



# Parish of St Cuthbert Croxteth Park

## Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council and Financial report for 2023-24

**Vicar** Reverend Laura-Lee Leatherbarrow

**Church Wardens** June Simm October

**Parish number 580**

**The church holds bank accounts with** Lloyds Bank plc, Broadway, Norris Green, Liverpool and main Account is with NatWest, 509 East Prescott Road, L13 3BZ

**Independent Examiner** John Moores accounting team

**Architect:** Peter Williamson of Candylofthouse

<b>PCC members</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Date Elected</b>	<b>Term of office</b>
Revd. Laura Leatherbarrow	<b>Ex officio</b>		
Vacancy Churchwarden			
June Simm	<b>Ex officio</b>	April 23	1
Pam Ambrose	<b>Ex officio deanery SYNOD</b>	2023	3
Vacancy synod			
Stephen King	<b>Ex Officio SYNOD</b>	2023	3
Tricia Smith	<b>PCC SEC</b>	2022	3
Natalie Jones (NJ)	<b>Lay Chair</b>	2022	3
Hayley Birtles		2023	1
Byrony jones		2022	3
Elaine Wilson		2023	1
Stuart Dobie		2023	1
Nicola Cushion		2023	1
Kath Nelson		2023	1
Elaine Walsh		2023	1

<b>Deanery Synod</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Term of office</b>	<b>End of term</b>
Pam Ambrose	2023	3	2025
vacancy			
Vacancy			
Stephen King	2023	3	2025

<b>St Cuthbert's Officers</b>			
<b>Treasurer</b>	Gordon Simm	<b>Lay Chair</b>	Natalie Jones
<b>Gift aid officer</b>	Kristina Stoddern	<b>Vergar</b>	On request Gordon Simm
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Victoria Dobie and team	<b>Homeless advocate</b>	Hayley Birtles /jimmy Birtles (11) Rev Laura
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	Ged Shudall as needed	<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Tricia Smith
<b>Sunday School</b>	Rachael Kiel and Elaine Walsh	<b>Electoral Roll Officer</b>	Stuart Dobie

<b>Toodles</b>	Rev Laura and Janet spencer	<b>DBS Checker</b>	Natalie Jones
<b>Foodbank</b>	Gordon and June Simm	<b>Scouts</b>	Dave Glencross
<b>APLACE2B</b>	Rev Laura and Natalie Jones	<b>Brownies</b>	Victoria Dobie

## SIDES PEOPLE

Service	Team	SIDES PEOPLE
10am		Clare Powell
		Hilary Balmer
		Bryony Jones
		Kristina Stoddern and Lauryn
		Natalie Jones
		Tracy Simmons
		Janet Spencer
		Gordon Simm
6pm		Gill Brocklehurst
		Tricia Smith
		June Simm
		Janet Spencer

## St. Cuthbert's - Achievements in 2023 and Objectives for 2024

	St Cuthbert's Church Croxteth Park
1	<p><b>Welcome and Belonging</b></p> <p>Achievements in 2023</p> <p>We have continued to improve our communication to the wider community which has been used successfully and has been effective for events from Holy Communion/ Quizzes/ fundraising/ activities for community as well as missional opportunities. This needs further improvement though as due to the nature of the estate it is virtually impossible to reach everyone and only magazines (not leaflets as they are thrown away) seem to hit every person. This of course is the costliest option. We are part of several WhatsApp groups which has continued to get the word out across the estate and school as always push the work out into the different parent year groups as well as newsletter app.</p> <p>Continuing to provide a good welcome at the door and spot those who are missing from our community is vital we have also taken part in the pyramid review and now have a table at the end to invite people to join in with tea and coffee at the end of service rather than just setting up for Toodles.</p> <p>All invited to partake at Communion making clear that it's open to all and as inclusive as possible.</p> <p>Screens now used for several things Rev Laura is encouraging the young people who don't want to go to Sunday school or who are older to help with the laptop for Church and Alex has been particularly good at doing this regularly at the 10am</p> <p>Encouraging signs of baptism /younger families who worship at our newer service for 0-6yrs old called Toodles@4 to engagement with Church in other services and events throughout the week which again makes people feel they belong and has become a small worshipping community for the church and it's an area that increases that sense of community while gently teaching about faith and Christian values.</p> <p>A place2B has been a fantastic place of welcome and is an official Place of Welcome and warm space during 2023 slowly growing each week following the deaths or illness of several members</p>

	<p><b>Objectives for 2024</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To run Wellbeing days to help people's health and wellbeing and looking at how the church supports spiritual growth</li> <li>2. To understand new normal while also understanding that Covid has not gone away, and so keeping people safe is important. Provide what is needed and reasonable for the community as well as being aware of the environment and ensuring we care for our climate in all we do. To run once again the Easter trail as well as an Easter party with grotto and film nights?</li> <li>6. To run Aplace2B with volunteers and chef being a place of welcome with generous hospitality</li> <li>7. To continue to encourage Toodles families to have a celebrating baptism families picnic party with Toodles to encourage baptism families who perhaps don't engage to come and celebrate their baptism</li> </ol>
2	<p><b>Worship</b></p> <p>Achievements in 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More liturgical/seasonal material used for services allowing for a varied liturgical flavour throughout the year.</li> <li>2 Varied services with visual displays. Encouraging the regular Parade all age services to rebegin though all uniformed have struggled to begin again due to different variants but we continue to work closely with the children in the church groups. Sadly, Rainbows closed due to lack of leaders and Brownies aim to have a sabbatical in 2024.</li> <li>3. Social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, WhatsApp, plus written material) used to promote services and events.</li> <li>4. Offering a morning service, Toodles and a 6pm offers a flavour for everyone to find a place to belong. At 6pm Laura has taken some of the principles of Fika and uses them in the group we look at the really big questions we all have in life making the 6pm quite a good discipleship group</li> <li>5. Pyramid review – action offer table after Church during 2024</li> </ol> <p><b>Objectives for 2024</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To encourage people to use social media for all aspects of church life as well as national ventures #Home for Christmas and Thy Kingdom Come. Ensuring those without IT can follow information via posters and news sheets.</li> <li>2. To provide interaction worship in the local community.</li> <li>3. To use the screen more for information for people coming into the church as well as services</li> </ol>
3	<p><b>Nurture, Discipleship and Vocation</b></p> <p><b>Achievements in 2023</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lent and discipleship groups offered as well as Cultivate.</li> <li>2. PCC members were encouraged to be disciples and spread the Gospel by being open to consider new ways of taking church to people in a non-traditional way</li> <li>3. Christian Mindfulness is attended by a small regular group. Mindfulness is valuable with issues surrounding mental health issues, although this took a break in September and will restart when able.</li> <li>4.. People encouraged to attend the Diocesan led Cultivate course for people exploring what God is calling them to be/do and to look at worshipping communities: this was part of our Fit for Mission course. We also continue to encourage people to attend the Directions course but there were no takers this year .</li> <li>5 we ran 0 confirmation services.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Objectives for 2024</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide times for reflection within the crucial times and seasons of the year and to offer Lent courses.</li> <li>2. To run the Wellbeing journey towards end of year as well as wellbeing days looking at our whole wellbeing especially since Covid. Continue to provide good wellbeing support at A Place2B with Natalie's take 10!</li> <li>3. To continue to offer confirmation training. We hope to have service here at ST Cuthberts this year</li> <li>4. Working with Scouts and Brownies/ Sunday school for the regular all age service</li> </ol>

	<p>5. To encourage people to attend the Directions course looking at what your vocation may be?</p> <p>6. To look at the Fit4Mission2 plans and to communicate them to parish</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Leadership, Service and Evangelism</b></p> <p><b>Achievements in 2023</b></p> <p>1. People have been encouraged to be involved in the life of the church by taking on caring roles such as providing tea/coffee and chat after a service, welcoming visitors as sidespeople adhering to the Safer Recruitment Policy as well as buddies both for phone and in person have been invaluable. More people have stepped up and taken some of the roles back from Rev Laura and taken on new roles too allow more lay leadership to develop.</p> <p>2. Our congregation continues to generously support Foodbank, Hugs in Boxes, Tearfund and Children's Society.</p> <p>3. To look at grants for Aplace2B, and ECO work as well as general running of the church</p> <p>4. To continue to outreach to community</p> <p>5. Have really encouraged people who have not read before or done intercessions to have a go</p> <p><b>Objectives for 2024-</b></p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>1.To engage PCC in Fit4mission 2 and to look at vision days/ awayday for portfolios etc later in year Speaker and Supper night here at St Cuthberts</p> <p>2. To encourage lay leadership across the church; for people to really explore their gifts and be encouraged and empowered to play their part in being a 'Bigger Church to make a Bigger difference'.</p> <p>3. To engage the people we meet out of church with our faith. To share the love of God with all.</p> <p>4. To encourage lay leaders for leading services. Work with the youth of the parish continuing to build links with Emmaus School.</p> <p>5. Christmas Artisan Fair, Summer fairs to continue offering missional opportunities at both</p> <p>6 An Easter egg hunt and trail to be offered as well as trail and party,</p> <p>7. Continue to work with the community payback teams.</p> <p>8. To offer mental health ventures – using gardens and possible allotments.</p> <p>9. Revd. Laura to continue to work and be Chaplain to GPs, which is a valuable support to those in the practices.</p> <p>10. To run wellbeing days for those in community bringing Gods love for all as a message on those days.</p> <p>11. To work on building our Eco presence working towards the next award when it is made, and to look at becoming net zero. Spreading the word about Gods creation to our whole community</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Pastoral care</b></p> <p>Achievements for 2023</p> <p>1. Pastoral care team to continue giving excellent care to the community and picking up referrals from Jubilee Medical Centre Physicians and Social prescriber Debbie and of course church community.</p> <p>2. The welcome on arrival to church is continued inside and after the service.</p> <p>3. To use WhatsApp to keep people informed and together as well as having a separate prayer group/ Toodles group/ and fairs and fundraising groups.</p> <p>4 Offer Coffee Chat and prayer after the service in church to bring people together.</p> <p>5. To continue to do Hugs in Boxes, and encourage life events (occasional offices) to be held in St Cuthberts</p> <p>6. To offer support and a listening ear to those struggling with mental health due to pandemic or otherwise ensuring we also care for our younger generations as well as older.</p> <p>7. To continue APLACE2B and to encourage people of all ages to use the resource as well as being a warm space</p> <p><b>Objectives for 2024</b></p> <p>1. To increase number of baptisms. / occasional offices</p> <p>2. To engage further with Pastoral care team. And to use the garden more as outside space for those who will find gardening a good activity to talk about faith and mental health.</p> <p>3. To encourage people to do the Wellbeing journey and run the course regularly.</p> <p>4. Continue to offer Mindfulness to all ages</p>

5. To explore group texting, in line with GDPR processes, to inform new members to church of special services and events within the church. Group texting facility used to communicate with baptism families and to promote services such as All Souls and wedding celebration services
---

## **Structure, Management and Governance**

St Cuthbert's PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure 1956.

There are no other related trusts. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church members are registered on the Electoral Roll and therefore eligible to stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC operates several subcommittees again and these were recommenced from October 22: There is of course a Standing Committee which sets the agenda and makes emergency decisions if urgent repair etc is needed. PCC members receive Safeguarding training to a high standard and are now required to make an application under the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The first and most important function of the PCC is to work in conjunction with the incumbent in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. The Church is called to be pastoral place to -

- to look after individual people
- to be evangelistic
- to tell people the Good News and invite them to accept it;
- to be sociable and build community.
- to help the poorer members of society, and those suffering from racial, economic and other forms of injustice
- to be ecumenical
- to encourage good relations with other denominations.

The PCC has reviewed its policy for Safeguarding and in 2023 we now have a Safeguarding officer and a DBS officer to help with the smooth running and a subcommittee to ensure all safeguarding paperwork is completed. The PCC operates under a mature system of controls and procedures developed over many years of operation. Finance and operational issues are routinely monitored as part of regular PCC meetings.

When planning activities for the year, the PCC considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit with a specific guidance to charities concerned with advancement of religion. An annual budget is prepared to monitor short term viability. Actual results compared with budget are reported to the PCC quarterly. Geographically there is little or no experiences of terrorist activity in any churches and the risk rating of any problems in this subject area is exceptionally low, but as a place of worship open and welcoming to many visitors' vigilance is always paramount.

**Reserves Policy** - No charity can operate for any length of time without reserves. There are now improved reserves, due to help by national church and hard work by all parishioners. We must also mention the support given to us by 1<sup>st</sup> Croxteth Park Scouts as well. To continue to build reserves to a working level, a minimum of two months costs and to re-build a contingency for future maintenance costs. This is the aim for 2024 while also increasing our Parish share by 4% to allow us to be prepared for the rising costs that come.

## **St Cuthbert's Parish and Local Area**

### **The Parish**

The Parish is situated to the northeast of Liverpool. The estate, of largely privately owned homes, was developed on land acquired from the estate of the Earls of Sefton and is some six miles from the centre of the city. The parish borders Croxteth Country Park. The Country Park, and the Grade 2 listed Croxteth Hall within it, is one of the major heritage centres in the Northwest of England.

The church was opened in 1988 and was initially part of a team with St Mary's, West Derby. St Cuthbert's became an Independent Parish in 1998. 1998 also saw the opening of the Emmaus Church of England and Catholic Primary School.

The Parish is part of the Croxteth Ward and details of the ward can be found on the Liverpool Council website, [www.liverpool.gov.uk](http://www.liverpool.gov.uk).

### **The Deanery**

West Derby Deanery consists of 12 churches (one of which is closed for worship and will be closing permanently with roads absorbed by Good Shepherd and St Cuthbert's), 12 clergy (a mixture of stipendiary, non-stipendiary and retired Incumbents and assistants). The Deanery has completed a Deanery Mission Plan as required by the Diocese of Liverpool. The Deanery Synod is keen to explore ways in which the churches can develop working together that would see an increase of the relevance and impact of the churches in their communities.

With this in mind, we are looking together at the Fit4mission work for 2023 -24 and the hope is we will be one parish from September 24. We are to be called Christ our Hope and St Cuthberts will sit as St Cuthberts within the parish of Christ Our Hope

### **Emmaus School**

Our work with the school continues and our relationship with school remains strong; Mr Williams and his staff are very positive and supportive of the church. Meetings and collective worships have been done in school and online. We look forward to being in school properly again next year. Meanwhile Worship Group on a Thursday continues.

### **PCC Membership**

One third of the ordinary membership stand down from the PCC each year. Election of new members is by secret vote when nominees exceed vacancies. PCC members receive induction information including trustee responsibilities, basic health and safety, risk assessment, management, and child protection procedures. All members are required to make an application under the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) and to complete safeguarding training.

### **Fabric and Maintenance**

Our Quinquennial was lost by the Architect during 2020 due to computer and staffing problems so and was repeated at the beginning of 2021 we are sadly still awaiting the report at the end of 2022 and Maggie Mullen informed us that she would be stepping back due to ill health which meant we needed a new Architect. The PCC nominated Peter Williamson of Candyloft House who came to do a report and then failed to produce it which Chris Leggit and Gordon our parish Admin support is chasing up.

All PAT testing is completed as well as fire extinguishers we have also had electrical issues looked at but still need the LEDES looked at as all electrical, and work required by Ecclesiastical Insurance. Has been completed. We are a well-structured and young church with good maintenance plans which are ongoing generally completed by the generosity of several volunteers.

### **Risk Assessments**

All organisations are subject to risk which could prevent them from operating effectively. St Cuthbert's Church as a charity is no different. To identify their major risks, the PCC undertook a programme of assessments. Procedures were then put in place to manage those risks and minimise their impact on the life of the church. Action in the main areas of risk has been taken as follows.

### **Financial Risk**

An annual budget is prepared to ensure short term viability. Actual results compared with budget are reported to the PCC. A finance group was set up in 2023 to monitor and control the budgets for St Cuthbert's. The Treasurer was happy to be invited and report back each month using the new software that has made the accounts much simpler and we now have had this for the last two years. Under the Charities Act 2006 churches with a gross income or total expenditure of under £500,000 do not need a full audit instead they may choose to have an Independent Examination. The PCC have taken advantage of this rule and have Keith to take an audit of finances.

## Health and Safety

A review is annually undertaken by a member of the church with specific experience in this field. The PCC has been appraised of the risks and the necessary compliance requirements and these have been complied with. Specifically, procedures for recording accidents have been put in place and all wardens and sides people have been trained in fire safety. These procedures are reviewed on an annual basis and formally reported to the PCC. Ged Shudall who works as a health and safety officer as his paid employment has said that he will be a consultant as and when we need assistance.

## Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection

Policies for children and vulnerable adults have been approved and co-ordinators appointed. Natalie Christie is the Safeguarding lead but will be stepping down and Victoria Dobie will be the new Safeguarding lead with Natalie Jones as DBS verifier. We take this extremely seriously and ensure all our leaders that need DBS are renewed and that all parishioners are encouraged to complete Training C0 with PCC completing C2 and all children's leads are to be C3 with the Safeguarding lead and of course Clergy.

## Fire Procedure-

A review of equipment and escape routes is undertaken on an annual basis by a firm of external consultants. An internal assessment is carried out by representatives of the PCC who are appropriately qualified.

## Electoral Roll

April 2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
152	140	106 (New Roll)	106	116	119	?

## Our church and church grounds

Grants have helped us from our deanery and Together Liverpool. The grants meant that we were able to put on several free days with food for our community involving food which we wish to continue in 2024.

The Pay Back team have met when possible and continue to use our facilities as part of our commitment to be the heart of the community.

Phil and Tommy have done a sterling job keeping the gardens maintained and have worked on some of the things we need to put in place as we care more for our environment.

## Environment Eco Church

During 2021 we were awarded our Gold Eco Award and we have continued to grow and work on this ensuring we have continued to complete the ARoche Survey and getting a base line for 360 Carbon. During 2022 we have offset our Carbon and have been classed as D for our building and A for our Activities on our Energy reports

Rachael Kiel has worked to ensure we all do our absolute best for God's Creation and ensuring good stewardship as we prepare for the future. However, in 2024 we need people to help take this mantle forward as it has fallen on Rev Laura to keep maintaining and a new Eco Rep needs to be sought. We did however ensure Creation tide and Creation Sunday were maintained. Our tea and coffee is Fair Trade and our cleaning products are eco-friendly. We continue to use Give a Crap eco Toilet paper.

Our website is updated with links and useful information regarding Eco Church and how we can get involved.



Rachael Kiel took the sermon spot on one Sunday to explain all things Eco church about what we do, what we can do and how we can improve and work towards the gold award. We continued to support and work with the payback team looking at environmental issues and we began changing the way we cared for and used the gardens. We do hope to continue with allotment areas and the youth to care for the youth beds and have had in place during 2023, a low mowing schedule, left an area as a wildlife area, and had a family of hedgehogs

Below are the guidelines we are asked the congregation to work to in 2023/24.

1. Each day of Lent pray for one thing in creation that you care about e.g., the birds in your garden, or even your favourite food. Thank God for it.
2. Set aside time each week to go for a walk (or look out of your window if you are not able at present) and actively appreciate God's creation, remembering how we are wholly dependent on it for our survival. This is also valuable for your mental health and wellbeing.
3. Come to the Eco days and litter picks and of course pray for us as we work to maintain our Gold award and to keep improving to protect God's environment. look up [www.prayandfastforclimatechange.org.uk](http://www.prayandfastforclimatechange.org.uk)
4. Become part of the Eco Group.

Lobby MPs and send green hearts as reminder for COP27. The plan is to work towards the net zero award which is the next stage of our journey with Eco Church and to involve more of the congregation, especially those who do not have access to the internet to look at the hints and tips available. To continue the raised beds and to continue to look at what we can do to raise awareness of climate issues especially with our MPs and councillors. To continue the craftivism group and to embed the environment and climate awareness into all we do- To do a fresh heart bombing of the estate to raise awareness by the craftivism team.

### **Our challenges in 2023-24**

Our wonderful churchwarden, vicar, lay leaders with the PCC have continued to work hard to ensure mission and God's love to our community is first and foremost, but we also need to continue to make great strides with our finance and this has been achieved through hard work, giving, fundraising and grants. The church has always struggled financially and at the end of 2022 we are delighted to have a surplus, (not including reserve funds) for the first time in many, many years. We are very grateful for the help we received from the National Church which gave us the help we needed to make our parish share each month via a deduction. This then gave us the hope we needed to begin see light at the end of the financial tunnel. ~

The Parish Share remains at the fore of our needs for the coming year and this year we have no financial help from the National Church, but they have held the share at last year's costs so once again our finances remain a concern and we must continue to be careful stewards regarding bills while ensuring that we continue to have climate challenge in our minds and continue to support green ventures. We will also ensure that we continue to keep mission at the heart of all we do. Fit for Mission is challenging and sadly two churches have already stepped back but Cultivate was well attended by members of St Cuthberts and at least two people have offered to help with portfolios. This work continues to be fed back weekly.

Our prayer for the year going forward in 2024 especially as we face Fit for mission 2 becoming one parish towards the end of the year and continue to look at our finances is .

*'Loving Lord, you are our hope and our strength – You are our ever-present help in this difficult world and Lord we know that You hold the future in the palm of Your hands, and we trust You. We thank You that You are always there to provide for our needs and to protect us from the storms of life...and we pray that no matter what the future holds – You will remain there beside us. We know that no matter how difficult life becomes Your grace is*



*sufficient for all our needs. Help us to rely on You no matter what problems and difficulties arise – for our hope and future is in You.'*

## **Reports for the Church**

### **Churchwardens report – Sunday school Report -**

### **Safeguarding Coordinator (Children & Vulnerable Adults)**

Safeguarding is of vital importance. As a church we need to be welcoming, but also a safe place. The PCC is responsible for ensuring and promoting the best possible safeguarding culture and expects that everyone will work within the church Safeguarding Policy. In particular, the church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to any member of the congregation immediately raise this with members of the Clergy or the Safeguarding Coordinator. The PCC being responsible to ensure that all activities involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults, are managed and supervised by appropriately trained and recruited volunteers.

Utilising Liverpool Diocese 10 Steps Safer Recruitment Policy, new members of the congregation, before they are eligible to volunteer and work with children, young adults, and vulnerable adults, must have attended regularly at Services/and church activities for six months.

All volunteers are required to attend an interview with the Safeguarding Officer or Revd. Laura and complete a DBS application and undergo the appropriate Safeguarding training.

We have adhered to and implemented the new Safeguarding rules and policies advised.

It applies to all and offers a great foundation for good safeguarding practice.

As a PCC we have complied with the duty under section 5 of the safeguarding and clergy discipline measures 2016 (Duty to have regard to House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.) The policy will be read out to the whole of the community at the APCM.

### **St Cuthberts Brownies**

Report is due Victoria Dobie

Brownie Leader.

**1<sup>st</sup> Croxteth Park Scouts report is due**

**DAVID GLENCROSS**

**GROUP SCOUT LEADER**

**1<sup>ST</sup> CROXTETH PARK (ST CUTHBERTS) SCOUT GROUP.**

**APLACE2B need report**

**Fundraising group – report**

**Sunday school**

**Should the one parish not happen by September 2024 APCM will be set for April 2025.**