

# A REVIEW OF 2023'S ACCOUNTS

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF  
**BOGNOR REGIS AND SLINDON**

We are followers of Jesus, on fire with his love,  
sharing that love with each other and with the world.



# Introduction

Dear parishioners,

It is my pleasure to introduce the Parish Accounts for the year 2023. As always, I am extremely grateful to each and every person for the contribution you make to parish life, whether that be financial as reported here, or spiritual or practical through the generous offering of your time and talents; all given in the service of the Gospel and the mission to which Jesus calls us personally and as a community. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Parish Finance Committee for their hard work in helping look after our finances, and particularly to Caroline Battersby for her hard work in putting this report together. I hope this report gives you the information you need to feel confident that your generosity is received gratefully and used wisely. Financial transparency is crucial if we are to encourage every member of the parish to take personal responsibility for their part in the life of the Church. We want you to know how your contributions are used, not only in the upkeep of our buildings, but in the building up of a community engaged in mission.

In the autumn of last year we held our Parish Stewardship Drive where we reflected on the goodness of God in the many blessings we receive, and on our responsibility to use those gifts wisely and for good purposes. Later in these pages you'll see some good news about how income has increased as a result. Some people, too, stepped forward to offer their time in support of one or other activities in the parish. Let's thank God together for all the ways in which people felt able to respond. The three-week co-ordinated drive isn't something we'd plan to do every year, but the principles behind it are important to keep always at the forefront of our minds: God's goodness is entrusted to us so that we might make the Gospel of his love more widely known.

As we review the last year and thank God for his blessings, I'd ask you regularly to reflect on the question: is God calling me to offer of my time, talent or treasure in a new way? For information about Standing Orders or Gift Aid, or to offer your time and talents, please contact the Parish Office Tel: 01243 823619 Email: [bognor@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bognor@abdiocese.org.uk)

With my thanks and an assurance of my prayers,

Fr Chris

# 2023 YEAR END REPORT

	2021	2022	2023
<b>Income</b>	<b>£158,806</b>	<b>£192,804</b>	<b>£192,647</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£192,894</b>	<b>£205,193</b>	<b>£262,712</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>£34,088</b>	<b>£12,389</b>	<b>*£70,065</b>

You will see from the figures that our expenditure as of late has exceeded our income. This is unsustainable and is only possible due to reserves gifted to us as a parish over the years. Whilst costs have increased overall, energy charges are now one of our major expenses; in 2023's accounts this amounted to £24,462, however, due to a changeover in Diocesan supplier we did not receive Electricity invoices from July 2023 until this year, adding a further £4,658 which will be reflected in 2024 accounts.

\*The deficit for 2023 is largely accounted for by the necessary rebuilding of the wall to Haltwhistle Cottage which was in danger of collapse, amounting to £60,345.

## Additional Expenditure

To improve facilities at St Anthony's for groups such as Life in the Spirit seminars, the Diocesan *Invited!* Programme and other events, a new fridge, tables and television were purchased at a cost of £1,002.

To meet increased demand and use of the Parish Centre kitchen for homeless breakfasts, Sunday Tea/Coffee, Alpha etc. a second dishwasher was installed at a cost of £437.

Other equipment purchased includes an additional screen in the Sacred Heart Chapel as an aid to greater utility of the cameras for livestreaming, particularly for funerals, weddings and Holy

Communion celebrations (£795). Music equipment (£464) and a replacement TV for the Parish centre (£479).

### New Income Streams

Excluding the wall costs, the deficit has reduced over the past two years through new income streams. In light of the decision for Bognor Regis and Slindon to be served by only one priest, house and office space became vacant. Priory Cottage has been rented to the L'Arche community and the vacant office in the Parish Centre has been rented to a local builder, providing an income of £18,480. Hire of the parish hall has also increased with an income of £2,567.

Thank you to all parishioners who responded so generously to our Stewardship Drive in the October. Much of this has now become apparent in 2024: the amount donated by standing order has increased by 24% over the five month period January to May compared to the same period in 2023 from £24,896 to £30,892. In addition, around 20 more parishioners also signed up for Gift Aid. This is a significant source of income, in 2023 we recovered £16,743 from the Government, these additional Gift Aid donations will really make a difference.

### **Account Balances at the end of financial year 2023**

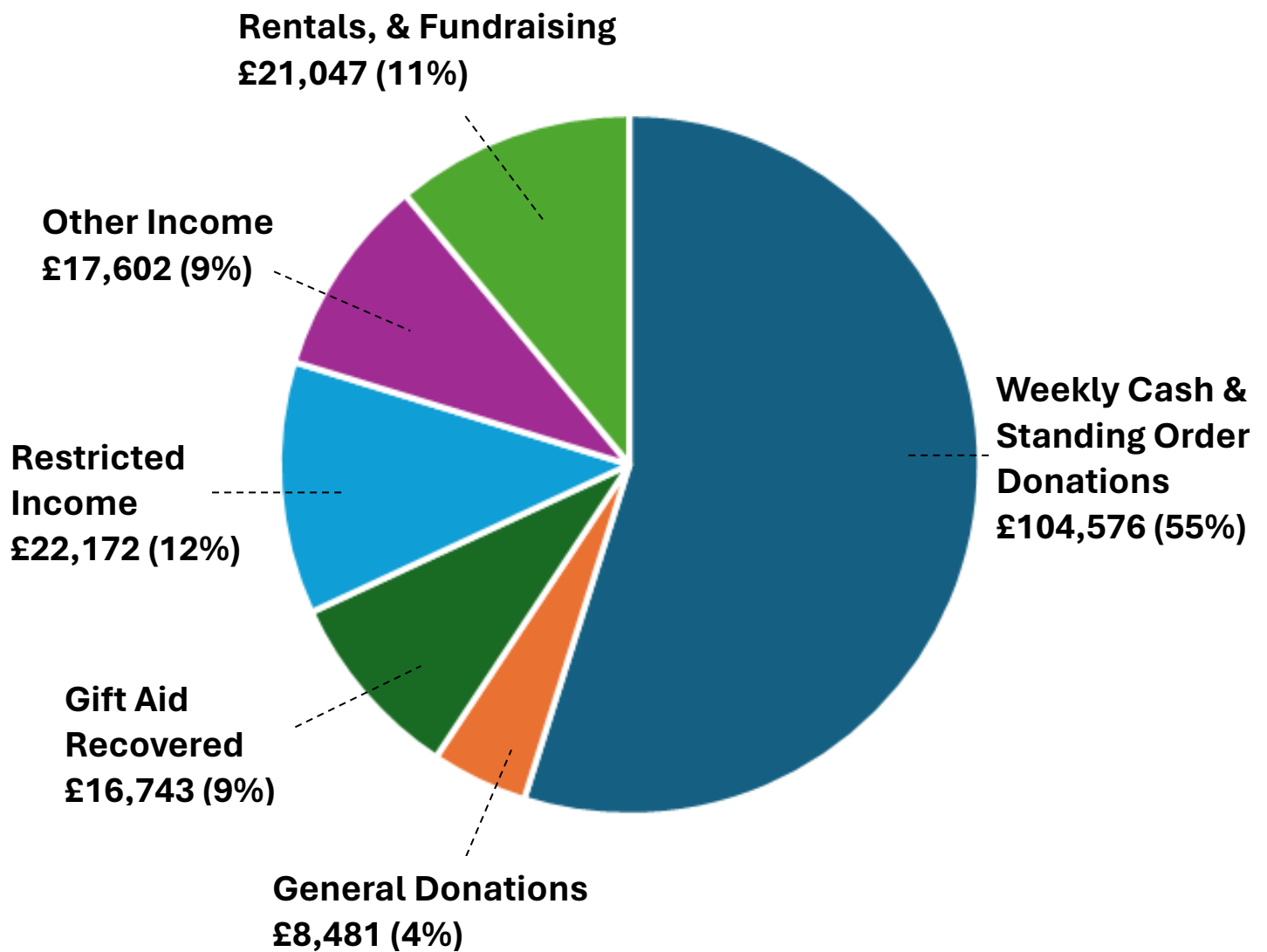
<b>Current Account</b>	<b>£6,722</b>
<b>Building Fund</b>	<b>£2471</b>
<b>Investment Account</b>	<b>£217,255</b>

### Budget 2024

In 2023 our five yearly survey (Quinquennial) was undertaken which highlighted a number of areas that will need to be addressed in the structure of our churches. These works will be carried out over the next 5 year period according to urgency and financed from reserves.

The budget for day to day expenditure aims to be financed solely from investment dividends, rental income and your individual giving.

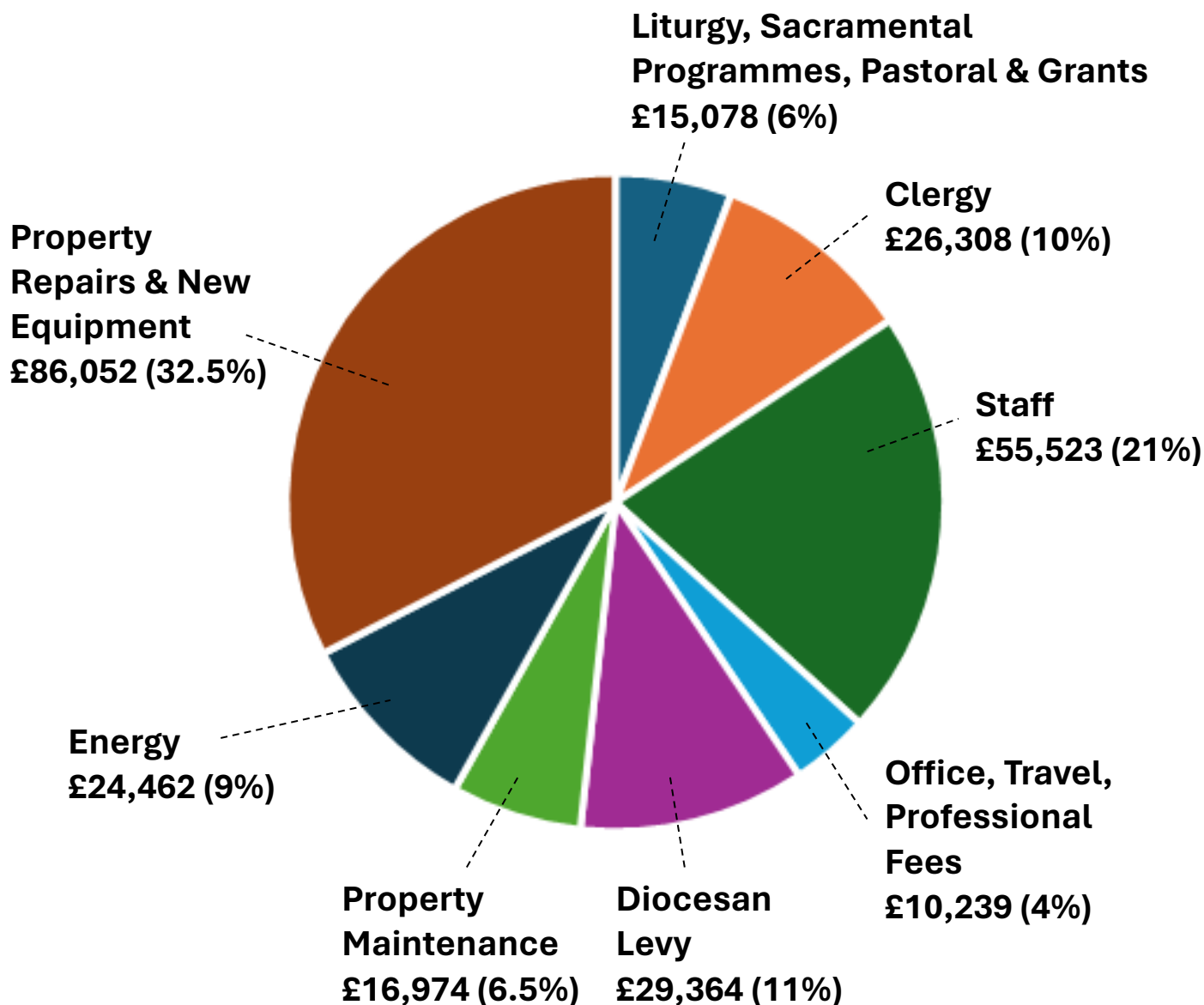
# Parish Income 2023



## Notes:

- Restricted income: these are donations designated to the priest in Christmas and Easter offerings; stipends and stole fees which go towards clergy costs in expenditure
- Other Income includes Insurance claims, shop and votives

# Parish Expenditure 2023



## Notes:

- Professional fees of £2,578, Diocesan solicitor fees in relation to the rental of property. Travel costs cover mileage allowance for the priest and transport to and from the airport for Fr Ramon
- Property Maintenance includes rates, insurance, licences for music and streaming, maintenance of electrics, gas and equipment.

# THE FRUIT OF OUR GIVING:

## Putting faith into action with others

“As a young adult within this area’s Church, I sometimes ask myself, “where are the others like me?” My peers have either moved out of the county or have fallen out of practicing their faith. So, it can be a challenge to find a place we feel we “fit” into the parish community.

I am very thankful for what has happened over the past few years. Covid has been tough, granted, but it has also given us new ways to connect. With the Diocese’s organisation, I’ve developed friendships and companionship with other young people across Surrey and Sussex; utilising the opportunities offered through Zoom. It turns out there are plenty of young adults around, if you know where to look!

Additionally, over the past couple of years, I have been blessed enough to gain a spiritual home in the parish through the Knights of St Columba. As I’ve learned, the Knights are a men’s fellowship group with thousands of members spread across councils (groups) all over the world.

When I was first invited to join the Knights, I was quite apprehensive of what they (we) did and whether I would find my place there. However, the meetings have been a great experience. To have a place to pray and put faith into action with others has been a real game-changer for me.

Here in Bognor, the Knights are involved in a range of outreach ministries, from prison visiting to pro-life advocacy. Being part of causes like these has given me a real confidence boost. It’s encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone, get to know other members of the parish, and to feel more confident in sharing my faith with those who haven’t yet responded to Jesus’ good news.

New members are always welcome!”

Alex

---

The Knights of St Columba meet regularly in the Parish Centre. This building acts as a hub for many activities each week from feeding those who are homeless to a meeting space for discipleship groups like the Knights. This is only possible thanks to your generosity; thank you!

For more information on the Knights of St Columba, and to find out how to get involved visit [bognorcatholicparish.co.uk/KCS](http://bognorcatholicparish.co.uk/KCS)

# THE FRUIT OF OUR GIVING:

## Responding to the call of Jesus

“I first joined the Parish Community of Bognor & Slindon when my daughter joined St Mary’s Primary School. It was clear from the outset that the school, and the parish by extension, was a warm, loving and faith filled community. My daughter was embraced by her teachers and peers in all aspect of school life and, even though we did not go to church as a family, it soon became clear that she valued the faith life of the school above all else.

When she was in year 6, my daughter asked me and her mum if she could be baptised. Naturally, we wanted to support her in her journey of faith as best we could. Along the way, however, it soon became clear to me that this was something that was drawing me in as well. After talking with Fr Chris and spending time in prayer, I recognised my calling to be baptised too. It was a wonderful thing, and only the beginning of my exploration of faith!

In the lead up to my daughter receiving Holy Communion for the first time, I joined the First Holy Communion programme, where we were able to discuss some trickier aspects of faith as parents journeying together, and I met some wonderful people to share these discussions with.

In May 2022, I joined the Emmaus (RCIA) programme, along with some other parents who I met in the First Holy Communion course! We all really loved discovering the Catholic faith in all its fullness by talking, learning and praying together. In 2023, at Easter, I was received into the Church through the Eucharist and Confirmation. Please do continue to support the parish financially and in prayer as you have supported me, my daughter, and my new friends on Emmaus. Thank you.”

Mark

---

Praise God every year people step forward to become followers of Jesus and join our parish! The good news of Jesus is infectious! Yet following Him is never easy, so we are blessed to have a range of Catechists (teachers) who support everyone from babies and their parents in preparing for Baptism, to now over 50 children each week for Children’s Liturgy of the Word, to adults preparing for initiation through RCIA. Though these brilliant people give their time for free, your giving funds the associated costs of these ministries, the ongoing training of Catechists, and the venues in which they meet. Thank you!