

Brunswick Church Annual Report 2023



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Our Vision/Values

Our church is called first to worship God.

- we seek to offer worship which;
 - honours God
 - enables a real encounter with Him
 - reflects our varied community
 - is accessible to newcomers.

We must be the place where all can grow into wholeness in Christ

- together we seek to grow in;
 - the understanding of our faith
 - caring for one another
 - developing our gifts
 - deepening our relationships with one another.

We are called to make Christ relevant to all, and encourage all to follow Him

- we seek to this wherever God has placed us.

We are called to follow the example of Jesus in serving others, mirroring His ability to meet the social, spiritual and physical needs.

We seek to express God's love by serving people locally and worldwide, helping all people to experience life in all its fullness.

PURPOSE

The Parochial Church Council of Christchurch Brunswick, together with the incumbent (Reverend Canon Simon Gatenby) have the responsibility of enabling Christian Mission, Worship and Nurture to take place within and beyond the parish boundaries. It also has responsibility for the Church complex located on Brunswick Street, Manchester 13 and a property at 35 Portland Crescent, Longsight, Manchester 13, known as Barnabas House.

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

PCC Membership

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC

Incumbent:	Rev. Canon Simon Gatenby
Curate:	Rev Kathreen Shabaz
Church Wardens:	Mr Tim Craft Mr Dilu Varughese
Deanery Synod Representative:	Mrs Judith Keeble (until 30/4/23) Mr Gordon Flear (secretary from 30/4/23)
Elected Members:	
Mrs Agnes Ablakwa	Mrs Sally Jones (Treasurer)
Mrs Jenny Ferneyhough	Mr Andrew Crome (from 30/4/23)
Ms Elizabeth Adebo	Mrs Judith Keeble (from 30/4/23)

PCC Employees

Ms Mo Blue – Community Programme Manager
Ms Kaydia Benjamin – Buildings Caretaker
Luis D'Assuncao – Barnabas Cleaner

PCC Organisation

PCC met 9 times during 2023 with 80% attendance. Various sub -groups continued to meet and fed in reports regularly-, Preachers and leaders, Youth leaders and Eco Group.

Church Attendance

There were 89 parishioners on the electoral roll at the AGM in April 2023

The details of those attending services (including those on Zoom) were as follows :

	Average	Highest	Lowest
Adults / Children (<16)	45/13 (8 Zoom)	90/30	18.5

There was a regular Wednesday morning prayer (average 5) and a monthly Sunday evening Prayer meeting as well as other services (Ash Wednesday, Carol Service etc).

PCC Review of Year

Major items that PCCs discussed/progressed were

- a) Safeguarding – Safeguarding is a mandatory agenda item for every PCC. A series of detailed actions were chased through at each meeting. The PCC complied with the duty under section 5 of the safeguarding and clergy discipline measure 2016.
- b) Prayer – The monthly evening prayer meeting was supplemented by a daily prayer list which encompassed both individuals in the congregation and all the streets and activities that took place in the parish
- c) The Refurb Project – Despite plans for a non-building year, the PCC supervised the refurbishment of the Church lounge and interior decoration
- d) The Climate group kept PCC apprised of various items and Eco matters became part of our monthly Cycle with 'Just One Thing' PCC dedicated one whole meeting to discuss what actions could be taken in lieu of the continuing Climate Crisis and declared a Climate emergency.
- e) The Positive Steps project continued and the PCC obtained various grants so that the offer of the midweek programme could include a Homework club, Craft club and more musical classes.
- f) The PCC discussed its Mission support and giving in detail and made changes to its Mission partners for the next 3 years to be implemented in 2024.
- g) The PCC supported 2 church members in their successful applications for Authorised Lay ministry training in 2024
- h) Various other topics were discussed or decided in including setting up of Fabric church nearby, Living in Faith and love report, Pastoral care in Church, Health and safety and policies updated

During the year Simon (and Helen) undertook a 3½ month sabbatical, which allowed many of Church to experience, grow and develop in different aspects of Church life.

You can read more about these items and more in the attached reports.



*On behalf of Christchurch Brunswick PCC
Reverend Simon Gatenby*

If you are reading the printed version of this booklet you can access the links to further info and videos by downloading the online version from this link on the church website <https://www.brunswickchurch.org.uk/news/agm-time>

Warden's Report

In serving as the two named churchwardens for the year, we have very much appreciated working within a small shared leadership team. The help and support we have received through this, with people's willingness to share ideas, tasks and responsibilities through the year have been invaluable.

One part of the wardens' responsibilities, together with assistants, is helping in the practical aspects of Sunday services. It has been good to see a number of people continue to be involved in areas of our Sunday services such as reading, leading intercessions, and assisting at communion, although we are naturally always happy to talk to anyone who might like to join in any of those.

Another role on Sunday is that of what we call the "Duty Warden", to help in setting up the worship room, welcoming people, and looking after the back of church during the service. This has traditionally been shared on a rota basis between wardens and assistant wardens, together with sidespeople and/or welcome team.

We have been a bit short in this area recently, and with one of us regularly running the AV system for the service it would be good to have a wider team of people who could help in this and the welcoming roles.

Wardens are also responsible for maintaining the church buildings and fabric. Much of the larger work and repairs have, of course, been combined with the Refurb project, and we are grateful to Gordon for coordinating most of that, and to others who are around the building during the day to address issues.

Our maintenance team (mostly composed of young people, although others are also welcome to join!) have continued to do a fantastic job on Monday evenings, keeping on top of many day-to-day repairs and maintenance, including roof repairs, wall patching and painting, light bulb changing, Smartboard installation, toilet repairs, chair repairs, outside gardening and much else!

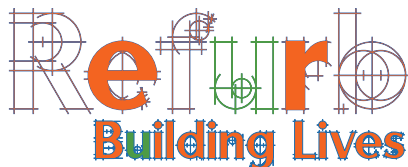
One ongoing fabric-related issue is that we continue to have some leaks in the worship room and youth room roofs, largely due to the age of them, which we are attempting to keep patched until we can replace those as part of the Refurb project.

The worship room windows are another large item that will need addressing sooner rather than later, as significant areas of the frames are rotting. Again, we hope they can be replaced as part of the Refurb project.

Dilu & Tim

Refurb Report 2023

So we ended 2022 with these words in the AGM Report regarding Refurb



“There’s no fixed timescales or expectations as yet as we move forward- we learnt in Phase 1 about waiting and God’s timing. Phase 2 may be very different to phase 1!” Little did we know what was going to happen, but yet again looking back can see God’s hand over it all.

The Year started with PCC authorising some drawings and obtaining some costings of what we thought was going to be Phase 2 (central part of Church complex), partly because we thought we might be gifted some developer’s social responsibility money. However, we found out more details about this as the year went on and eventually wrote an objection about the development.

The year also started with some leaks – notably in the lounge – and our initial thoughts were that this needed sorting as part of Church Maintenance.

By May we had begun to think (and pray) differently – with PCC approving the Lounge roof repair and some other alterations to the fabric of the lounge area. Costings were obtained and in July PCC approved the roof/repair with Refurb funds supplemented by reserves from other funds. It was also suggested we could appeal to congregation and diaspora to see if we could Refurbish the fabric of the lounge (walls, carpet, chairs etc)

By our PCC September meeting the Refurb report read as follows: *“We agreed to pay for lounge roof ourselves from Refurb monies plus extra x Barnabas fund.*

So, following distribution of the next Refurb Update we have had an offer of a gift so we can complete ALL the structural parts of lounge refurbishment bar the fabric! I’ll just let that sink in. PTL

On that basis we had quote for windows (which have been ordered and should be installed 6th October) and are obtaining quotes for false ceiling, electrics, new partition and removal of the old heater. The Refurb group wanted PCC approval to proceed with all of this.

Church will be responsible for Fabric – curtains, paint, recovering chairs and new carpet tiles - estimate about £10k. We will need to raise this and do this ourselves”

Work began on 6th October with new windows, and by the end of November we had a new roof, new internal roof, new carpet had been provided and the new



lounge was first used for Morning prayer on 29th November! Over the next month (and into 2024) a new partition wall, recovering of chairs, new curtains and the provision of pictures and lights completed the transformation. Here's a ['before' video](#) of the lounge to contrast with these photos.



As was mentioned, the impact of the lounge refurbishment has been one of “WOW!” – from regular users to the Rector returning from sabbatical – and it has been used greatly since completion.

The other small matter is that all the costs (nearly £100k) had been covered, with only the last 2.5% to be paid later in 2024 – and gifts are still coming in.

So, thanks firstly and mostly to God – but he also enabled quite a few others to get involved such as Jonathan our architect, UTC our contractors (along with Crystal window installers), Marie, Anne and the maintenance team who did a huge amount with the chairs and not least all those in Diaspora and Congregation who gave time, effort, and money towards what we are now calling “Phase 2 A”.

So, what for 2024? We are hoping to become a Net Zero demonstrator Church for the C of E which will help us with our Worship Room. We would still love to sort out the front doors and (50 year old) toilets and yes, we still have leaks. Our priority is what is happening because of the building we have – what happens in it – but we will be praying and thinking about what next as the year moves on.

Gordon Flear – Project Manager

Maintenance Group Report 2023

One of our most regular and essential groups (that is only seen by Church maybe once or twice a year) has most of its members under 19 years of age! We've held a couple of events where we have encouraged all the Church to join us as we undertook a major task, but mostly we meet on Monday evenings at 7pm and can be found in/above and out of every part of the Church building. We've had a few new people this year (both young and a bit older) and have 15 active members.

What goes on? Well a selection from our WhatsApp group in 2023 suggests quite a lot.



Bulbs in worship room- lots	Electric repairs – led by Tim	Repairing door locks -
Kitchen clean -twice	Door closers - adjusted	Toilets, shower, Rectory
Foyer chairs – all repaired	Paper ripping – fave activity	Repairing holes in walls
Doors – made to work	Emptying rooms – small	White corners on walls
Banners – replaced a lot	office	New display notices at front
Lights – in other spaces	Watering plants -	doors x 2
replaced	occasionally	Counting chairs and how
Roof esp. youth room- MG	Meter readings – every 4	many people we can fit in
better than roof repairers	weeks	worship room- Yes, really
Leaks – lots and lots and lots	Moving cupboards – see video	Annual H&S walkabout.



Thank you to the extra over 18's who have joined this year, but especially to the young people who turn up every week, get stuck into whatever is asked of them, hopefully learn some new skills and enjoy meeting up.

*Gordon Flear
The Maintenance Team*

Eco Report

Our 5th Mission Action Priority is Climate Change Awareness. To build on the initial group's work in 2021 and embed Climate Care Action in both Church life and in lives of church and community members.

Early in 2023 we continued to use the 'Keep well and Warm Fund which had been put together in 2022 to help community and congregation help themselves with cost of living and the plant with using for eco friendly heating.

As the weather improved we held an Eco Tea in March as part of the Great British Spring Clean at which planting and tidying of the garden/ planters/car park borders too place with tea and cakes (of course)

However, the ECO group didn't think that as a church we should "go for gold" as an Eco church as there was some doubt if we could claim to have embedded Creation Care in all that we did. So we used a whole PCC (in June) to talk and think about this and came



out with things we wanted to do. Which were:

- PCC Declared a Climate Emergency, which Church reaffirmed at a service in September.
- 3 Services a year would be on a Climate/Creation care subject. Our second was just last week (April 14th).
- The 'monthly' priority – just one thing would be highlighted in the notice slot every second Sunday – I wonder if you can recall any of them – plastic, talking, transport and shopping?
- Our Missions' discussion in October included Christian Climate related Charities and we decided to support A Rocha (arocha.org.uk) for the next 3 years. Have a chat with Edwin.
- A Climate Corner to be investigated with young people – which has been started.
- That church (as in people) doing climate actions was actually more effective than church (as in the building) having climate related work done.



Having said that, we were able to incorporate some great insulation into the amazing Lounge Refurbishment, which will reduce our carbon production in the building. We have also been nominated at a Demonstrator Church for the Church of England's Net Zero project and recently featured a bit in a [video](#)!



But... the Climate Crisis continues and is getting worse – impacting the wider world and ourselves. Anything and everything we do as a church (building) is good – but everything we can change as church (people) is so much more important – how embedded is Creation Care in my life?

The Eco Group

Sunday School 2023

It's only when I sit down to write the AGM report and take a moment to reflect on the past twelve months that I truly appreciate the blessings bestowed upon us by God. In last year's report, I expressed our hope for additional leaders in our Senior Sunday School... and I'm thrilled to share that not only have we welcomed one, but two amazing leaders who are already having a positive impact on our young people. Furthermore, we're delighted to announce that we've regained full access to our building on Sunday mornings, and our numbers continue to grow! Keep reading to find out more...

Age Groups Update:

- Infant Sunday School: Our littlest ones (aged 3-7) have had steady attendance of about 4 children a week with lots of giggles filling our Sunday mornings. Our superb leaders think of exciting ways to help the bible stories come alive for the youngest in our congregation each week. One of the highlights is any time Sunday School involves making/ decorating/eating food!
- Junior Sunday School: We've welcomed some new faces into our Junior Sunday School group which is for those in School Years 3-6 at Primary School. Depending on attendance, some weeks we combine activities with our Infant Sunday School, showcasing the incredible adaptability of our leaders. A huge thank you to each of them for creating a welcoming and enjoyable environment that keeps the kids coming back week after week!
- Senior Sunday School: A heartfelt appreciation goes out to our Senior Sunday School! Your consistent engagement and thought-provoking contributions have made our sessions truly enriching. With a varying attendance of 4-12 children each week, we've enjoyed exploring innovative ways to connect biblical teachings with the realities of teenage life. And with the excitement of welcoming two new leaders to our team, we're looking forward to adding even more fun to our gatherings.



What's New:

- Building buzz: Guess what? After a whole year, we've got the whole building back! It's been a bit of a juggling act using just a room or two for our three groups, but thanks to everyone's flexibility and teamwork, we've made it work. Thanks to our amazing leaders for making magic happen in the smallest of spaces!

- Leadership Boost: A warm welcome to our two new leaders stepping up to lead our Senior Sunday School group. With their fresh ideas and passion, we're in for some exciting times ahead!
- Sabbatical Support: When Helen had some well-deserved time off, we had some amazing leaders step in to keep things running smoothly. Huge thanks to everyone who pitched in to cover for her!
- Roots Resources: We continue to use the "Roots On The Web" resources as a basis for planning each of the Sunday School groups. We are very pleased with how they are working for us, and often use them as a starting point for our own ideas.



Here's to another year of laughter, learning, and love in Sunday School at Brunswick Church! We are so blessed by each and every child and young person who engages with us on a Sunday Morning. I know our fabulous leaders only do what they do because of how wonderful you are, and how much you bring to each session - so thank you!

Got questions or want to get involved? Talk to Naomi Harrison – she'd love to hear from you!

Naomi Harrison

Safeguarding Report 2023

The Parish continues to be guided by the Diocese of Manchester policy "SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK" which is available on the church website. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you'd like to know more, please contact Naomi Harrison or Simon Gatenby.

In 2022, some of our Sunday School team completed online Safeguarding training. There are further volunteers from our PCC and our Sunday School team who need to complete this training and they will be contacted by Naomi after the AGM.

In 2022, all of our Sunday School team were checked for DBS as part of our usual rolling program. There are a number of DBS checks that will need to be completed once the new PCC have been elected. Naomi will contact those who need to update their details.

There have been no allegations or reports of abuse made and no cause for concern raised.

*Naomi Harrison
April 2024*

Praying together as a church family

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." Ephesians 6:18

We are all called to pray for each other but there are some specific prayer activities that happen at church.

1. **The prayer ministry team.** This is a group of church members who have committed themselves to pray with people at church. We pray in pairs for people during Holy Communion every 4th Sunday but also during or after other services when asked.

The current team is: Agnes Ablackwa, Helen Gatenby, Simon Gatenby, Nick Jones, Judith Karanja, Judith Keeble, Kathreen Shahbaz and Gloria Slippe. Some people are currently considering joining us. We really need more people as the team is now smaller. If you would like to discuss joining the team or recommending somebody for it, please speak to Judith Keeble, Simon Gatenby or Kathreen Shahbaz.



2. **Prayer Chain.** The church has a version of a prayer chain as a way of praying for each other at any time. People can sign up to receive requests for prayer by email (or phone). People can ask for prayer by contacting Jenny Ferneyhough who will forward those requests to those who have signed up to receive them. This has times where quite a few people ask for prayer and times that are less busy so we would encourage people to continue to use it. Please mail requests to prayer@brunswickchurch.org.uk

Thank you, Jenny, for coordinating this over a long time.

3. **Regular Prayer times.** Regular prayer takes place on:

- Sunday mornings before the service - 10 am
- Wednesday mornings - 9.30 to 10.00 am
- The third Sunday of the month - 7.00 to 8.00 pm

You are very welcome to join these prayer times.

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If you are interested in finding out more about how you can be involved, speak to: Simon Gatenby, Kathreen Shahbaz or Judith Keeble.



Judith Keeble

Pastoral Group

During lockdown an informal pastoral group were involved with phoning to check on our older or isolated church members. Since lockdown some visiting or phoning church members who may be unwell or more frail has continued.



Our informal pastoral group currently consists of Andy Crome, Gordon Flear, Judith Karanja, Sally Jones, Kathreen Shahbaz, Simon Gatenby and Judith Keeble.



We know that many other church members are encouraging and caring for each other which is great. If you have some ideas about how we can build on what is already going on and support each other more effectively, please share your ideas with us. We need to learn from each other. Find out more about joining our group too and help us develop it further.

Judith Keeble

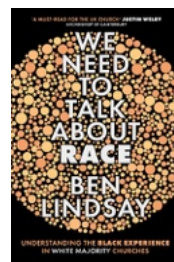
Wednesday Evening Fellowship Group

The Fellowship Group has enjoyed another year of coming together for shared study, prayer, and support in our faith. We have continued to meet from 7:45-9:15pm on Wednesday evenings, except for taking a break (as usual) while Lent Group is running. This year we've met in person weekly, along with a Zoom option for those who are unable to attend physically. At present the group is made up of between 5 to 12 people each week, and we've enjoyed welcoming new members over the last twelve months.

We've gone through a number of studies this year on topics suggested by the group's members. These have included courses about racial justice within the church, experiencing faith across different seasons within our lives, and a new year's 'Spiritual Detox'. Along with our weekly studies we support each other in prayer at the end of each meeting, and share new requests, praise and updates on our active WhatsApp group (which also keeps us in touch with those who've moved on over the years!).

You'd be very welcome to join us, whether in person or online.

Everybody's availability tends to vary, so there's no expectation that people attend every week if that's not practical! Contact judithkeeble@gmail.com for more information.



Andy Crome

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2023.

Total income for the year was £238,371 (2022 £163,660). The increase was primarily due to donations received for the Lounge Refurbishment Project in the last quarter of 2023.

General giving and donations totalled £42,629, slightly higher than in 2022 (£40,193).

Room hire and EV charging income continues to grow and brought in £50,376 in 2023 compared with £32,757 in 2022. Barnabas house room rental income remained steady at £24,600. The minibus was sold during the year as it was valued at less than the cost of the repairs needed. Overall, these resources contributed income of £75,000 (2022 £58,709).

We received £23,750 from Our Manchester representing $\frac{3}{4}$ of the first year (April - December 2023) of our 3-year grant towards the costs of our community project, Positive Steps. We also received a £5,000 grant from Arawak Walton Housing Association and the balance of the grant awarded in 2022 by the National Lottery for our music projects (£8,333). Other grants and activity income from participants amounted to £18,029. The Positive Steps Project also received its usual annual contribution of £3,000 from the Church congregation.

In October, prompted by a leaking roof with the potential to damage the newly refurbished hall, the Church began a Lounge Refurbishment Fundraising Campaign and received £60,708 in donations! This, together with some Church reserves, enabled the lounge refurbishment to be completed by the end of the year, at a total cost of £102,414.

Total expenditure for the year, excluding depreciation, was £236,370 (2022 £154,834). The increase on the previous year due mainly to expenditure on the lounge refurbishment.

Salary costs were higher in 2023 as Mo's hours were increased from 28 to 32 per week from April, part funded by the Our Manchester grant. Energy costs continued to rise, from £10,136 in 2022 to £14,038 in 2023, (some of which is due to increased room and EV charging use). We also held lots of community events throughout the year and continued to provide household items for local people in need from our Keep Warm Fund.

The Church was again able to pay its Parish Share in full (2023 £24,043; 2022 £22,440) and to support its various mission partners.

The Church ended the year with net current assets of £122,968 (2022 £120,967) of which £81,359 are general reserves.

As usual, 10% of giving, and tax relief received on Gift Aided giving, during the year will be set aside for mission support during 2024.

Thanks to Mo for her help with the bookkeeping.

Sally Jones – Treasurer

Positive Steps

Hi Everyone

What another amazing year for the Positive Steps Project. It's here for you to read all about it. By the time you get to the end you will be thinking WOW! I do and I am here all the time! Happy reading!



In February 2023, we were delighted to hear that we had been awarded a grant of £95,000 from Our Manchester towards the costs of our Positive Steps Project, payable over three years from April 2023 – March 2026. Having the security of three-year funding means that we have been able to continue and expand the range activities and services we offer to the local community through our weekday project.

Women's Footprints

Our very popular women's group continued to meet on Monday mornings throughout the year. As well as catching up over tea and cake, the group took part in creative workshops, including making [knee warmers](#) from old duvets, enjoyed a [pamper session](#) c/o students from Manchester College, a trip to Home



theatre to see '[Hot Brown Honey](#)' (the first time some of the women had seen a live performance) and a visit to the Royal Northern College of Music. They organised two more very popular [table top sales](#) and the annual [Macmillan Coffee Morning](#). In August 25 women and their children enjoyed a [weekend away](#) to Manchester Cathedral House in Mellor (for which the women saved weekly).

Parent/Carer Toddler Group

This extremely popular group, led brilliantly by Susan, meets in our community hall on Wednesday mornings. It continues to thrive and be appreciated by both parents and toddlers. Up to 20 children attend each week with their parent or carer to socialise, enjoy interactive play, songs and healthy snacks.



Brunswick Beestro

Our café, Brunswick Beestro, continued to provide light refreshments (free or by donation) on Tuesdays - Thursdays 10.30am - 2pm and a hot meal on Tuesdays for £1. Numbers fluctuated during the year but generally 10-15 people were served each day. The café is staffed by local volunteers, who have gained their food hygiene certificate.

Community Christmas Meal

We were delighted to be able to again offer a [Community Christmas Meal](#), at which 70 local people were served Christmas dinner with live musical entertainment from local musicians and DJ Lee Ellis!



Zumba

Our Monday evening family Zumba sessions, continue to be a hit with local people. Participants pay £3 for the session as a contribution towards the cost of the instructor and hall overheads.

Slow Flow Yoga

Numbers attending these daytime classes dwindled during the year, so the decision was taken to stop the classes in the Autumn.

Armchair Yoga

On Thursday mornings our armchair yoga session takes place in the lounge, giving those who are less mobile the opportunity to take part in gentle exercise to improve flexibility and mental wellbeing.

Advice and Guidance Drop In

The Project continued to provide its Advice and Guidance drop in during the year. Mo is on hand to help local people with queries relating to benefits, housing, school applications, food bank referrals, energy providers etc., to advocate on their behalf as well as general signposting to other organisations or just be a friendly and trusted listening ear.

Joyful Noise Singing Group and Guitar Lessons

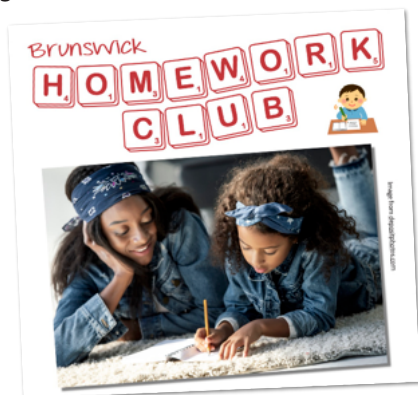
Our singing group, Joyful Noise, set up in September 2022 with funding from the National Lottery, continued to meet during the year and gave several performances, including at the [Swinton Grove Christmas Light Switch On](#) and our own Community Carol Service. Members meet each Thursday afternoon. Using the same funding, weekly guitar lessons for local children aged 11-16 started in January 2023 (with guitars provided) led by a



local guitar teacher. Seven children attend regularly. At the request of local adults, adult guitar lessons began in January 2024 and are going well.

Homework Support Club

In response to a suggestion during consultation with local people, in September we started an after-school Homework Support Club for children in years 1-6 and their parents. The club, which meets on a Tuesday afternoon, is staffed by volunteers, two of whom are retired teachers and one a local mum. There are now 8 children and their parents regularly attending who, as well as receiving support with their homework, enjoy a healthy snack and playing educational games.



Buzz Exercise sessions provided by the NHS

Participants at these weekly sessions are referred through their GP.

Keep Warm and Well

During the Autumn/Winter of 2023-24, Mo was able to meet more requests from local people for items to keep them and their families warm over the winter and to reduce energy costs from the Church's [Keep Warm and Well](#) Fund (established in the Autumn of 2022 from donations)

Supporting our Volunteers

In July, we were delighted to be able to [sponsor a local football team](#) managed by Anthony, one of our regular and much-valued day-time volunteers by buying them new vests and footballs bearing the Positive Steps logo! It's great that the number of sporting activities that Positive Steps hosts and supports, has now been expanded to just down the road at the Pitz Power League.

Craft Club

Again, at the request of local people, we started an after-school Craft Club in September, facilitated by a local community artist. Numbers attending fluctuated but became very low by the beginning of 2024, so a decision was made to stop the club.

Young @ Heart

Our over 50's group met several times during the year for [afternoon tea](#) with bingo or a music quiz.

Community Events

Musical Celebration

In September we held a party themed on [30 years of music](#) from the 70s, 80s and 90s, which was also – not very secretly – about



celebrating 30 years of Simon as the minister at Brunswick Church. As well as lots of local people there we had guests from various times during Simon's years with us (and a couple who knew him before!), sharing and remembering. Excellent food c/o Mo and team, and great tunes and karaoke c/o DJ Lee.

Big Quiz Night

Our annual quiz in support of Tearfund took place in October.

Brunswick Bonanza

In November we hosted and took part in a [Brunswick Bonanza](#) event - a day of information and activities sponsored by S4B, showcasing some of what happens in our amazing neighbourhood. There were loads of hints and tips for the winter including cost of living and home energy advice, how to stay warm and well, arts and crafts, money and budgeting tips, plus jobs, training and volunteering opportunities.



Tabletop Sale

Back by popular demand came the Tabletop Sale in December. We were so busy we had to ask some people to bring their own fold-up table. Once again there was a real sense of community. This is a great opportunity to do something great for the environment and for residents to create a small amount of income.



Pantomime

In December we, once again, hosted traveling theatre company, NWTAC, who this year did two performances of the pantomime "[Jack and the Beanstalk](#)" to a packed auditorium of local families. Tickets were £5 for an adult and child and £3 for an extra child. All the children enjoyed free refreshments and a treat to take home.



Family Games Night

In January we held our first [Family Games Night](#), which included child-friendly and team games, such as Jenga a Beetle Drive and Bingo (which got very competitive!), followed by board games from 8 pm for teenagers upwards. Pizza, salad and cakes were on the menu. It proved so popular that we held a second one in February!

Lunar New Year Fair and Celebration

Also in February, we hosted a [Lunar New Year Fair and Celebration](#) to celebrate the Chinese New Year, featuring a New Year Market, unique delicacies, games, an art workshop and cultural and artistic performances.

Pancake Party

On Shrove Tuesday, we had our annual Pancake Party with Mo and our volunteers serving huge amounts of pancakes with all sorts of toppings to local families.

International Women's Day Conference

On 8th March we had an amazing celebration of [International Women's Day](#). There were gift bags for everyone, a raffle for shopping vouchers, lovely food and a programme of music, readings, poetry, speakers and interviews, all ably anchored by Mo and Olivia. Big thanks to our funders and volunteers and to all the women (and some men) who came and shared in a day where we declared for women "No dream is too big!"

Thank you to all our amazing volunteers, who often go above and beyond - Susan, Amelia, Olivia and Sheney, particularly Alison and Anthony, Sally and Gordon, without whom Positive Steps wouldn't be the wonderful project that it is.

Many thanks

Mo – Community Programme Manager



Music Group Report 2023

Music group have continued to lead the church in sung worship this year. We come, we sing and play, we worship.... and as two or three (or more!) are gathered together, somewhere in this mystery God is here and meets with us. We trust that what God desires and 'listens' to is the intention of our hearts, rather than our musical skill, as we come to Him, seeking to worship in Spirit and truth; and we approach leading the congregation in this vein, inviting the Spirit to inhabit the best that we can offer to enable us to praise and worship Father and Son.

We were delighted to welcome Jayden and Olivia to the group this year, joining: Paul, Lee, Abi, Jenny, Evan, Herbie, Marie, Helen, Simon and Gina. When we've not been able to 'field a band', we've occasionally used videos, or relied heavily on Lee and his keyboard of 'magic tricks', providing backing piano, drums and more, all in one instrument! And let's not forget the PA team – Tim, Edwin and Matthew – who enable our sound to be heard, and words to be seen, both in the building and on zoom. Thank you to everyone involved!

This year, leading the group was largely taken on by Helen until her sabbatical (from mid-September to December), when Evan took on the role of co-ordinator and Jenny, Lee, Abi, Marie and Olivia led the group and congregation in music worship on Sundays. A big thank you to Evan, Jenny, Paul, Abi and others for the considerable task they undertook this year of sorting-out music and refiling it all in a bigger cabinet ... this has made finding music, and knowing what music we have, considerably easier!

We are always open to more people of any age joining us in music group and in leading worship: if you have some musical ability, or can hold a tune vocally and have a desire to use these gifts to serve God and the church through worship, then please do come and speak with us, we'd love you to be involved.

If you have songs, of any tradition, that encourage you and that you would like us to sing, please do let us know and we'll do our best to learn and incorporate them into our worship.

Worship is the collective endeavour of all of God's people. Thank you for your active participation in sung worship on Sundays – standing at the front and seeing God enabling people to worship Him through singing, dancing, contemplating, praying, laughing, clapping and crying is a real privilege and a sign that when two or three are gathered together, here Jesus is with us.



Well, wherever you thought you were going with that worship song, it appears God has re-directed you.



Helen Gatenby

Mission Partners

M13 Youth Project 2023

M13 Youth Project is a Registered Charity working with local young people in the Brunswick community.

We meet young people on the streets, listen to them, have conversations, laugh (and cry!) together, share opinions, skills, ideas, create activities together to learn more about life and take action together to make things better for all of us.

There are lots connections between M13 and Brunswick church: Matt Harrison is Chair of M13 Trustees, Tim Craft is our Treasurer, Helen and Sally are staff members and Georgina works sessionally with us; M13 uses the church building weekly to run activities with local young people; we rent office space in 'Barnabas', the church house; M13 is one of Brunswick Church's mission partners; and many congregation members support our work in prayer and through giving financially.

M13's work currently falls into three areas:

- detached youth work in Ardwick, since 1995 (on the Brunswick, Coverdale and Grove Village estates)
- detached youth work in Hulme, since 2022
- Young Dads' Project working city-wide, since 2018.

We deliver an average of 21 youth work sessions every week – more in the school holidays – through which we meet and work with over 600 children, young people and young dads each year. Most of our work takes place out in the community, on streets, in parks, in McDonalds, meeting and listening to young people. However, we also run clubs/drop-ins set up by and for young people in buildings local to them; and we are grateful to be able to use Brunswick Church for 3 weekly groups:

- Brunswick Youth Club – Tuesdays 4.30-6.30pm for young men and women 11-16yrs
- Older Lads' Group – Tuesdays 7-9pm for young men aged 14-18yrs
- Older Young women's Group – Thursdays 7-9pm for young women aged 15-24yrs

We also run a Younger Girls' Group in the Extra Care Centre Community Room on Wednesdays from 4.15-6.15pm, for girls aged 11-16yrs.

M13 has a diverse staff team, made up of people of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds, some local and living locally, some previous participants, some who have recently joined our paid team. Our 'Brunswick detached team' is made up of Robert McFarlane and Shannon Callaghan – whom you will see out in our local community three

M13 Youth Project



times a week and in the building on Tuesdays; Gabriel Oyediwura runs the Older Lads group with Robert on Tuesday evenings; and you'll find Helen and Vikki Osobemekun in the building on Thursday evenings with the Older Young Women's group. As well as employing a number of local young adults over the school holidays to help us run children's holiday play clubs we also offer the opportunity for young people to volunteer with us. It's been great to see young people and young adults volunteering and working sessionally with the project – the children love their input.

So what do young people say about us and our support? Here are some quotes from them:

- 'M13 offer us a safe, welcoming, inclusive building space every week to come to, where we can be ourselves and who we want to be.'
- 'It's very open, comfortable and cosy; we get to plan things that I'd never think about doing on my own, like trips and workshops.'
- 'It feels like a second home: a space away where I can do whatever I want and forget about the other pressures in my life.'
- 'You guys treat us like people: other adults look down on us and they think our issues don't matter and our problems aren't taken seriously. You listen and help us.'
- 'You're able to joke around with us and have serious conversations with us, like we would with our friends. And there's no pressure [on us when you're] talking to us, like there is with our parents or teachers, to do things we don't want to or are not ready to do.'

Thanks. We really appreciate the church's prayer and financial support for our work with young people and to all of you who support us through prayer, volunteering and Trusteeship.

If you would like more information for prayer (or anything else), please contact: Matt Harrison, Helen Gatenby or Sally Jones, M13 Youth Project, 35 Portland Crescent, Longsight, Manchester, M13 0BU, 0161 225 0201, info@m13youthproject.org.uk or www.m13youthproject.org.uk. M13 Youth Project is a Registered Charity, No 1197730

Matt Harrison

A Rocha UK

A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to equip Christians and churches to protect and restore the environment – for God, nature and all people. It aims to inspire individuals and families, equip churches and church leaders, build partnerships and manage land for nature and people. For more info go to arocha.org.uk or speak to Edwin Colyer



Movement for Justice and Reconciliation (MJR)

MJR is a national UK charity set up in 2015 working for racial and class equality in the church and society. Central to the work of MJR is to identify and challenge the legacies of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, including its continued injustices and consequences for all communities, White and Black. MJR believes that reconciling slavery and its legacy issues is vital to the integrity of Christian witness, unity and renewal of fellowship. Its work includes research, training and education, networking and advocacy.



In 2022 MJR released a documentary film called 'After the Flood: slavery, the church and reconciliation' to bring into the light the hidden role of slavery in British Christian history. It has won awards and been screened widely in the UK – including at General Synod and the Lambeth Conference – and in other countries. The film was shown here at Positive Steps during Black History Month in October.

In February General Synod decided by 364-0 votes that all parishes should develop local action plans to address racial injustice. This will be on our PCC's agenda later in 2024 and MJR can suggest resources to help us in that task.

To find out more about MJR go to mjr-uk.com or speak to Paul Keeble.



Ambassadors Football Great Britain

Investing in churches, investing in people, sharing Jesus through football.

Ambassadors Football's vision is to serve the local church, inspiring and equipping it to build Christ-centred relationships through football. We want to invest in Churches and invest in people to share Jesus through football. We provide the following, to support your Church to use football to share Jesus.



Community Football Outreach Training: An ideal starting point for Churches interested in using football to serve their community. You can attend an introduction session as we look at why and how you can use football. We love to help support you to start a Community Football Outreach program in your area.

Camps: Football themed holiday clubs for local Churches. Whether you want to run a camp during school holidays, over a weekend or just to organise one for half a day, we are happy to help your Church to do so. We will help plan the program and provide the coaches needed to run the camp alongside the Church volunteers.

Ambassadors Football Academy: 9-12 months to experience and learn how to use

football to share Jesus, focusing on discipleship, evangelism and leadership.

Resources: Talks and other resources based on faith and Football.

Tournaments: Providing quality football tournaments to provide fellowship and for teams to hear the Gospel Message.

Tours: We run playing and coaching tours in other countries to help share Jesus and disciple those who come along.

Volunteers: We always need volunteers for programs and projects. It is a great way to get to know Ambassadors better and serve through football.

For more information go to gb.ambassadorsfootball.org, or speak to David Donnelly.

Tear Fund

As a church we have supported [TEAR FUND](http://tearfund.org) for many years and at last year's Mission discussion on PCC It was agreed that we should continue this support.



The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund as it once was known, has evolved from being a primarily Christian relief agency (helping with the immediate effects and impacts of floods, famine and wars) into a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. They tackle poverty through sustainable development, responding to disasters, and challenging injustice. "We believe an end to extreme poverty is possible". Their strapline for many years has been "follow Jesus where the need is greatest."

The 3 main areas of the work are

- Humanitarian response responding quickly to disasters and conflicts, supporting those in greatest need throughout the recovery process.
- Community development partnering with local churches and organisations, mobilising resources and empowering communities to lift themselves out of poverty.
- Advocacy and influencing helping individuals and churches speak out on issues of poverty and injustice, and we challenge unjust policies and practices at a local, national and global level. Going "upstream" as Bishop Tutu said ("There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in."). They are very involved in Climate Crisis work.

So why do we support them? Primarily because their mission and vision mirrors so much of what we believe and do in Brunswick – though they do it on a world scale! It allows us to have a wider perspective on what God wants for his world beyond Brunswick, and to know that there things we can do, give and pray for that can make an impact for our Sisters and Brothers throughout the globe

Poverty is not God's plan. You are.

For more about Tear Fund go to tearfund.org or ask Gordon Flear.

Operation Restoration Christian School



Based in Trenchtown, a hard hit part of Jamaica's capital Kingston, Operation Restoration Christian School (ORCS) is a remedial school, serving students between the ages of 12-17 who have fallen behind in their literacy and numeracy and who are functioning academically below their age group. They work with their students over a four-year period, assisting them to gain re-



entry into the main stream education system through the Grade Nine Achievement Test, or enter into other academic or skills development programmes. They currently have three classes, served by dedicated teachers and the principal, Robert Dixon.



Operation Restoration
Christian School



Initially through links with Les Issacs' Ascension Trust, together with visits from our own Paul Keeble and more recently Simon and Helen Gatenby who volunteered at the school for 5 weeks towards the end of 2023, our church has supported this school

financially and in prayer. The school was the recipient of the money raised (around £10,000) from the Thank offering we held after our successful completion of the first stage of our Refurb project, and we have welcomed Robert as our preacher when he is across in the UK.



so ~~was~~ I since is
like ~~we~~ we did some
things like
night we could make ~~games~~

It's a bit better
Dear Granddad
Love
Charlie

