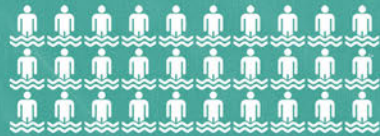


The Belfrey Annual Meeting

2023-24





30 people baptised



52 new Christians

Highlights on 2023 at The Belfrey



Wood removal from SMLB and repurposing it raised £11k



£1.5m raised for Impact



CAP Debt Centre established with 4 debt free totalling to £70,336.46



Andy's Report

2023 was a year of change, as we said farewell to our previous Vicar, Matthew Porter, on his consecration as Bishop of Bolton; and as we temporarily decanted into the De Grey Rooms so that the build phase of our Repair and Reordering project, Impact, could begin in St Michael-le-Belfrey Church. Church life picked up in our new venue, as we gathered there for weekly services and events. But as is clear from this booklet, which summarises many ministries of our church, so much more happened in 2023!

As we continued to be a church wanting to play our part in serving God's transformation of the North, we had our five aims very much in mind:

- serving York (social action)
- making disciples (evangelism)
- nurturing disciples (discipleship)
- developing leaders (leadership)
- planting churches (planting)

As we sought to serve York especially by supporting those in need through our Social Action Programme, it was exciting to see our CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Debt Centre develop, helping those struggling with debt. We rejoiced with each of the four people who were set free from debt by this work. Within this programme, our Post-Pandemic Fund (PPF) continued to be a beneficial resource, enabling us to give many small grants to organisations serving York in our three focus areas: poverty; mental health; and young people and families. We did this in partnership with Two Ridings Community Foundation as well as some grant-making responsive to immediate local needs. We also ran a £100,000 'Catalyser' Fund where we awarded larger grants to 8 local charities to act as a catalyst for growth, innovation and sustainability, and formed a Community of Practice to continue learning together.



Andy's Report

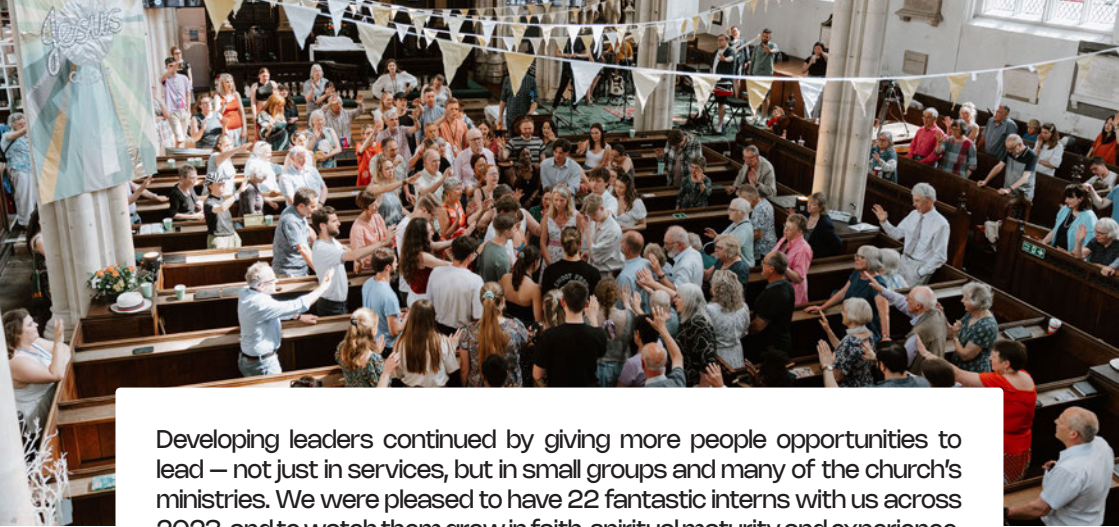


Other grant-making included £50,000 to support the Eden Byker Team being established by St Thomas' Newcastle, one of our previous Belfrey church plants. Thanks to the PPF, we were delighted to appoint Mandy Smith as our Children & Families Outreach Worker, to develop a network supporting church-run toddler groups, in partnership with the Diocese of York who provided some additional funding for this, and to set up a family befriending service to start in 2024 in partnership with Safe Families UK. Jessica Horn also joined us to set up and manage our Counselling Service, due to launch in spring 2024 in partnership with Wellspring Therapy and Training.

All the projects we've started as part of our social action programme provide opportunities for church members to get involved in volunteering, and we especially emphasised this through our Love Your Neighbour initiative, which had a different focus for each quarter of the year for congregations to get involved with, including Besom projects, harvest foodbank donations and Christmas hampers for those in need.

We also, in 2023, continued to preach Christ and sought to be a church making disciples. We know of at least 53 people who made professions of faith during the year, and 27 adults publicly marked new or renewed faith (in Baptism, or Affirmation of Baptismal Faith). Our Belfrey Doors team facilitated daily opening of our church building during the week until it closed in September, to welcome in visitors to experience the good news of Jesus. Welcome Lunches were hosted almost every month, and we continued to ensure people were linked into Belfrey Groups.

Through our Belfrey Groups, worship services and courses such as The Bereavement Journey, we aimed to be a church nurturing disciples. In 2023 we were sad to say farewell to Elaine Davies, Grace Dawson, Doug Greenfield, Jenny Hough, Daniel Lydiate, Harry Lydiate, Linda Peace, Bob Shead and Dan Simpson as they passed away. We honoured them and their kind and faithful service to many. They will be sorely missed. Our House of Prayer team continued to pray for transformation in York and the North, and a faithful group gathered on Zoom at 7am each Tuesday morning for Dynamic Prayer.



Developing leaders continued by giving more people opportunities to lead – not just in services, but in small groups and many of the church's ministries. We were pleased to have 22 fantastic interns with us across 2023, and to watch them grow in faith, spiritual maturity and experience. As well as running the Growing Leaders course, lots of people have been safeguarding-trained and equipped for roles in all sorts of areas of church life. Most of all, we hope the teaching in our services and the Bible studies in our small groups are able to be applied in a multiplicity of contexts, so each one of us is increasingly equipped to be people of influence, in our families, in our streets, at work and beyond.

It was wonderful to be preparing to send Vicky Earll and a team to plant a church in Hull early in 2024. As planting churches becomes more embedded in our culture, we've been able to serve the vision of our Diocese. Having a Northern Church Planting Fund is also helpful, as we can support a variety of planting initiatives beyond us, not just in prayer but with some financial support and networking too.

As part of our move to the De Grey Rooms, and in order to specify what God was doing this year, we launched our new Mission Statement 'Pray, Give, Grow.' This was to make it apparent that for the next few years, whilst we are out of our own church building, we have a clear way to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. We will continue to focus on our five aims but this mission statement allows us to clearly focus on prayer, generosity and growth in order to work towards them.

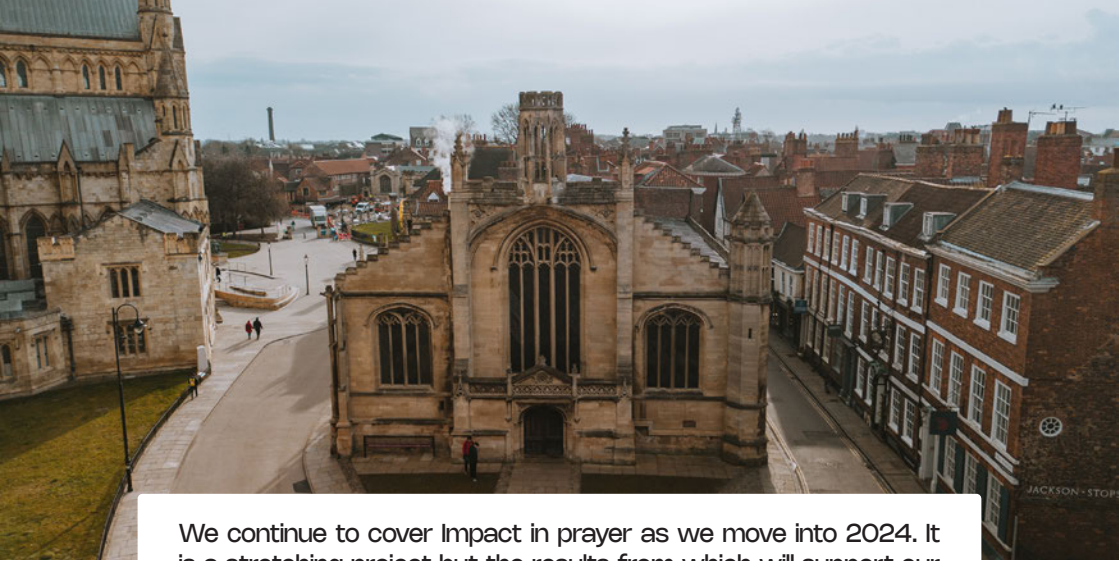
2023 was a hugely significant year for Impact, our c£11m project to repair and reorder St Michael le Belfrey Church building. We received a further £1.5 million and are enormously grateful to those who have given their support, including Trusts, individual donors and our generous church members. Significant grants have been pledged or received from the Benefact Trust, Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation, Feoffees of St Michael's Spurriergate, Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust, The Hobson Charity and The Collier Trust.

The project was granted essential permissions in 2023 – a big answer to prayer – which included planning permission and listed building consent from City of York Council and faculty approval from the Chancellor of the Diocese of York. Further applications to install smoke vents in the new roof to meet fire regulations and for the external signage and creation of hoardings with graphics were submitted later in the year.

Autumn 2023 gave us the opportunity to carry out our Wood Reclamation project, ahead of the Construction stage. The aim is to repurpose the wood for commercial and domestic use as part of our Sustainability strategy. Taking down the pews, gallery and narthex panels was carried out carefully and sensitively, recognising that the removal of such features has met with opposition. The hope is the gallery staircases can be used in new locations and the children's pews reconstructed and relocated. Some of the wood has been made into Belfrey furniture for people to purchase, particularly for members or those with a former connection with the church. It gives them the opportunity to own a physical reminder of the church building before it is reordered and contributes to the fundraising campaign.

In December 2023 the Tender, a substantial piece of work, was issued to six contractors by Cost Consultants Morham & Brotchie (The Belfrey's Cost Consultants and part of the design team led by LDN Architects). Tenders are due to be returned in March 2024 and the hope is to select a Contractor to start on site by Spring 2024.





We continue to cover Impact in prayer as we move into 2024. It is a stretching project but the results from which will support our ministries for generations to come.

It is a great privilege for me to be Interim Priest-in-Charge of our church and to serve with a wonderful team of clergy and staff, dedicated Wardens and Church Council (PCC) and so many volunteers and kind people. It's all part of serving God's transformation of the North.

As you and I go ahead into 2023 and beyond, 'may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit' (Rom. 15:13).

God bless

Andy Baker (Interim Priest-in-Charge)



Social Action

2023 was a great year for our Social Action Programme, where we continued to explore the calling that God has given us as a church to serve York and reach out to those in need in our city. We made progress with funding a number of exciting projects within our three programme pillars of Poverty, Mental Health, and Young People and Families, using the resource of our Post Pandemic Fund (PPF). We also further developed how our congregations and Belfrey Groups can get involved with social action through our Love Your Neighbour initiative.

We have created a number of projects as part of the programme:

New projects run by The Belfrey are a result of research into needs in York, and create volunteering opportunities as well as recruiting some salaried staff. These are mostly run in partnership with other specialist charities.



Congregation social action is enabled by our Love Your Neighbour initiative.

Grants to support local charities are our grantmaking schemes to support work already happening in York aligned with our three pillars.

Grants to charities outside of York are to fulfil our commitment to give away 10% of the Post Pandemic Fund to social action work outside of York, elsewhere in the North of England.

New Projects Run by The Belfrey

1. CAP Debt Centre – That has now been running for a whole year!

2. Counselling Service – We are pleased to be partnering with Wellspring Therapy and Training to set up and run an affordable, accessible and professional counselling service at the De Grey Rooms for adults in York. Jess Horn started with us as Counselling Service Manager, working towards the service launch in Spring 2024, with 3 years of funding provided from the PPF.

3. Young People and Families – We've committed to fund a 3-year Children and Families Outreach Worker post at The Belfrey and welcomed Mandy Smith to this role in September. This work has two strategic social action elements, both focused on low income families: support for families outside of the church, who are in a particular period of need; and Early Years provision through toddler groups.





Family Befriending Service – We have been working with the charity Safe Families UK to develop a proposal for a family befriending service using their model of supporting families with trained church volunteers. This will be for families with school age children and is planned to launch later in 2024.

Early Years Resourcing – In partnership with the Diocese of York, who have provided some funding towards the Children and Families Outreach Worker role, we've begun to form a network of church-run toddler groups in York. This aims to provide a supportive and encouraging space for leaders to come together, share resources, pray for each other, and offer advice and best practice

Youth Outreach – We reviewed and re-envisioned our existing Youth Outreach Worker role in 2023 to give it a stronger social action focus, and provided 3 years of funding for this role from the PPF. This outward facing role now focuses on reaching vulnerable and disengaged young people, prioritising areas such as healthy lifestyles, accessibility of education, and mental health support, and working with other local churches to do this where possible. Nathan Hook moved into this revised role in January 2023 and left in August to take up the post of Eden Byker Team Leader with St Thomas' Newcastle. The Youth Outreach Worker role was advertised over the summer but wasn't appointed to, so will be readvertised in early 2024.

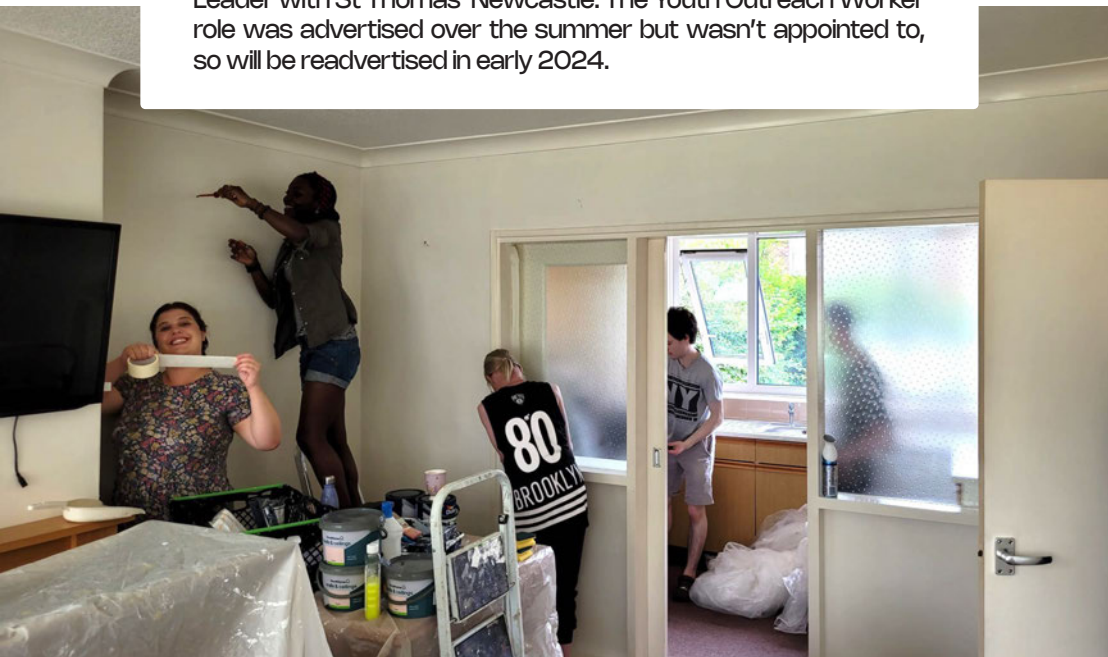
Grants to support local charities

1. Small Grants Fund in partnership with Two Ridings Community Foundation. We've run two more rounds of small grants this year, offering grants of up to £5000 for projects that provide deep or ongoing support or have significant impact, or of £1000 for smaller or one-off projects, especially if these bring joy into people's lives. Local charities applying needed to demonstrate that their work aligned with one or more of our programme pillars. £50,000 was available in total and recipients included Beetle Bank Farm to support dementia carers with sessions to help manage emotional stress, SENSes for support to parents of children with disabilities and complex needs, and York Rescue Boat who patrol the local river to prevent incidents with people in crisis. After running the Small Grants Fund in 2022 and 2023, we have awarded £100,000 via 41 grants to 37 individual charities in York.

2. Catalyser Fund. We opened our £100,000 Catalyser Fund for applications in early summer, with the aim of providing grants that act as a catalyst for growth, innovation, or sustainability, to help social action organisations adapt and transform in order to keep making an impact in their communities. Charities and Community Interest Companies in York whose work aligns with one or more of our 3 pillars were invited to apply for a grant of up to £15,000. We awarded 8 grants in total, to the following organisations:

Chocolate & Co, providing employment opportunities in their café and mobile drinks unit for ex-offenders and people recovering from addiction: project worker salary

City of York Council Early Support Fund working with the Local Area Coordination team: flexible, targeted micro-grants to help people take a step towards a better life, particularly those who can't access support through other routes





Gateway Church, The Atrium café and hub in Acomb, providing a warm space, free food and safe place to connect with other community support: staff salaries and running costs

Joseph Trust, working with children at risk of exclusion from mainstream education: part time staff member salary and provision of more non-classroom activities

St Denys Tea and Chat/Warm Space, working with the community of Walmgate to address loneliness, isolation and poverty: IT equipment and café running costs

Transitions CIC, working with children who are disengaged from education and experiencing social, emotional or mental health needs: an equine therapy horse and shepherd's hut project

York City Church 'The Well' Wellbeing Community, running support events for people who are struggling with or wanting to improve their mental health, alongside tailored counselling and coaching: project coordinator salary

York Vineyard, Growbaby free clothing provision for 0 – 5s, and Soft Play group for 0 – 3s, working with refugees and families in the local community around Fishergate: equipment costs and part time staff member salary.

We've formed a Catalyser Community of Practice, meeting every other month for a year to share learning, offer support and celebrate the work of each organisation involved. We used the Belfrey core values of generosity, festivity, simplicity and humility as our guideline for the set up and running of this group.

3. Ad Hoc Grant Funding. We made a grant of £4000 to RAY (Refugee Action York) towards the set up and running of 'Central Store' a free clothing store for asylum seekers which ran from March to August 2023. This was hosted by Central Methodist Church and resourced with volunteers and clothing donations via RAY and also from churches through One Voice York, including The Belfrey. A further grant of £5000 was made to Chocolate & Co, one of the Catalyser recipients, who approached us with a specific request for help following a fire on their mobile drinks unit which meant a loss of income and cash flow. We also gave a grant of £8000 to the Spurriergate Centre towards 6 months running costs of their counselling service, which was brought to a close at the end of 2023 in anticipation of the launch of our new Wellspring Counselling Centre.

It's been exciting to see how The Belfrey's grantmaking initiatives have served to support and enable development of many social action projects within York churches and charities. With this investment, and our ongoing networking, we're starting to see more relationships being built across organisations and new collaborations emerging. We've also continued to work with the One Voice York church unity and prayer network, especially the One Voice Social Action Team, looking at how churches in York can be supported to further develop their social action ministries and find opportunities to work together.

We've maintained links with City of York Council, York CVS, York Cares and other city organisations, and hosted the York Cares Christmas Social Club at the De Grey Rooms, an event to bring together older and young neighbours as a way of reducing social isolation. Over 80 people attended this, along with volunteers from Aviva, Nestle and other city employers, and the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

Grants to Charities Outside of York

Beyond York Grants Fund. As part of the proposal to set up the PPF in 2021, the PCC agreed that £100,000 (10%) of the fund money should be given to social action initiatives beyond York, with £50,000 of this to be earmarked for a new Eden team being established in Newcastle in partnership with St Thomas' Newcastle, one of The Belfrey's church plants, and The Message Trust. Eden sends and supports teams of urban missionaries to live sacrificially, share the gospel and build authentic community in deprived neighbourhoods. Eden Byker was formally begun in 2023 with the recruitment of Nathan Hook their Team Leader, so we were pleased to be able to support the team with this gift.





CAP Debt Centre

Ania Druzic, our Debt Centre Manager, completed the CAP Debt Counselling Training Programme and is fully signed-off as a CAP Debt Coach!

Ania also worked with numerous York churches (especially Living Word Church, York Community Church, Gateway Church) and organisations (especially City of York Council, Peasholme Charity, Peasholme Shelter, Community Links) to provide more wraparound support to our clients. Over the year 34 clients have been contacted and 10 clients have been helped with further financial support (food or energy vouchers, money for essential shopping). Our befriending team has grown to 10 with 2 recruited from the Belfrey.

It has been amazing to be able to help 4 clients to be debt free over the year amounting to just over £70,000 being released!

Let's Cook

2023 was a challenging year for us. We had to temporarily shut down the outreach due to a safeguarding issue, which has now been resolved. We looked forward to January 2024 with a fresh vision for a 16-week course, in which our clients are free to come and go as appropriate to their needs. Encouraging for all is that we have two new clients signed up for 2024!

As part of The Belfrey's social action team, good networking with other churches and non-church contacts is vital to the Let's Cook outreach, which we've been pleased to increase. Many of our team are members of other churches.

A big thank you to the Belfrey groups who have donated towards the cost of purchasing food for one of the Let's Cook sessions.



Love Your Neighbour in a year

Spring 2023

Collection point for clothes for asylum seekers – over **30** bags of clothes and shoes donated
10 volunteers sorted clothes for Central Store

Summer 2023

39 volunteers worked on decorating and gardening projects through Besom
2 hampers given by a Belfrey Group to people leaving Restore and moving into their own flats
One person reconnected back with The Belfrey

Autumn 2023

Harvest saw **20** crates of food collected for York Foodbank

Winter 2023

Around **40** Besom Project Christmas hampers donated by The Belfrey and G2
One Belfrey person helped sort hampers at the warehouse

Overall

14 charities shared prayer points and ways to help through our website
3 collections from The Belfrey of IT equipment by ITReuse to help bridge the digital divide in York

Clothes sorting in Huntington:

"I had wanted to do something practical to help refugees and was intending to contact the Action Centre about this. The Belfrey Social Action weekend was the perfect opportunity to start getting involved. We managed to sort a huge amount of clothes and had good fun doing it together. I'm sure that, by doing this, we are showing the love of Jesus in our care and concern for all refugees who come to York."



Decorating in Bishopthorpe:

"What an amazing opportunity we had, being able to intentionally partner in Besom's vision of demonstrating God's generous love through provision, time, hope, practical skills and transformation! What a day of faith building for all of us involved. It was such a joy to come together as a group and spend time getting to know other individuals who joined us too. No expertise needed at all, everyone in their own way had a gift they could use through the day. God really showed us so much more than we could have ever expected as we spent time together! Giving us so much to reflect on even in just the short space of time that we were there."





Alpha in 2023

2 courses were run

30-50 people attended each course

12 people were baptised

11 people attended our first Farsi-language Alpha course

Farsi Alpha saw **3** new Christians and several re-commitments

2 post-Alpha Discipleship Courses have started, with **8** guests per course

Evangelism

Our Parish Evangelist Paul Myers reports:

"Our support of Belfrey Doors continued during 2023, growing its sharing of the Gospel with visitors, up until the church building closed in September.

Our local outreach also continued to be a fruitful partnership with York's Youth with a Mission (YWAM) base, and worship leaders from various churches. Together we continued to deliver a regular outreach on the forecourt of St Michael le Belfrey Church. This consisted of sung worship, public proclamation of the gospel, the reading of scripture, and engagement in natural conversations with the public using chalkboards and questions.

As Parish Evangelist, and a member of the Archbishops' College of Evangelists, I am continuing to invest in training interns and evangelists both here in York and in the wider north of England."



World Mission

In 2023 we were able to welcome some of our mission partners to come and speak to us. In May, **Judy Homer**, who works for World Horizons and is involved in training and support for missionaries across the world, was able to come and speak. She shared about the work that she supports in Burkina Faso. She shared a specific need of money to buy sewing machines for those who were due to graduate from the sewing school. The gift of a sewing machine enables the individual to have a job and livelihood. Judy was amazed by the response of people in the Belfrey and all ten of the desired sewing machines were bought.

On Fathers' Day we welcomed **Chris and Suzy Wilson**, who are involved in training pastors in refugee camps in Ethiopia. It was a joy to have Chris speak at all three of our services. **Andy Roberts**, who together with his wife Rose set up Revive in Brazil and now is back in the UK as Mission Director for the Church Mission Society (CMS), came to speak in July. He spoke very movingly about the work that continues to go on in Brazil which many in the Belfrey support personally.

Luke and Alison Blacker had an earlier return to the UK for their Home Assignment year ahead of a move to a new part of Thailand in 2024. It has been a joy for the World Mission Team to walk alongside them as they process an eventful three years, and discern where God is leading them in the next season of their ministry. Please do talk to them and their children about their experiences and their hopes for the future as they are among us as a church family this year.

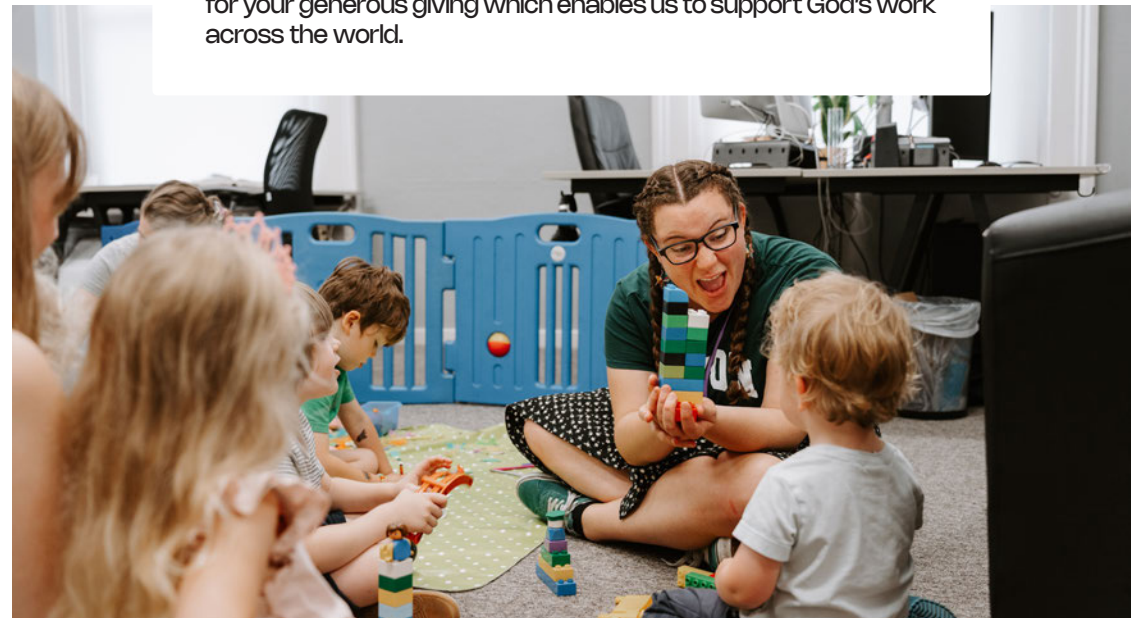
Tim and Suzy continue in their important work in Thailand. If you would like further information about what they are doing, please speak to a member of the World Mission Team.

An exciting development that emerged towards the end of 2023 was an opportunity that emerged for **James and Tash** to move to the Middle East and to continue their work among Syrian refugees. Do check out the website for further details about what they will be doing. Thank you to everyone who contributed to their moving costs in our December retiring offering. We raised £2,580.60 in addition to the £6K we had committed to as a church to help with these large costs.

As a church we continue to support the annual budget of the mission partners for whom we are their sending church at 20%. **Andy Roberts** now has a salaried position in CMS so we are no longer financially supporting him, but are continuing to support him in prayer.

Prayer is a key part of the work of this ministry. In 2023 we continued monthly prayer meetings on Zoom, which are fueled by the monthly prayer newsletter brought together by the faithful Sue Lawrence. Every half term we have continued to pray as a whole church for our mission partners in all three of our services and children's groups.

Thank you to everyone who prays for our mission partners, and for your generous giving which enables us to support God's work across the world.



Nurturing Disciples

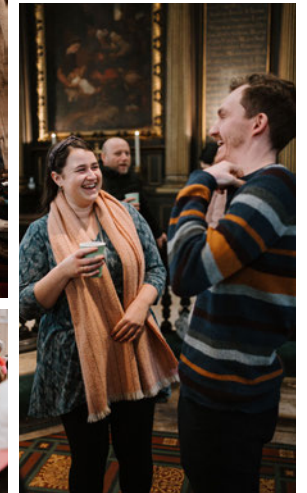


Services

2023 was the year that our services, which are central to our life as a church, relocated from St Michael-le-Belfrey to the De Grey Rooms. From September we were gathering in a new, temporary home as a church family for public worship, and welcomed many new faces too. Although in a new home, we have continued in our services to praise God, hear his word, ask for Christ's forgiveness, pray for our world, and be sent out in the power of his Spirit to live and work to his praise

27 adults marked new-found faith in Christ in this way in 2023 (22 new believers, plus five renewals of baptismal faith). We also were delighted to baptise four infants, and welcome these little ones into the church family.

We spent the first couple of months of the year journeying through a sermon series entitled Welcome Home, and then spent the season of Lent focusing on the theme of Caring, with a particular emphasis on the Gospel of John as we approached Easter Sunday. From Easter through to summer, we looked at Paul's letter to the Galatians, and then followed a series on identity. During summer, we merged our 11am and 6pm services into one all-age service at 3pm, as we looked together at the life of Joseph. With the return of schools in the autumn, we launched services at the De Grey Rooms, and with that launched our new mission statement – Pray, Give, Grow – with an accompanying sermon series. Advent saw us enjoying a sermon series entitled A Thrill of Hope, centred around the many ways that Jesus is our eternal hope. We were delighted to return to York Minster for our annual Christmas carol service in December.



Wednesday Lunchtime Service

During 2023 at our midweek Wednesday Lunchtime Service we:

- Saw consistent attendance, and some increase in numbers, throughout the course of 2023 and the beginning of 2024, despite the break over summer and the move across to the De Grey Rooms.
- We have seen several new leaders and speakers being given opportunities to take a significant leadership role in the service as part of their internship years.
- We have seen our staff team grow to 15, with the potential of 3 new team members in this new year.
- We have continued to follow the theme of expository Bible teaching, looking at books including Jonah, Malachi, Haggai, Acts, Romans and Titus.
- Have introduced communion at 3 services in 2023; Ash Wednesday, to celebrate the last Wednesday in the Belfrey, and the Wednesday before Christmas. We are looking to introduce it at 4 services in 2024, potentially more.
- We continue to provide a space for those who need to be signposted or provided information on other services through the church and in wider York.

Wednesday at 12.30pm, De Grey Rooms



Nurturing Disciples



G2

2023 has been an exciting time for G2. We had our first weekend away, which coincided with the King's Coronation. Spiritually, something changed during late spring, and we felt we had finally recovered from the after-effects of the pandemic. We began to sense that God was shifting our posture to face outwards and focus on connecting with those who don't know Jesus. We made necessary changes in September to our Sunday and small group focuses, and have met with many people who are curious about the hope they can find in Jesus. A few highlights were baptising two cousins who were brand new to faith, seeing someone healed of long Covid, and welcoming international students into one of our small groups. We hosted a carols and cake cafe every week in December, and saw people come in from the library and the street to join in. Many stayed for the Sunday service, including a sausage dog named Leila!

Hannah Smith (G2 Team Leader)

Pastoral

Pastoral work is crucial to the life of a church, and we were blessed with a faithful team to carry out this ministry in 2023.

A key focus of our pastoral work is ensuring that housebound church members are regularly visited, with Holy Communion being offered in homes, and gift bags given at Easter and Christmas. The church's pastoral directory, which we use for pastoral needs requiring expert help, was updated and added to. 2023 saw us start to fulfil our vision to deliver various pastoral courses, with The Bereavement Journey being offered in the autumn. The year concluded with our third Blue Christmas contemplative service: a quiet, reflective service for all, but especially designed for those who had had a hard year, and may not be looking forward to the usual big celebrations at Christmas.

We are so grateful to God for all that he helped us accomplish in 2023 as we came alongside people, walked with them and sought to support them.





Belfrey Groups

2023 was a busy year for our Belfrey Groups. It's estimated that there were 1225 Belfrey Group meetings in 2023! We had one group close down but had two 18-30s groups and one daytime group start - so for the fifth year running we have ended the year with more groups than we started with! There is also an increased number of Student Belfrey Groups, with eight Monday groups now gathering. Three discipleship groups formed off the back of Alpha.

The groups have been as active as ever, dropping off meals, visiting the sick, bereaved and lonely, caring for one another and giving lifts to hospital appointments. Several groups arranged socials, and even a weekend away. Over Christmas, a number of groups put together Besom Christmas hampers, with around 40 hampers being assembled.

We launched our new Belfrey Group Leader Handbook. This gave a common idea of how to run a group and suggestions for mission and multiplication. This book has been much appreciated by the Belfrey Group Leaders and has been also shared with some other churches.

As in previous years, we have heard so many testimonies of how much groups have meant to people with the support, prayer and fellowship offered. We have also seen several groups invite new people who have subsequently come to faith! We want to say a huge thank you to all our leaders who have sacrificially supported their groups and led them so well.

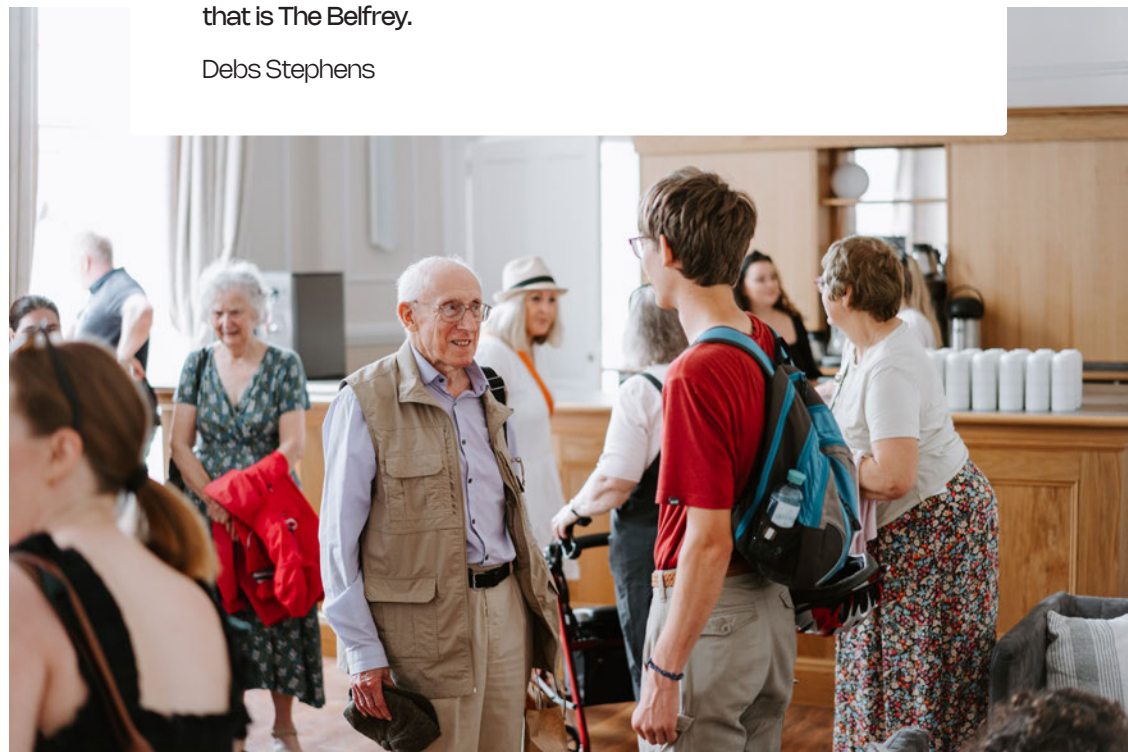
Belfrey Seniors

During 2023 Belfrey Seniors held two uplifting worship events, tea by the Lock at Naburn, practical help from Age Concern York on "living older age well", a trip to Lotherton Hall and our usual Christmas event, this year in the De Grey Rooms.

Our worship events were amazing times of lifting our voices in praise to God and being filled with His Spirit. Worshipping with these Christian warriors of Christ is humbling. Amongst the music, food and conversation at the Christmas event, we took time to consider at the end of the year what it was to be thankful even when it was difficult to do so.

As usual we feel blessed to be together and continue to enjoy fellowship, laughter and good food. I thank God that we have such a significant balance of ages in our church - the Seniors bring experience, history and wisdom into the wonderful mix that is The Belfrey.

Debs Stephens



Nurturing Disciples

18-30s

In 2023 we took over a hundred 18-30s, including students and young families, to Wycliffe for our annual weekend away, which was brilliant. We looked at identity over the course of the weekend in our teaching time, and had just a great weekend.

During the year we had two new 18-30s groups form.

We went to New Wine United taking a group of 18-30s. This is something I would love to see more 18-30s coming to as we plan to go again this summer.

We had many 18-30s attend both our 2023 Alpha courses, and saw some amazing testimonies as people came to know Jesus and were baptised.

In 2023 the 18-30s Worker role changed slightly as we've joined the Diocese of York's Multiply movement which aims to set up new worshipping communities for people in their 20s-40s.



Nurturing Disciples



Students

- On campus, we ran Alpha, worship nights and free barbecues (with G2)
- There were more small groups, and over thirty students serving on the student team, either as group leaders or Alpha leaders and helpers
- We saw lots of baptisms and people coming to faith. Including some brilliant testimonies of people coming to faith out of nowhere.
- We worked with St Thomas' Newcastle for worship nights and helping with outreach.
- We ran the late-night venue with students at New Wine United Week A in the summer

We have been thinking a lot about what is different about this generation and how that affects the way we reach them and disciple them in church. We would be happy to chat in more detail about this!

Youth

The Youth ministry has continued to grow, adapt and resource the local church. 2023 highlights were Luminosity (New Wine's youth festival) and our annual residential Encounter at Wydale Hall. The young people had lots of space for worship and to go deeper into God's word.

Youth Nights (11-18) continued to be a brilliant space to welcome young people, worship God, study the Bible and have fun together. We regularly welcomed 15-25 young people per night. Youth Belfrey Group (15-18) saw a regular attendance of 5-6 young people; this was launched as an opportunity to spend time studying God's word together in a more relaxed environment, similar to a typical Belfrey Group. Wildfire on Sundays (11-16) adapted well to additional needs within the group; we continue to develop as a team and are attending a British Sign Language course.

Some of the events that we partnered with locally in 2023 were Youthfest (a summer festival based in York, with social action); Christmasfest (a Christmas gathering with an outreach focus); Feaster (an Easter gathering for young people) and Citywide Worship (prayer and worship nights for young people).

We continue to look for a brilliant Youth Outreach Worker to join the team. Please pray for this as we continue to point young people towards Jesus!





Children & Families

The Children & Families ministry saw much growth in 2023. The team expanded with the appointment of Mandy Smith as Children & Families Outreach Worker, and Izzy Stone as an intern. We also grew our volunteer team!

We continued to run children's groups for 0-11 year olds on Sundays, averaging about twenty-five 0-11 year olds attending our 11am service. The move to the De Grey Rooms enabled us to have all these groups running in the same building for the first time, which has made the groups much more accessible and safe for children. SongStars (our weekly group for 0-5 year olds and their parents/carers) continued to thrive, averaging about twenty children attending each week. The team also ran a variety of one-off events over the course of the year, including social meet-ups for families during the summer holidays, and drop-in events for families in the Christmas and Easter holidays. The team have also taken the lead on running the Christingle and Good Friday services.

We are developing a network of support for church-based toddler groups across the city; the first meeting of this group took place in November. Mandy helped York Community Church (YCC) to run their weekly outreach club for primary-school-aged children (Corner Kids), and our team ran the children's work for the Weekend Away of a church in Huddersfield. Liz continued to co-ordinate the Children's Leaders Network.

In 2023 we began discussions with an external Christian organisation with whom we are now going to form a partnership to run a parenting support service. We are excited about reaching out into our community to support families who are struggling or would benefit from some emotional and/or practical support.

Belfrey Women

Belfrey Women entered a new season in 2023, with new leadership and a renewed vision to see all women, across the generations, coming together to be built in their identity in Christ, to be released into the giftings God has given them and the freedom to partner with God in all He is calling them into.

The Belfrey Women's programme for 2023 began in March with a breakfast in the Belfrey Hall, with speaker Sarah Snyder from the Rose Castle Foundation. In June, we held our annual Women's Day at The Belfrey, where we had the privilege of Arianna Walker, the CEO of Mercy UK, speaking powerfully to us on the freedom we find in Christ. In October we hosted our next breakfast in the Belfrey Hall, with around 80 women of all ages attending. Vicky Earll, one of our curates, shared with us her journey of faith and God's call into church leadership, including the challenges, the provision and the growth in relationship with Jesus.

It was great to meet as women of different ages and stages of life, praising Jesus and hearing and being encouraged by Him. The Holy Spirit moved powerfully amongst us, as we agreed with Him, that whatever life stage we are in, He is calling us to partner with Him.

Hayley Baker & Kay Scott

Belfrey Men

Ross Kenyon, Belfrey Men Leader in 2023 reports

"Alex Male and I are thankful to God for a solid year leading Belfrey Men. We are particularly thankful to our special guests, who shared inspirational Bible teaching, whilst others shared the experiences that have shaped their lives. Many agreed to be interviewed, which takes a lot of courage, and we honour those who did.

Alex and I both have busy careers and other ministry commitments and after a review, we both felt that it was right to step down from leading this ministry at the end of 2023.

We wish the Ministry every success as it moves into a new season and we want thank those that have supported us during our tenure, many of whom did so in unseen ways."



New Wine Discipleship Year & Leadership Year

God has continued to bless us by bringing us our New Wine Discipleship Year and Leadership Year students.

Our Monday teaching sessions are a very key part of the internship for our students. We have loved studying the Bible together and also being involved in serving the city and social action projects and sharing community with one another. Our interns have all served God humbly and faithfully. I want to say a big thank you to our NWDY Interns of 2022/23 – Adam, Izzie, Rachel, Zoe, D'Andre, Beth and Lucy, and to our LY Interns – Sam, Libby, Jemima and Matt. All have either moved into full-time jobs working for churches, or are continuing to volunteer in the life of the Belfrey. Some of our interns from last year have become staff members of other churches in the city. We have loved building relationships with other churches in the city too, and we're praying that we will continue to send other interns to resource other churches.

In September we welcomed eight new NWDY students – Silas, Izzy, Faith, Hannah, Izac, Evan, Rosemary and Ombretta. God has really blessed us with a great number of interns willing to learn, grow and serve our church. We have loved growing together in developing spiritual disciplines, learning about spiritual gifts and using them, and having opportunities to lead in different church ministry contexts. We have also loved gathering with other NWDY Hubs across the country to worship together at weekends away, as well as volunteering at the New Wine United summer events.

We also welcomed three new Leadership Year students – Zoe, Beth and Lucy have all committed this year to grow in their leadership giftings and be equipped to move on to leadership positions in the future.

These years prove to be foundational for the faiths of our interns and we are so thankful for all that they pour out for our church. Please pray for them as they continue to grow and develop in the coming months as they are with us here in York.



Leadership Development

Leadership development is an incredibly key part of what it means to be an active, healthy resource church. Leadership development not only enables more people to actively further God's Kingdom here in York, but it provides a strong foundation for our planting initiatives. We are incredibly blessed at The Belfrey to have so many people who are willing to lead in Belfrey Groups, church services, ministries and our many activities that happen during the week.

This commitment to discipling and encouraging leaders takes shape in all sorts of ways, from having co-leaders in our services, through to mentoring in discipleship and leadership. During 2023 we continued to grow our leadership programmes through the internships, seeing 22 interns participate in the scheme across the year, and also with courses like Growing Leaders, which is now in its fifth year. We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to the life of the church through leadership inputs!



Northern Church Planting Group

The Northern Church Planting Group is a subgroup of the St Michael le Belfrey PCC. In 2023 Allen Dixon, a lawyer and member of St Michael le Belfrey, became Chair. We're delighted that The Bishop of Hull, the Rt Revd Dr Eleanor Sanderson, and John McGinley, Executive Director of Myriad, part of the Gregory Centre for Church Planting, also joined. All bring great planting knowledge and prayerful wisdom from inside and outside The Belfrey.

In 2023 The Belfrey prepared to plant a church in Hull led by Revd Vicky Earl in late 2024. St Thomas Newcastle, the resource church which was planted in 2019 by the Diocese of Newcastle with a team from The Belfrey, also prepared for their first church plant to be established in 2024. We're very excited about this as it's our first "grandchild"!





Worship & Production

2023 was a great year for our ministry, as we continued to make Jesus known through worship, creativity and audio-visual production, as well as growing as a team, and in our style and hearts for worship as a church. It's been amazing that we've been able to continue making our Sunday services accessible to church members who are housebound and also many people all over the world through our livestreams every week.

2023 was a very exciting and stretching year as we decanted into the De Grey Rooms out of St Michael le Belfrey Church. The Worship and Production team reflected a lot on the transition from the building we've been so used to worshipping together in as a community: we strongly feel that God is teaching us a lot about worship in this season, particularly as a way to unify our Church family together and to use it as a focus in lifting Jesus high so that He is our priority during this time of change for us. It's an honour and privilege to be part of this, and we are praying that God continues to meet with us and have deeper and deeper encounters with him through our praise to Him.

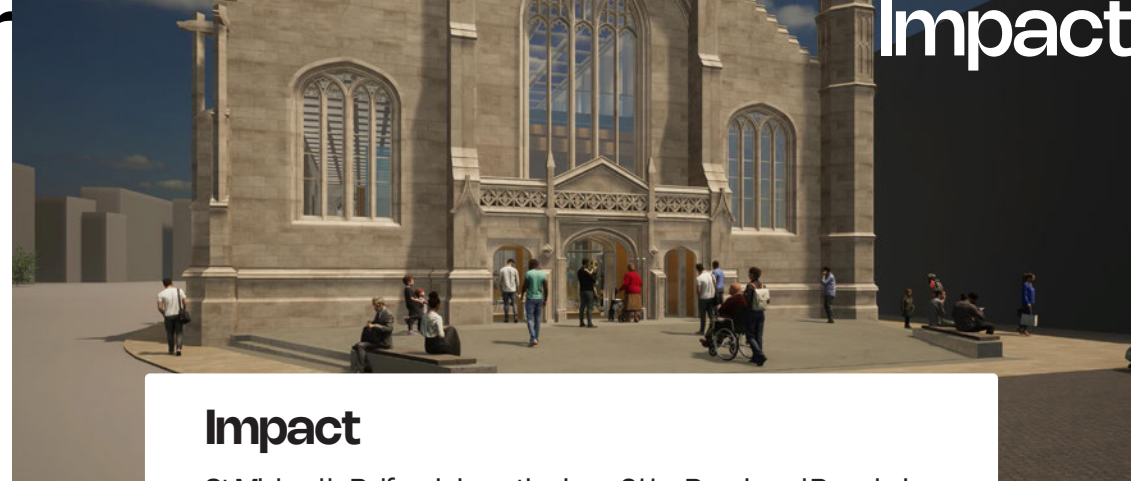
In the move across to the De Grey Rooms, the team has been incredible at putting together the space for us to worship in our new home. Many people have gone above and beyond in clearing out the Belfrey building, moving AV equipment and instruments across to the De Grey Rooms and helping set up the new system, which took several months to achieve and then troubleshoot. A massive thank you to all who volunteered and gave time to help us.



House of Prayer

Jesus has done so much at the House of Prayer (HoP) in 2023 – a year of breakthrough, growth in spiritual war-readiness, and triumphant consecration. "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" – 2 Corinthians 3:18. Sophie Dearnley reports:

"We continued to seek the face of God together at our monthly Tabernacle and weekly prayer meetings for the city of York, stretching our spiritual stamina and prophetic sharpness in Holy Spirit-led worship and fervent prayer. During these meetings, people have encountered God deeply, seeing and hearing in the Spirit for the first time, seeing answers to prayers prayed over the decades, as well as receiving healing, deliverance and commissioning into their true identity and callings. There has been an anointing for creative expression of the heart of God seen in painting, dancing, prophetic use of instruments and objects and much more. It is never dull when the Holy Spirit shows up to a meeting!"



Impact

St Michael le Belfrey is investing in a c£11m Repair and Reordering project called Impact, the first major development in over 150 years. It will beautifully restore and transform this Grade 1 listed church building so it is fit for worship, social action and visitors for generations to come.

2023 has been an exciting year, with significant milestones achieved, and a great step forward in Impact's progress.

In April, City of York Council granted planning permission and listed building consent, and in August, the Chancellor for the Diocese of York gave faculty approval.

Also in April, The Belfrey received its first major grant award from The Benefact Trust and overall has received or been pledged trust funding amounting to £300k. The generosity of Belfrey church members has seen individual giving and pledges amounting to c£500k.

During the autumn, with the help of a local building contractor and regional furniture maker, the wood, including the pews and gallery, was carefully taken down and removed from the church building. This fits with Impact's Sustainability strategy, gives Belfrey members and those connected with the church, an opportunity to own a piece of furniture, and respects the sensitivity of the fabric highlighted by the amenity societies.

In December, Tenders were submitted to potential Building Contractors. Tenders will be returned in March 2024 and a Contractor appointed.

Throughout the year the faithfulness of The Belfrey and answered prayer has been evident. The Impact Board looks forward to seeing Impact enter Construction in Spring 2024.



Operations

2023 was a huge year in the Operations department!

The first half of the year was primarily focussed on preparing and then moving our church activities and staff office into the De Grey Rooms. It was a joy and blessing to work with York Conservation Trust and Pinnacle Construction on this, as well as many phenomenal and generous members of our church family who gave time, muscle, packing boxes and cake! Thank you so much to those of you who were part of this work, particularly Ruth Brookes who voluntarily coordinated much of it – we literally couldn't have done it without you all.

The second half of 2023 was about settling into our new temporary home, which whilst of course having its challenges did in general go really well. It is refreshing and helpful to be in a new space where we can experience in part the flexibility and creativity which Impact is facilitating in St Michael le Belfrey for the future.

After 18 months without a Facilities Manager, we were delighted (and relieved!) to welcome John Hanna to the team in October. John has brought a wealth of skills, knowledge and passion to the work of looking after nine buildings across the city. We've also onboarded other new colleagues across the staff team and facilitated a few role changes – in particular Izzy Pysanczyn's transition from Belfrey Doors Coordinator to Pastoral Administrator & Safeguarding Officer. We were all very sad to say farewell to Matthew and Sam Porter and their family in June, and all that they contributed to The Belfrey, particularly a heart for generous hospitality and welcoming new people to church; but we have loved supporting Andy Baker as he took on the role of Interim Priest-in-Charge and prepared to recruit an Interim Associate Minister.



Facilities

In 2023 we moved to the De Grey Rooms. This involved moving our entire office and worship centre, and was a major project which is still ongoing as we adapt to the new space.

We also welcomed our new Facilities Manager, John Hanna, who now oversees the general maintenance and security of our church buildings, and the health and safety of those who work and worship in them.

John is managing a number of larger projects to improve and protect the buildings we use. These projects include:

- Investigation works and making safe the Belfrey Hall, as movement was detected in its foundations;

- Renovating number 11 Minster Yard, one half of the Parish Centre;

- Continuing to adapt the De Grey Rooms in order to facilitate new ventures and ministries, including welcoming the York Food Bank in 2024.

John is also joining the Impact technical advisory committee and will be supporting the Impact project one day a week as the renovations continue and the church looks ahead to moving back into St Michael le Belfrey and the Parish Centre.



Safeguarding

Izzy Pysanczyn took on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer in 2023, joined by Kirsty McCollough as volunteer Deputy Parish Safeguarding Officer from the congregation.

The parish safeguarding policies were reviewed and approved by the PCC in July 2023. The PCC received a Safeguarding report at every meeting, and the Safeguarding team met monthly with senior clergy. The Safeguarding team also worked closely with the Children's team, the Youth team, Belfrey Group leaders and the Pastoral team, offering advice and assistance.

The Church of England online training modules are completed by all new staff, interns and volunteers, including Belfrey Group leaders, worship band members, pastoral visitors and youth team, among many others. Almost 250 people now require safeguarding training in their role, which is updated every three years. DBS checks are also required for many roles: we are thankful to Liz Hunt for leading our DBS administration.

York Deanery Synod Report 2023–24

The Deanery Synod is a forum between the PCC and the Diocesan Synod (itself a tier below General Synod) where we meet members of other churches. Through its agendas we learn the views of others on topics that concern the wider church. The Synod's main agenda items in 2023 were continuing discussions of 'Living Christ's Story'; the encouragement of lay and ordained vocations; and the church's response to the climate crisis.

There is concern in the Deanery about church numbers, money and organisation as well as evangelism. The Church of England urgently needs to get in shape to address these twin challenges. Church leaders make it explicit that the evolving church will rely heavily on the laity.

A key idea in future will be that of 'building on potential'. How do we define 'potential'? Once measured, how do we build on it? How is 'potential' reconciled with 'needs' in the allocation of resources? How do we share fairly between inner-city parish, depopulated dale, former mining village and a thriving suburban church, and maintain a presence in all communities? These are some of the issues with which the Deanery and Diocese have to grapple.



PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the legal trustee body of St Michael le Belfrey Church. Together with the Vicar/Interim Priest-in-Charge, it is responsible for good governance of the Church.

2023 was another busy year for the PCC. On top of the yearly planned cycle of meetings (full PCC meeting every other month, with Standing Committee meeting in the intervening months), following the announcement that Matthew Porter was to become the Bishop of Bolton we had a number of extraordinary meetings to discuss the various options that we had to fill the vacancy once Matthew left. We elected two parish representatives to work with the Bishop of Selby and the Archdeacon of York to interview and appoint our new Interim Priest-in-Charge, and thank God that we were able to appoint Andy Baker to this position.

PCC Members 2023

Ex-officio:

Daniel Brookes (Warden)
Karen Dixon (Warden)
Remi Oduyemi (Warden)
Andrew Oldroyd (Warden)

Elected:

Lydia Baldwin
Katherine Bridge
Ross Kenyon (until April 23)
Joe McKeogh
Liv Portway
Dan Tilbrook (from April 23)
Paddy Wordsworth (until Aug 23)

Deanery Synod elected members:

Daniel Brookes (until July 23, however remains a member of the Deanery Synod as Lay Dean of York)
James Hayden
John Lindley
Andrew Oldroyd (from July 23)
Martine Somerville
Becca Tilbrook

Clergy:

Andy Baker
James Congreve-Horn
Vicky Earll
Matthew Porter (until June 23)
Secretary: Martine Somerville
Treasurer Team: Joe McKeogh (Treasurer) & Martine Somerville

Finance

Total income received in 2023 was £1,465,176 and total expenditure was £1,765,271. This led to an overall deficit of £300,095, mostly due to expenditure of restricted funds related to the Impact project and the Post-Pandemic Fund.

Unrestricted income was £815,276 and unrestricted expenditure £793,317 leaving a surplus of £21,959. Compared with 2022, unrestricted donations and legacies increased by £126,000 to £696,000. £15,000 of this was designated by the PCC for work with children, families and students. Unrestricted expenditure reduced by £67,000 to £793,000. This was mostly to do with moving to the De Grey Rooms over the summer and savings on utilities in the church and the parish centre over winter.

Restricted income was £649,900 and restricted expenditure £971,954, resulting in a deficit of £322,054. Compared with 2022, restricted donations and legacies increased by £76,000. This was due to continued fundraising for Impact, which brought in £65,000 more than in 2022 before Gift Aid. We also received £291,000 of restricted grant income. £220,000 of this was for the Impact project, £33,000 was reimbursed VAT under the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme (also for the Impact project), and £35,000 towards 18-30s and student workers' salaries. We were able to earn £55,000 of bank interest by investing money received for Impact in short-term deposits.

The Post-Pandemic Fund for social action gave out grants in 2023 amounting to £217,000. While we did receive £9,500 of income into the PPF in 2023, the fund is on track to be fully spent by the end of 2027. Fundraising has started in order to enable the social action projects that have been established to continue after that time. No grants were awarded out of the Northern Church Planting Fund in 2023 but there are four applications which will be considered in the first half of 2024.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST MICHAEL LE BELFREY WITH ST CUTHBERT, YORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	680,948	15,000	275,717	971,665	770,601
Income from charitable church activities	73,419	-	15,978	89,397	82,214
Other trading activities	22,983	-	11,219	34,202	19,038
Investments	10,748	-	56,721	67,469	15,215
Other income	12,178	-	290,265	302,443	7,482
Total income	800,276	15,000	649,900	1,465,176	894,550
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	102	-	6,863	6,965	13,843
Charitable church activities	793,215	-	965,091	1,758,306	1,680,958
Total expenditure	793,317	-	971,954	1,765,271	1,694,801
Net income/(expenditure) before gains and losses	6,959	15,000	(322,054)	(300,095)	(800,251)
Net gains revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)	6,959	15,000	(322,054)	(300,095)	(800,251)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in Funds	6,959	15,000	(322,054)	(300,095)	(800,251)
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023	1,057,114	-	8,586,533	9,643,647	10,443,898
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023	£1,064,073	£15,000	£ 8,264,479	£ 9,343,552	£9,643,647

Total expenditure on Impact during 2023 was £473,612, while income totalled £511,472. The main costs were architect fees (£129,000), the deposit and rent for the De Grey Rooms (£115,000), project team salaries (£73,000), wood removal (£38,000), reclaimable VAT (£34,000), and legal fees for lease agreements and Diocesan Chancellor costs (£26,000).

In 2023 trading activities amounted to £34,000, consisting of a mixture of hiring out the De Grey Rooms and the Belfrey Hall, as well as Impact merchandise and furniture reclamation sales.

During the year a legacy received for Holy Communion was used to buy two new silver chalices, two new silver plates, storage boxes and items of linen, which are now being used in De Grey Rooms while

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ST MICHAEL LE BELFREY WITH ST CUTHBERT, YORK

BALANCE SHEET

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible fixed assets	971,026	-	3,688	974,714	951,565
	<u>971,026</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,688</u>	<u>974,714</u>	<u>951,565</u>
Current Assets					
Stock	513	-	4,990	5,503	613
Debtors	24,265	-	5,136,600	5,160,865	6,219,971
Cash at bank and in hand	99,604	15,000	3,126,035	3,240,639	2,522,356
Total Current Assets	124,382	15,000	8,267,625	8,407,007	8,742,940
Current Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	31,335	-	6,834	38,169	50,858
Total current liabilities	31,335	-	6,834	38,169	50,858
Net Current Assets	93,047	15,000	8,260,791	8,368,838	8,692,082
Total assets less current liabilities	1,064,073	15,000	8,264,479	9,343,552	9,643,647
Net Assets	£ 1,064,073	£ 15,000	£ 8,264,479	£ 9,343,552	£ 9,643,647
The funds of the charity					
Unrestricted general fund	753,073	-	-	753,073	746,114
Designated funds	-	15,000	-	15,000	-
Unrestricted revaluation reserve fund	311,000	-	-	311,000	311,000
Restricted funds	-	-	8,264,479	8,264,479	8,586,533
Total Charity Funds	£ 1,064,073	£ 15,000	£ 8,264,479	£ 9,343,552	£ 9,643,647

our older and more precious pieces of silverware are being repaired and then stored in York Minster for the duration of Impact. We also purchased a new keyboard to be used for worship. The rest of the legacy will be used to repair the reredos and altar area in the church building.

The move to De Grey Rooms over the summer was a significant event. While Impact funds have covered the rent for the building, general church funds were used to invest in new staff laptops, the truss set up in the ballroom and the extra desks, chairs, sofas and tables needed to use the space effectively. The new computers and truss have been added to the balance sheet as assets and we are planning to sell the truss when we vacate the De Grey Rooms, as it should still have significant value by then.

Get Involved



Volunteer

belfrey.org/volunteer



I'm New!

belfrey.org/new



Give to The Belfrey

belfrey.org/giving



Give to Impact

belfrey.org/impact

