC's quarterly in arrears in the ratio of the 7 Church's Parish Shares; Staple Fitzpaine PCC share is 18.1%. Hence we made no payments for her costs in 2023, but in 2024 we paid £698 being our share of those costs from Sept 2023 to Sept 2024.

Note 13. CSF Children, Schools & Families Worker

The CSF worker is mostly funded by giving from individuals. The PCCs have agreed to fund £3,000 per year of the cost, shared between the PCCs in the ratio of the PCCs' Parish Share. St Peter's share of the £3,000 paid in 2024 was 18.1% or £543. This is for the year 1st Sep 2024 to 31st August 2025.

Note 14. Organist costs

Organists paid £25 per regular church service. Some organists make no claim for playing. The PCC receives Wedding and Funeral organist fees from the families, and pays them to the organists as the families' agent, so these fees do not appear in these accounts.

Note 15. Church Repairs and Maintenance

	Restricted Fabric Fund	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£
Tower Clock service	222	222	
Roof Clearance	250	250	
Organ Tuning	234	234	
Fire Extinguisher service	78	78	
Mission Hut Burst pipe repair		0	40
Damage repairs new compost loo path		0	612
Material for front gate repairs (no charge for labor costs)		0	67
Electrical ad in parish mag, in lieu of floodlighting repairs		0	115
Tapestry kneeler repairs		0	109
Total church repairs & maintenance	784	784	£943

Note 16. Churchyard Maintenance

	Unrestricted General Fund	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£
Curland All Saints Grasscutting	350	350	290
Total churchyard maintenance costs	350	£350	£290

NB no costs were claimed for grasscutting and maintenance of St Peter's and St Paul's churchyards in 2023 or 2024, all maintenance work was performed by church warden and volunteers.
Donation of £175 received towards cost of grasscutting of All Saint's churchyard (see note 5.)

Note 17. PCC Donations to Charities

	Unrestricted General Fund	TOTAL 2024	TOTAL 2023
	£	£	£
		0	
The Open Door (50% Harvest service + village carol singing collection)	189	189	468
The Royal British Legion (Remembrance service collection)	325	325	279
Memorial service Flower Pedestal costs			100
Taunton Food Bank (50% of harvest service + Village carol service collector)	169	169	70
Somerset Church and Chapel Trust	25	25	25
Change Ringers Association	20	20	15
	£728	£728	£957

The PCC is committed each year to donating a minimum of £400 to charitable causes and/or outreach projects