



**The parish of St John the Evangelist, Tipton St John
with St Gregory the Great, Venn Ottery**

Sharing God's love with our community

**Annual Report and Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31st December 2024**

Team Rector

Rev Lydia Cook

Team Vicar

Rev Mark Ward

Licensed Lay Ministers

David Williamson

Caroline Poultney

Bankers

Barclays Bank

Independent Examiner

Mr Anthony MacGregor

16, Primley Road, Sidmouth EX10 9LD

The Parochial Church Council is an Excepted Charity

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF TIPTON ST JOHN with VENN OTTERY

Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2024

Aim and purpose

The churches of St John the Evangelist, Tipton St John and St. Gregory, Venn Ottery, are part of the Otter Vale Mission Community in the Ottery Deanery and the Diocese of Exeter within the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Team Vicar, the Rev Mark Ward, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or co-opted by the PCC in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. This can be seen in our Mission Action Plan (the aims of which are **to share God's love through pastoral care, prayer, public worship and building relationships; to share God's love within the Church; and to share God's love for his creation**) and in our efforts to achieve these aims. The Plan was updated in November 2024. This report of our activities in 2024 demonstrates the public benefit of the Churches in Tipton St John and Venn Ottery and how the PCC and the Vicar have taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. To facilitate this work, it is vital that we maintain the fabric of both our Churches.

Worship and Prayer

Prayer and Worship are key elements of our Mission Action Plan. We offer services at Tipton St John on every Sunday of the month except the first Sunday. The Lay-led Cafe Style Church introduced during 2023 is held in the Village Hall on the 3rd Sunday of each month. This has proved popular with the community. Owing to the ongoing problems with the fabric of St Gregory Venn Ottery (see Fabric) and limited clergy resources, the building, while open for private devotion, has not had regular Sunday Services. Thanks to our Licensed Lay Ministers and support from the local community there have been a number of well attended special services including Harvest Festival and a Carol Service. Other churches in the Mission Community have welcomed attendees from our parish on the first Sunday of the month. In conjunction with other parishes in the Mission Community, a Sunday Service of the Word online via Zoom on two Sundays a month is still being offered. A monthly Prayer Sheet is printed for those who come to church and also posted on the Mission Community website. Prayer meetings have been held in Tipton Church and a Home Group meets weekly.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of our Licensed Lay Ministers who lead Services of the Word both in the churches and on line and also lead the Home Group and our annual Lent Course.

Mission and Evangelism

We continue with our outreach activities, such as the monthly coffee mornings, which provide the fellowship that many in the community seek. Our Annual Fete on August Bank Holiday Monday is not only a significant source of income (a 'profit' of over £5000) but it is also a major outreach event for the church. This year we had over 500 attendees at this event which is widely regarded as a 'village fete' with many villagers who are not church goers contributing to its set up and running. We are also seeking to benefit the wider community by actively engaging with Eco community initiatives in the Mission Community and establishing a group within the parish. An annual collection of food,

toiletries and clothing donations is organised at harvest in aid of St Petrock's, the homeless charity in Exeter

General levels of attendance at Services have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Current attendance at Sunday morning services are generally only between 15 and 25. The exception to this is the Cafe Style Church which has been attracting more than 35 attendees – the village hall being more accessible to the less mobile than the 'church on the hill'. A lay team continues to provide Home Communion for those unable to get to the church. In 2024 there were 3 Baptisms, 2 Marriages (of which one was at Venn Ottery) and 5 Funerals in Tipton church and 2 at the Crematorium plus 2 Interment of Ashes. A weekly Assembly is held in Tipton Church by the village Church Aided Primary School lead either by the Team Vicar or a member of the school staff. The school also use the church building for some activities (e.g. piano lessons) that cannot be held in the school. Members of our congregation also participate in the Open the Book team which visits the village school each month."

Venn Ottery Church has also been used for events for the local community which has committed itself to raising funds to restore the church bells.

At the Annual Church meeting in April 2024 54 parishioners were reported on the Electoral Roll.

Church Fabric

Tipton Church needed a number of repairs in 2024 including to the main doors and a small area of the ceiling above the organ that collapsed.

The condition of St Gregory's Venn Ottery remains of concern. The instability of some of the walls of the church with cracks suggests there might be a serious problem of subsidence. In 2023 the Church Architect recommended that some remedial works might be undertaken in the churchyard particularly in respect of the drains, preceded by a Structural Engineer's survey. For various reasons beyond our control this was delayed until late in 2024. The conclusion is that the foundations are weak at the east end of the church but stability might be improved by installing a new drain to flow into the brook on the south side of the churchyard. This will initially require a further survey!

Fire and Safety checks take place regularly throughout the year, with work being carried out as and when needed. This is done in accordance with our Insurance Risk Assessment Plan.

Volunteers

The PCC would like to thank all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to make our Church a welcoming and worshipful community. Without them we would not be able to run Services (including the Café Church), Home Groups meetings, provide home visits and engage with the local community in all sorts of ways including the monthly Coffee Mornings and the Annual Fete.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod, which provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

Safeguarding in the Parish

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding and vulnerable adults). Safeguarding continues to be important in the life of our churches. Safeguarding is on the PCC agenda at each PCC meeting. All members of the PCC have a DBS check where required. Domestic Abuse training is on-going and is currently up to date.

Governance

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956 and the Church Representation Rules 2022) and a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

The PCC met 5 times during 2024. The PCC members who served from 1st January – 31st December 2024 were:

Ex-Officio members

Vicar: Rev. Mark Ward Chairman
Licensed Lay Ministers :
Mr D. Williamson
[Mrs C. Poultney Mrs Poultney has declined to take up her place]
Wardens: Vacant

Deanery Synod representatives:

Mrs R Williamson Electoral Roll Officer
Mr D Bowyer

Elected members:

Mrs A. Stevens Honorary Secretary
Mr C. Schofield Honorary Treasurer
Mr M. Smith Vice Chairman & Fete Co-ordinator
Mrs J. Parkin Safeguarding Officer
Mrs N.E. Steel Pastoral Visiting
Mr K. Poultney Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Officer
Mrs S. Hamilton (From April 2024)

[In attendance: Mrs M. Birch as PCC Minutes Secretary]

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 **Standing Committee** consists of the Vicar, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Church Wardens, although as have had no Church Wardens since 2023, their role on the Committee has been fulfilled by the Pastoral Visitor and one other member of the PCC. The Committee met 5 times over the year. It is the only committee required by law and has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. The minutes of its meetings are received by the PCC and discussed as necessary.

Churchwardens

The two Churchwardens retired in 2023. Unfortunately no one has come forward to take on these roles so Members of the PCC are sharing them.

Financial Review

Planned Giving

Planned Giving income during the year was £15,570 – a decrease of £856 on the previous year. There were 30 planned givers during the year: a reduction of one.

Gift Aid recovered from HMRC was £4,635. This is superficially an increase of £723 on the previous year. However, HMRC made an additional payment in error in December 2024 of £834 which we were not able to return to them until January 2025. The actual amount recoverable in respect of 2024 was only £3,801- a decrease on 2023 of £110.

Reserves Policy

The practice of the PCC has been to keep at least 6 months cover as a Reserve against unanticipated expenditure. The current amount of Reserve in the General Fund (£26,983) provides over six months cover and will need to be reviewed. The PCC also has substantial Designated and Restricted Funds (£66,273) mainly for the upkeep of the fabric of the two churches. Despite having to draw on these to meet the cost of emergency ceiling repairs at Tipton, high interest rates maintained the overall level of these Reserves.

Points of note in 2024

In respect of Unrestricted Funds (in effect our day to day financing), Receipts exceeded Payments (excluding the Repairs to the ceiling at Tipton funded from Reserves) by £3,298. However that figure belies 2 factors (a) the overpayment by HMRC of Gift Aid refund which artificially inflates our income and (b) due to circumstances beyond our control, the need to re-issue 2 cheques (to Crisis and the O6 as part of our charitable giving) that were 'lost' by the payees. This was not done until 2025. Consequently the accounts show a much reduced level of charitable giving compared with what the PCC resolved. Had these 'anomalies' not happened the surplus would only have been £1664. We were sustained in 2024 by a 'bumper' summer fete and Parish Fees which matched the high figure in 2023, although neither of these can guarantee to be replicated in 2025. Collections at Services increased by about £500 due in part to the success of the cafe church which more than covered its costs.

Fortunately, on the expenditure side, our Parish Share remained virtually unchanged, although the cost of insurance and heating continued to rise. We had to finance the ceiling repairs at Tipton from the Building Fund, although repairs to the church doors at Tipton were generously funded by the Friends of St John and St Gregory. As indicated above, we have had to spend money on commissioning a structural engineer's report into the possible causes of the degradation of Venn Ottery church. The cost of this was almost totally covered by a donation. At the initiative of the local community we have also set up a designated account for the restoration of the bells at Venn Ottery.

Overall, although the outturn was better than predicted, we are not complacent as there is so much beyond our control: the income from Parish Fees and the Fete and expenditure on insurance, heating and the Common Fund. Additionally, 2025 will see the quinquennial review which could throw up totally unforeseen demands to fund repair work on both churches.

Approved by the PCC at its meeting on 10th February 2025:

Name: Michael Smith (Vice Chairman)

Name: Alison Stevens (Secretary)



Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees of	PCC of Tipton St John with Venn Ottery, Sidmouth		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st December 2024	Charity no (if any)	An Excepted Charity
	Set out on pages 7- 9		

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
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Name:	Anthony MacGregor
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Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	FCA
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Address:	16 Primley Road, Sidmouth EX10 9LD
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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF TIPTON ST JOHN with VENN OTTERY

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Receipts and Payments Accounts

	Unrestricted General Funds £	Designated Building Fund £	Restricted Building Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary receipts:					
Planned giving	15,570.50			15,570.50	16,426.00
Collections at services	2,052.22			2,052.22	1,536.10
Gift Aid recovered	4,635.38			4,635.38	3,911.89
All other giving and voluntary receipts	3,734.74			3,734.74	3,293.52
	25,992.84			25,992.84	25,167.51
Activities for generating funds	7,336.02	425.00		7,761.02	6,740.27
Investment income	2,925.68		3,205.41	6,131.09	4,318.93
Church activities	3,228.00			3,228.00	3,300.00
Other income					328.40
Total Receipts	39,482.54	425.00	3,205.41	43,112.95	39,855.11
PAYMENTS					
Church activities:					
Common fund payment	20,390.00			20,390.00	20,336.00
Church running costs	14,120.56		3,906.00	18,026.56	15,088.00
Fundraising costs	708.27			708.27	919.50
Mission giving/donations	965.29			965.29	1,875.50
Total Payments	36,184.12		3,906.00	40,090.12	38,219.00
Excess of receipts over (payments)	3,298.42	425.00	(700.59)	3,022.83	1,636.11
Fund Transfers				-	-
Cash at bank and CBF at 1 January	28,037.62	4,078.02	58,126.39	90,242.03	88,605.92
Cash at bank and CBF at 31 December	31,336.04	4,503.02	57,425.80	93,264.86	90,242.03

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
Cash funds:						
Bank current account	6,119.90				6,119.90	3,998.50
CBF Deposit Account	25,216.14	4,503.02	57,425.80		87,144.96	86,243.53
	31,336.04	4,503.02	57,425.80	-	93,264.86	90,242.03

CBF Investment Funds:					
Tipton St John	9,228.50	12,592.39	828.28	22,649.17	22,160.91
Venn Ottery	39,278.07	1,749.00		41,027.07	40,109.03
	48,506.57	14,341.39	828.28	63,676.24	62,269.94

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

- The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- CBF investment funds are held by the Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd and are shown at the closing unit valuation for the year.
- Movements on Funds during the year:

	Balance B/Fwd £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance C/Fwd £
Unrestricted Funds:					
Undesignated General Fund	23,684.71	39,482.54	36,184.12		26,983.13
Designated Kneeler Fund	8.30				8.30
Designated TSJ Building Fund	4,069.72				4,069.72
Designated VO Bell Fund		425.00			425.00
Weekes Bequest	4,352.91				4,352.91
	32,115.64	39,907.54	36,184.12		35,839.06

Restricted Funds:					
TSJ Building Fund	29,117.88	2,189.45	3,906.00		27,401.33
VO Building Fund	29,008.51	1,015.96			30,024.47
	58,126.39	3,205.41	3,906.00		57,425.80

4. Further Analysis of Receipts and Payments Accounts

	Unrestricted General Funds £	Designated Building Funds £	Restricted Building Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
RECEIPTS					
All other giving and voluntary receipts:					
Donations	926.25			926.25	464.17
Friends of St John & St Gregory	855.05			855.05	0
TSJ Church Box	17.04			17.04	26.35
VO Church Box	104.40			104.40	0
Legacies					1,000.00
Grants: Cemetery from EDDC	1,832.00			1,832.00	1,803.00
	3,734.74			3,734.74	3,293.52
Activities for generating funds:					
Summer fete	5,822.22			5,822.22	5,194.32
General fund raising	1,483.80			1,483.80	1,410.95
Fund raising for VO Bell Fund		425.00		425.00	
Lent Lunches	30.00			30.00	135.00
	7,336.02	425.00		7,761.02	6,740.27
Investment income:					
Bank interest	1,748.66			1,748.66	1,711.13
CBF Investment & Deposit income	1,177.02		3,205.41	4,382.43	2,607.80
	2,925.68		3,205.41	6,131.09	4,318.93
Church activities:					
Parish fees	3,228.00			3,228.00	3,300.00

Other income – insurance claim			328.40
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PAYMENTS

Church running costs:

Insurance	3,224.01		3,224.01	2,966.89
Heating and lighting	1,706.01		1,706.01	1,489.63
Repairs and maintenance	1,679.19	3,906.00	5,585.19	2,086.14
Building Work – Venn Ottery	1,230.00		1,230.00	2,065.00
Cleaning	322.00		322.00	265.97
Churchyards	3,825.00		3,825.00	3,658.00
Team wardens' fund	622.00		622.00	552.00
Organ tuning and repairs	180.00		180.00	204.00
Organist and choir costs	512.00		512.00	735.00
Flowers	80.40		80.40	88.38
Sanctuary	49.15		49.15	121.59
Deanery fees	15.00		15.00	
Printing and stationery	58.49		58.49	107.49
Sundry				8.42
Hospitality	78.90		78.90	
Broadband Services	101.22		101.22	257.40
Postage	18.80		18.80	12.00
Café Church Expenses	418.39		418.39	91.69
Removal of wasps' nest				378.40
	14,120.56	3,906.00	18,026.56	15,088.00

Cost of generating funds:

Fete & function expenses	708.27		708.27	919.50
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Gifts from fundraising:

Farm Africa	443.49		443.49	
Children's Society	91.80		91.80	90.50
Tearfund				135.00
WaterAid				150.00
	535.29		535.29	375.50

Gifts from general income:

The O6				500.00
Middle East Appeal	400.00		400.00	
Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal				500.00
Crisis				500.00
Devon Bell Restoration Fund	30.00		30.00	
Total Mission giving/donations	965.29		965.29	1,875.50

Approved by the PCC at its meeting on 10 February 2025 signed on its behalf by:

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Name: Michael Smith

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Name: Alison Stevens