

hillsborough
PARISH CHURCH

2023 Trustees' Report

for

St Malachy's Parish Church,
Hillsborough

as required by the

Charity Commission for Northern
Ireland

St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough

Reference and administrative details

Charity Name: St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough

Charity Registration Number: 101674

Contact Address: Church Office
The Downshire Centre
Main Street
Hillsborough
BT26 6AE

Trustees

From 1 January to 23 April 2023 the Trustees comprised: Ken Allen, Andrew Cunningham, Revd Canon Dr Bryan Follis, Lesley Harvey, Letty Lucas, Nigel McCarthy, Gareth McCaw, Dermott McCurdy, Gareth McGonigle, Miranda Reid, Alan Richardson, Stephen Robinson, Penny Scott, Brian Sparkes, Karen Topping, June Walker and Jenny Williams.

From 24 April until 31 December 2023, the Trustees comprised: Revd Canon Dr Bryan Follis, Lesley Harvey, Tanya Howe, Letty Lucas, Nigel McCarthy, Gareth McCaw, Dermott McCurdy, Gareth McGonigle, Jenny Mitchell, Alan Richardson, Stephen Robinson, Penny Scott, Karen Topping, Anthony Trimble, Jeremy Trimble, June Walker and Jenny Williams.

Principal Office-bearers

Clergy: Rector – Rev Canon Dr Bryan Follis

Hon Secretary: Mrs Letty Lucas

Hon Treasurer: Dr Penny Scott

Rector's Church Warden: June Walker

People's Church Warden: Tanya Howe

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

The Trustees present St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Objectives and Activities

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

The principal function of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough (often referred to as Hillsborough Parish Church) is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity, in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough has custody of property and of records,

religious heritage and maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough.

Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit

To help achieve the advancement of the Christian religion and provide public benefit, the Select Vestry of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough, continued to support the efforts of our Ministry Team in sharing the truth and love of Christ in our community.

During 2023, the first full year without restrictions since the COVID crisis, we were able to further renew our efforts to deepen relationships within our Church community and to reach out into the wider community. It is therefore encouraging to have welcomed several new families (from a variety of backgrounds) who choose to join our Church.

Our main Sunday Service at 10:30am continues to be enriched by the engaging worship led by Matt Good (our Music Director) and the Praise Band. This contemporary style of worship along with Bible teaching (by members of our Ministry Team) which is faithful but also pastorally relevant, has helped draw in and bless people. Furthermore, the ministry to children and young people linked to this 10:30am Service, has seen sustained growth during 2023. We are delighted to report that weekly attendance at our 10:30am Worship Service has increased by 40 people per week compared to the previous year.

In addition to ensuring that the weekly Services each Sunday are to a high standard, we were able to host special Services in the run-up to Christmas with the church once again full to capacity. Our Christingle Service, Carols by Candlelight, two Carol Concerts for charity, along with Services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day all drew maximum numbers and were a joy to all who attended. As well as being a blessing to our regular members, these special Services allowed us to connect with the wider community and welcome visitors from a variety of backgrounds.

As our ministry to children and young people has developed further, we increased the number of part-time Youth Interns from 2 to 4. From September 2023, Simon Kinnen, Louise Hatwell, Ethan Cheshire and Anna Holley - under the direction of Julie Currie, our Family Ministry Pastor - have helped deliver a weekly programme of activities for our young people. We are also blessed to have a dedicated band of volunteers who give generously and willingly of their time and talent each week to help with ministry to children and youth.

Our senior parishioners have also been looked after during 2023 by Lynn McFarland, as our part-time Pastoral Associate. After she stepped down in August, routine visiting and pastoral care of our seniors was undertaken by Rev John Rutter and Rev Julie Bell.

Our weekly 'Coffee and Chat' - hosted by a committed group of volunteers - has also afforded pensioners a warm welcome where they can meet up with others. During the cold winter and the cost of living crisis, this ministry (which is open to the wider community) also served as a 'warm room' for older people.

Our Rector, Bryan Follis and his wife, Eleanor, hosted a number of Coffee Mornings at their Rectory for senior parishioners. During the Autumn, a 6 week course, 'Hymns we Love', was led by Rev Julie Bell. These sessions proved very popular with all who attended.

As a Church community, we remained committed during 2023 to giving 11% of our income to help others at home and abroad who are in greater need than ourselves. Among the £48.5k donated by us during 2023 was £11.8k to our mission partnership with the Diocese of Egypt. This included support for student pastors drawn from among the Sudanese refugee community in Cairo as well as vocational training in Alexandria for local Egyptians struggling to find a job. Hosting the Rev Mina Helmy, Minister of a Church in Alexandria, for a month in March 2023 at the Rectory, helped further cement our partnership with Egypt.

On the home front, in view of the cost-of-living crisis, we increased our support for Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and their work in inner east Belfast. Through our Christmas Appeal and giving from our mission allocation, £12.5k was donated to CAP and St Brendan's Parish in 2023. Meanwhile through our 'Rector's Discretionary Fund', £1.9k was given locally in support to individuals.

As a Church, we continue to provide considerable time each week to those who have spiritual questions or concerns along with those struggling with a pastoral problem. This ministry is given by our Rector without charge to both parishioners and to those from the wider community who approach us with a pastoral or spiritual issue.

Looking back on 2023, the Trustees believe that it was a year in which St Malachy's Church meaningfully delivered its aims and objectives. St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for NI guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the parish objectives, as well as providing public benefit to the wider community.

Financial Review

The overall income in 2023 was £388.4k which is down on the £449.4k received in 2022. However, £122.0k of the 2022 total was a one-off legacy and when that gift is excluded, a significant increase in live giving can be seen. During 2023, regular voluntary giving increased by £10.6k and the annual Harvest Appeal, at £35.0k, has increased by £22.0k. Excluding the 2022 legacy from 2022 figures, the net total of all other donations is up by £11.1k while income from church activities has increased by £10.3k.

Given the growing financial pressure from the cost-of-living crisis during 2023, we are very grateful to our parishioners for their faithful support. Their willingness to increase their giving to our Church at such a time reflects, we believe, a significant and strong commitment.

These accounts have been prepared on a 'Going Concern' basis and there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that act significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Trustees are operating a Reserves policy whereby unrestricted funds held by the charity will cover ten weeks of unrestricted resources expended. For this purpose, unrestricted funds exclude fixed assets and unrestricted resources expended excludes depreciation. The Trustees believe that this level of reserves would be sufficient to continue operating the charity should there be a significant drop in funding.

As at the end of December 2023 unrestricted funds covered 25 weeks of unrestricted resources expended and exceed the required policy above by 15 weeks.

Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the finances for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough can continue its activities for the next 12 months and that the financial statements for the year end 2023 can be signed off as a going concern.

Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity

Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial Organisation. The Select Vestry members are the Charity Trustees.

Recruitment and Appointment of Select Vestry

All members of the Church of Ireland, who are over the age of 18 and are either resident within the Parish or live elsewhere but have been accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months, may register as members of the General Vestry of

the Parish, allowing them to attend and vote at meetings of the General Vestry and to stand for election to the Select Vestry.

Meetings of the General Vestry are held at least once a year. The Select Vestry is elected as part of this General Vestry meeting. The Select Vestry will hold their positions for a period of one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually and there is no limit on the number of terms which may be served.

Pay and remuneration

The Rector receives a stipend and together with office and locomotory allowances in accordance with figures approved by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland. Pension contributions and Employees' National Insurance are also paid in accordance with Diocesan recommendations.

The Family Ministry Pastor received a salary based upon diocesan staff scales while the Sexton, Church Administrator, Youth Interns, Cleaner and Music Director receive salaries commensurate with their role and experience.

Organisational Structure

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day to day management of the parish. The Select Vestry consists of the member of the clergy serving in the parish, any curate assistant ('the curate'), the church wardens, the glebe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the General Vestry elected at the Annual General Vestry meeting.

The Select Vestry is chaired by the incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how parish funds are to be applied.

The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by the members or by the Diocesan Synod. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the chairperson or by the Church Wardens. In 2023, the Select Vestry of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough met 9 times during the year and the average attendance was 82%

Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statement in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year.

Under that law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the statement of financial activities of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- *select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.*
- *make judgments and estimates that they are reasonable and prudent.*
- *state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and identify the standards in question, subject to any material departures being disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and*
- *prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Parish will continue as a going concern.*

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and disclosure with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Parish and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act

(Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the provision of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Parish and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure to our independent examiners

In so far as the Trustees of St Malachy's Parish Church, Hillsborough, are aware at the timing of approving our Trustees' Annual Report:

- *there is no relevant information of which the independent examiners are unaware; and*
- *the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any information relevant to the independent examination and to establish that the independent examiners are aware of that information.*

Independent Examiners

The independent examiner Mrs Judith Shortall has indicated her willingness to continue in office, and a resolution concerning reappointment was proposed and approved at the Annual Vestry Meeting.

On behalf of the Trustees

Revd Canon Dr Bryan Follis
Rector & Chairman

Mrs Letty Lucas
Hon. Secretary

10 April 2024

