

Parish of the Good Shepherd with St. Peter, Lee
Trustees' Report for 2024 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Trustees' Report for Parish of Good Shepherd with St. Peter, Lee PCC (Registered charity number: 1171429)

Review of the year May 2023 to April 2024 - (Financial Year 2023)

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A) Aims and Purposes

The Good Shepherd with St Peter Lee's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the object of the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England and has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Bridget Shepherd, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of our two church buildings – the Good Shepherd on Handen Road and St Peter's on Eltham Road – and the care and upkeep of the parish house located in Weigall Road.

B) Objectives and Activities

As a church we are committed to:

Shining God's light to our community and sharing the good news of God's love for all.

This is expressed and lived out through the following five values:

- All are welcome – we are an inclusive church.
- All have space to grow in faith – every age and stage of life matters.
- All are called to serve – everyone has a part to play.
- All find a place to belong – we are committed to God and to one another.
- All reach out – we respond to the needs in our community with the love of God.

The PCC has adapted and adopted the Church of England's current vision and strategic priorities and committed to becoming a church that is:

Jesus Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped

That reflects the character of Jesus by being **humbler, simpler and bolder**

That focusses its energy on four priorities:

1. Exploring, releasing and supporting each other to live out our faith in everyday life
2. Encouraging variety and creativity in our worship, mission and practice
3. Being a church that is younger and more diverse
4. Pursuing social justice for all

These four priorities helped to guide our activity throughout the year.

C) Achievements and Performance

Over the course of 2023 we have seen steady growth at our Sunday services, with our average Sunday attendance now at 80. This increase reflects an increase in our average attendance of more than 150% over the past 10 years. We were particularly pleased to see record numbers at our festival services, and we welcomed almost 900 people to our Christmas services, and over 175 to our Easter Sunday service – again, significant increases on where we were ten years ago. Alongside our festival services we had a special service to mark the Coronation, and a Deanery Service for Ascension Day.

We have continued to benefit from the leadership of our Ministry Team and our Music Team, both of whom enrich our worship, and bring creativity and variety. During the year we said goodbye to Revd Henry Whyte, who had been part of the Good Shepherd for ten years, and we welcomed our Curate, Revd Chris Henriette and family. It is good that we have a steady stream of people to bring new life to our services.

During 2023 our weekly Children's Church sessions have become much more established, with new families joining the church, and new people joining the team of leaders. During the year we took the decision to stop 'Wild Church', which was a monthly outdoor service for families, that was started during the pandemic. The main reason for this was that the bulk of the planning and preparation fell to a very small number of (already busy!) leaders. It has been good to see our children play a visible part in services by assisting with preparing the altar for Communion. We hope to continue to develop our provision for children over the coming year.

We are still offering a Zoom link to the Good Shepherd Sunday service, and it is well used and appreciated by a range of people. There tend to be around 4-8 people taking part by Zoom each week. The PCC took the decision to suspend Sunday worship at St. Peter's in the spring of 2022, and throughout 2023/4 to date the Bishop of Southwark has granted us permission to continue the suspension pending the PCC's discussions about the next steps and plans for the future – more of this below.

Outside of Sunday services, our home groups continue to meet, and we also offered a special course for Lent, and an environmental themed Bible study in the autumn. During Advent we once again produced an Advent Reflection Booklet, to encourage people to set aside time for prayer and reflection during the season of Advent. All of these opportunities to learn and grow in faith have been run and organised by lay members of the church. We continue to have a healthy attendance at our Wednesday Morning Prayer services (Wednesdays 9-9.30am), and at the fortnightly Christian meditation sessions.

As a parish church we have the opportunity to reach out to people in our parish through baptisms, weddings, funerals and memorial services. Last year we conducted eight baptisms, one wedding, and 14 funerals. From January to March 2023 we also ran the Bereavement Journey Course, which was much appreciated by those who attended. As in previous years, the annual Memorial Service is valued by those who attend it, and attracts many people who are not regular church-goers.

During the year our Youth Group was strengthened with growing numbers of young people and leaders. Over the course of the year the group met once a fortnight in term time, and also we ran a pilgrimage to Lambeth Palace, a paddle boarding trip and a family social for Bonfire Night. At the beginning of 2024 we ran our first youth weekend away at Carroty Wood in Tonbridge, which was a great success! One of the high points of 2023 was seeing 10 young people confirmed by Bishop Karowei.

As well as working with church young people, we maintain strong links with our uniformed groups and our local schools. In 2023 we saw well over 3000 different children and young people in assemblies, welcomed 360 children into church for school visits, and hosted school services for more than 600 young people. These are all fantastic opportunities to form connections with local families. Our vicar and several members of our congregation are part of the governing body of Trinity School – our local Church of England school.

Over the year we have provided support to other local churches, particularly through our Vicar's work as Area Dean for East Lewisham – a role she took on in January 2023. This has involved providing administrative, pastoral and practical support, especially to our neighbouring parishes that are in vacancy. We have also offered placements to two ordinands in training, which has been a mutually beneficial opportunity to learn from one another.

As a church we are committed to pursuing social justice for all, and that commitment is expressed through four areas of work – the Helping Hands Foodbank, the provision of English classes for Ukrainians, the Eco Church Working Group, and the Fairtrade Stall. We also support the work of other organisations and charities such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Inside Out (a Christian support group for ex-offenders) who use St. Peter's on a regular basis.

We continue to work with Action for Refugees in Lewisham to run the Helping Hands Foodbank, which provides food to 43 families. The foodbank operates once a fortnight, and is run by volunteers from the church and the wider community. The foodbank provides vulnerable migrants with vouchers, toiletries and fresh food – all of which has been donated by individuals, local schools, the Hatcliffe Charity, the Women's Institute, St. Mildred's Church, Goldluxel Services Ltd, and YACnGay (Youth Against Crime Not Crime Against You).

Our weekly English classes for Ukrainians have now been running since May 2022, and offer beginner and intermediate English language classes. The classes are run by a local resident, supported by members of the church and the wider community who help with hospitality and act as language assistants. The class continues to be greatly valued by all who attend.

The Eco Church Working Group was started to look at how we might respond to the issue of climate change – both individually and collectively. The group has maintained an active dialogue with the PCC prompting us to ensure that environmental targets inform our vision and future plans. During the year the group also carried out an environmental lifestyle audit, led a special service for Earth Hour, and ran a short course on environmental issues entitled 'Tenants of the King'.

In March we held a special fairtrade themed quiz night to mark Fairtrade Fortnight, then in May the Fairtrade Stall celebrated its tenth anniversary. The sales over the past 10 years are

over £41,500, and sales from Feb 2022 to Jan 2023 total £6,800 of fairly traded goods which has helped to support producers in other countries and has continued to raise awareness of fairtrade.

As well as church-based initiatives, we've endeavoured to maintain our presence in the local community by participating in the FUSS Christmas Fair, Manor House Gardens Festival, and hosting the annual Lee Green Open Studios. Over the year we have strengthened our links with 'Hithertones' – a local choir who rehearse at the Good Shepherd. In April we hosted a well-attended concert for Hithertones, and in October some of our own musicians and Ministry Team worked together to put on a special service of Choral Evensong.

As there is a lot going on within the church community we have continued our bi-monthly church magazine with the aim of sharing news with those who are part of the church community; this has had to be temporarily suspended due to the Editor undergoing major surgery in the autumn of 2023.

Lastly, as a church we are very aware of issues in the wider Church of England. We are part of the Inclusive Church network, and at the end of 2021 we took part in the 'Living in Love and Faith' discussions. In November 2023 the Church of England's General Synod granted permission for churches to use prayers of thanksgiving, dedication and blessing for same sex couples. In January 2024 our Clergy and PCC unanimously agreed that we are happy to use these 'Prayers of Love and Faith' in our parish, for any couples that would like to have their relationship recognised in this way. At the moment, the prayers can only be used as part of existing services e.g. on Sunday mornings, not in stand-alone services. We hope that this is a small step towards affirming all members of our church and community.

D) The Electoral Roll

As at April last year, the electoral roll stood at 122. Since then, 8 names have been removed and 21 names added which brings the new total to one hundred and thirty-five (135).

E) Safeguarding Report

At the Church of the Good Shepherd with St Peter we aim to provide a welcoming and safe space and take safeguarding seriously. We are fortunate that so many of our congregation have spent their working lives caring and looking out for the welfare and safety of others. There is a careful follow up of all safeguarding concerns and where appropriate these have in previous years been taken to the local authority as well as to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016* and has had regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children

and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) compliance were all regular agenda items for the PCC.

We have set up systems to ensure training and accountability, and our Parish administrator (Fiona Morrison) has ensured that our policies, based on standard diocesan policies, are up to date and can be viewed on the church website at www.goodpeter.org.uk/pcc. Fiona also checks that processes are compliant with safeguarding guidance, and has regular discussion with the Parish Safeguarding Officer (Ann Lorek).

All leaders and helpers of Children's Church and Youth Group are required to complete a DBS check and safeguarding training, also all members of the PCC and leaders of the Food Bank. Volunteers for other activities in the church, such as the Food Bank and English Lessons complete a Volunteer Registration Form and are offered online safeguarding training. Fiona has followed this up systematically over many hours. All have either submitted their DBS and training certificates, or are finishing this now.

We are aware that abuse has and will continue to take place in any setting, by someone of any class or gender, and we ask that any concerns are shared with Bridget or Ann. If anyone feels that this is not addressed in full, then we have shared information enabling direct referrals to be made by anyone to social care, or via NSPCC.

At the Church of the Good Shepherd with St Peter, we know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and thank you for being part of that.

F) Fabric Report

Fabric report: Good Shepherd 2023 – 2024

The main structural or urgent issues identified in the 2020 Quinquennial Inspection had been attended to by the end of 2020. This year we have had the hall floor re surfaced and attended to a number of minor repair and maintenance issues, including the clearing of the guttering.

Routine maintenance continues as normal which should cover the remainder of the works suggested in the Quinquennial except for new flooring in the toilets and lobbies.

In addition a leak in pipework under the vestry has been fixed.

Church Boundary Wall

As reported last year, we have a collapsed section of the Good Shepherd Boundary Wall. We have made submissions for List B approval to the Diocese, via the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Secretary, making a second submission mid 2023 based on advice of building surveyor, specialist excavators, structural engineers, architect (our Diocesan approved Quinquennial Architect) and arboriculturist supported by the Lee Manor Conservation Society. The expert advice so far has cost around £3-5k. The DAC Secretary replied just before Christmas accepting in principle but asking us to take into account specific DAC concerns. We resubmitted our experts' response to the DAC giving the reasons for

continuing with our proposal but the DAC have replied upholding two of their concerns which we will put to our advisors.

Once we have Diocesan approval we still have the hurdle of applying for Local Authority planning permission, after which we shall go out to tender. As we go forward, we will 'cut our cloth' accordingly in response to new information we receive about costs i.e. we have not included in the 2024 Operational budget but we know that the wall is a major competitor for the spending of our reserves; we will also appoint a PCC working group to think about how we might fundraise for the wall.

Fabric report: St. Peter's 2023– 2024

The St Peter's Quinquennial Inspection revealed no structural problems with the building, and the fabric is sound inside and out. The main item identified was the replacement of the gutters which have were repaired/replaced in 2023 and additional work and clearing carried out in 2024. Several small repairs and maintenance tasks throughout the building have been completed, e.g. new cooker, pest control re mice, ceiling cleaning (done by the Clergy!) and minor toilet repairs are ongoing.

Fabric report: Parish House, Weigall Road 2023 – 2024

Our tenant continues in Weigall Road and the property is in good repair with routine maintenance managed by our agent. The tenant is likely to continue until they find a house to buy locally. We have agreed to upgrade the kitchen cupboards, for which the PCC has made provision and the work is due to commence on the 10th June.

G) Deanery Synod

We are pleased to report that, in addition to being our Vicar and Area Dean, Bridget has acted as Archdeacon for the Lewisham part of our Archdeaconry during Archdeacon Alistair's sabbatical from end January to 8th March 2024.

In this reporting period, Deanery Synod meetings were held on 13 June 2023, 8 November 2023 and 7 February 2024. Focal areas were: community support in the cost of living crisis, supporting our church schools and the provision of healthcare in Lewisham. All of these were well attended, with knowledgeable guest speakers and panellists.

Deanery Synod also actively shared deanery-wide events and services, such as the Advent Reflection Evening and Lent retreat hosted by the Sisters of St Andrew, job vacancies in parish churches, World Day of Prayer, planning a joint Deanery service for Ascension Day, as well as certain events in neighbouring deaneries.

The Church Wardens' group, set up to enable churches to better collaborate, remains useful, with good feedback received from those involved. The Wardens' WhatsApp group has enabled more immediate Q&As and its use means we have reduced the Zoom meetings to bi-monthly.

H) Financial Report

We are grateful that in 2023, on the income side, the planned giving and the hall hire income have remained stable throughout the years. However, we had a small deficit in 2023 and are projected to have a slightly larger one in 2024. 'Normal' income and expenditure have both increased slightly less than inflation, but that emerging deficit arises from our decision to house a Curate i.e. we incur the full cost of the housing (no longer enjoying a free income from Weigall Road for general expenditure) although the salary is paid by the Diocese.

The estimated budget deficit for 2024 is £12-15,000 plus discretionary expenditure e.g.£7,500 already approved for the Weigall Road kitchen, whatever we spend on the Good Shepherd Boundary Wall and on any other major projects.

We currently have £55k (includes £10k left from a legacy) in reserves of which £45k is available to cover the deficit, do the above-named repairs or some combination but there is not enough to be able to do everything.

Looking ahead, we will continue to monitor our spending carefully. In order to be able to resource current expenditure and what we may require to meet our aspirations for ministry and mission, we will also need to look at income generation whether by increasing our stewardship giving, obtaining grants, making appeals or running events.

If you don't currently give to the church on a regular basis, please consider whether that is something you're able to do. To find out more about giving to the church see the church website at: www.goodpeter.org.uk/giving. If you are a UK taxpayer and have not yet completed a Gift Aid declaration you can download one from there too.

Please do pray for our Treasurer, Finance Team and PCC as they continue to manage our church finances, and to plan for the future. If you have any questions about our finances, please get in touch by emailing treasurer@goodpeter.org.uk

I) Reserves Policy

The PCC will maintain a Reserve Fund that will provide for the payment of those sums that in the event of the closure of the church would still need to be spent because of contractual obligations or implied promises.

The former includes three months' wages and utility bills, and the latter the Foodbank. At the current level of expenditure this is around £6,000.

The PCC resolves therefore to keep a Reserve of no more than £10,000 for the time being. The purpose of this Reserve Fund is to pay our obligations in the event that the church income drops below an otherwise sustainable level.

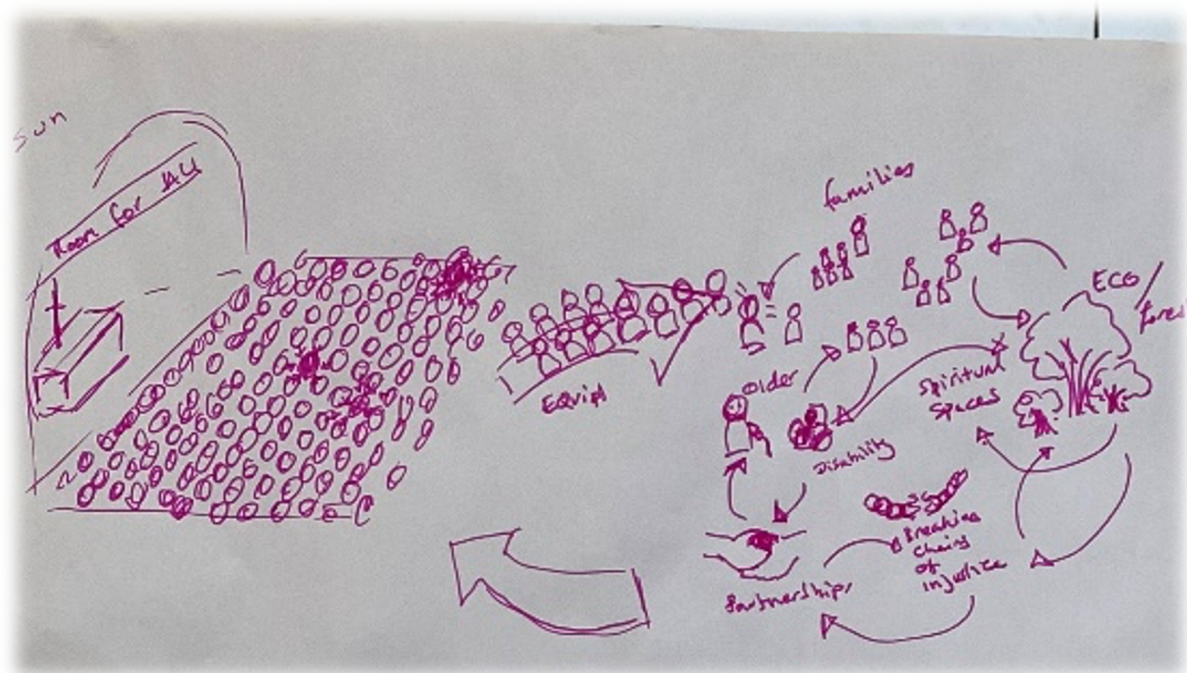
Note: Where money is set aside to meet predicted essential future spending, this is properly known as Designated Funds (budgeted items), This is a way of spreading the cost of funding a project that could not be met from future income alone.

Fluctuations in cash flow should be minor given the nature of our everyday income and expenditure, but in view of the repair work that we need to do in 2024 we may well temporarily dip into reserves.

J) Plans for Future Period

Since June 2023 the PCC have been spending time thinking about our vision for the future. This was prompted by a need to think about the future of St. Peter's, and a desire to consider that within the wider context of our vision for the whole parish. Below is a summary of our journey to this point:

- 1) In 2021, as we emerged from Covid, we decided to adopt the C of E vision for the 2020s to give us a focus and sense of direction
- 2) We put the priorities of that vision into our own words, and added a fourth priority:
 - Exploring, releasing and supporting each other to live out our faith in everyday life.
 - Encouraging variety and creativity in our worship, mission and practice
 - Being a church that is younger and more diverse.
 - Pursuing social justice for all
- 3) In June 2023 we had a special PCC meeting to think about our vision, and there was one image that seemed to capture and reflect our ideas. Our subsequent conversations confirmed that we want to be a hub of spiritual energy – focussed on the person of Jesus, and a hub of community activity – reflecting the life of the Kingdom of God, and that through that community activity people are enabled to encounter Christ.



- 4) We then looked at all the things we do, and mapped our activities against a faith journey from first contact with church to Christian maturity. This helped us to identify our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. We identified that the biggest gap in our offering was in Christian formation – especially for new Christians.
- 5) From there, we divided our existing ministry into five categories: Worship, Christian Formation, Life Events, Social Action and Community Engagement, and then considered our next steps. We agreed that the next steps are:
 - **Reconfigure the pattern of our Sunday services** e.g. monthly 'All Age' services move to a 9am breakfast service in the hall, Parade services to take place 3 – 4 times a year, explore informal evening service slot to involve young people.
 - **To implement a clearer pathway for Christian formation** e.g. to introduce a regular 'explorers course' for those who are new to the Christian faith, to link home group curricula to teaching themes
 - **To identify, train and affirm new leaders** e.g. through the development of a leadership course
 - **To embed a culture of being *missionary disciples*** where we recognise that we are all 'the church' at all time and in all places
 - **To create a more intentional communications strategy** that continues to raise our profile in the community, and is strategic about inviting people to attend events / services / activities

The next step is to flesh out these ideas, to think about how we resource them, then consider a realistic timescale for implementation.

A key focus for 2024 will be deciding if and how St. Peter's fits into our vision for ministry and mission within this parish. At the time of writing, a clear vision and purpose for St. Peter's has not yet emerged, and so we continue to seek God's guidance for the way forward. We anticipate that whatever is decided, we are likely to enter a season of change, and planning and leading that change will take up a significant amount of time and energy.

K) Structure, Governance and Management

Church Wardens are elected at the Vestry Meeting, immediately prior to the APCM. Anyone on the Electoral Roll or resident of the Parish may attend and vote. Churchwardens who are on the Electoral Roll are automatically members of the PCC.

PCC members are appointed at the APCM. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules (latest revision 2022). Deanery Synod Members are also appointed in accordance with the said rules at the APCM.

At the Good Shepherd with St Peter, Lee, the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our Vicar), the Curate, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod members, and members who are elected by the APCM. Readers (LLMs)¹ may also be appointed to the PCC by the APCM. All members of the congregation who are on the Electoral Roll of the Church may attend and vote; all those who attend our services or consider themselves to be members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC. Elected members of the PCC serve for three years, with one third of those members being elected each year.

The Parish had a Scheme which ensures that we have proper representation on the PCC and Deanery Synod from both churches. This Scheme as amended at the APCM held on 2nd April 2017 is:

Each Church must make up at least one third of the places, and the balance (or any shortfall in the event of insufficient candidates standing for election from either church) may comprise members of the congregation of either church.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the Parish including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. PCC members are inducted through a discussion of their role and function at the first meeting of the new PCC, and by going through a review of PCC policies annually. Specific training provided by the Diocese is given in Safeguarding, and eligibility and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are carried out.

¹ Readers are people licensed by the Church of England to serve in certain ways.

The full PCC met six times during the year with an average level of attendance of circa 67% (2023: 75%). The PCC and Ministry Team also had 3 half day meetings on our Vision and Plans for the future.

There have been no significant transactions with PCC members or closely related persons.

The PCC has only one employee, the Parish Administrator. Their pay and remuneration is set by the Church Wardens and the Treasurer, and a recent increase was based on Diocesan HR advice.

L) Administrative Information

The Parish of the Good Shepherd with St Peter, Lee is part of the Diocese of Southwark in the Church of England. It is in the Archdeaconry of Lewisham and within the Woolwich Episcopal Area.

It consists of two churches, the Good Shepherd which is situated on the corner of Wantage and Handen Roads, and St. Peter's which is situated on the corner of Weigall and Eltham Roads. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 47 Handen Road, Lee, London, SE12 8NR.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules (2020)) and members are Trustees responsible to the Charities Commission (Registered charity number: 1171429)

PCC members *who have served at any time* from 14th May 2023 until the date which this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members

Incumbent: Revd Bridget Shepherd
Clergy: Revd Chris Henriette (from June 2023)
Church Wardens: Sue Tearle (GS), James Murdoch (GS)

Lay Deanery Synod members

Adriaan Goosen, James Murdoch and Peter Watson

Elected members

Good Shepherd: Trudi Bramson, Pete Burns, Conway Tearle, John Murray, Yi Baylis, Gladys Ekpo-Daniels, Clare Johnson, Mia Hadfield-Spoor, Sophia Duffy, Louise Grace and Hannah Burns
St Peter's: Angela Stebbings

Members of the PCC also serve on the Standing Committee, as Deputy Wardens, and as Sidespeople.

The Vicar and PCC are supported by a large body of volunteers who fill various roles, on whose help we rely and to whom we offer thanks.

There is also a **Ministry Team**:

Clergy: Revd Bridget Shepherd and Revd Chris Henriette

Readers: Nick Shepherd and Cherry Murdoch

SPA: Laurie Stuart

Other members: Trudi Bramson, Jevan Green, Ian Butcher

Bankers and Advisers

Bankers: Barclays Bank UK PLC, 93 Lewisham High Street, London SE13 6BB

Independent Examiner: John Howard FCA, Thornton Road, Lee, London SE13 5RG

Quinquennial Architect: Nicholas Weedon of HMDW Architects Ltd, 16 Swains Lane, London N6 6QS

M) Approval

Approved by the PCC on Saturday 20th April 2024 and signed on its behalf by the Revd Bridget Shepherd (Vicar).