

# ANNUAL REPORT



## **Minister's Report**

The year since our last General Church meeting has been a game of two halves...



### **Sabbatical**

The first half of 2023 was in large part shaped by my sabbatical which meant I was away from the church for nearly 4 months in a combination of sabbatical and annual leave. Sabbatical cover was provided by Norman Hooks with the support of our church leaders and a circuit wide sabbatical support group. Work in HHMC of course continued in my absence not least with the continuation and development of Welcome Wednesdays. I'm hugely grateful for the energy and commitment which has made welcome Wednesdays such a pivotal point in our weekly rhythms.

### **Mission**

The Church Council has been spending quite a bit of time thinking about mission, conscious that a church that's not growing is in the process of dying. In our case, not only do we need to grow larger we also need to grow younger, hence we've been reflecting on how we might more intentionally focus our mission outreach on families and children.

Part of our challenge is that we do not already have a critical mass of younger people as part of our worshipping congregation. So, it's a challenge to start from scratch. Our conviction is that we need to think of mission in terms of drawing people from wide circles of contact into an inner circle of friendship where and invitation to explore faith might have a better chance of being considered. So we might encounter families in Brightstars, which could lead to an invitation to Messy Church, which could maybe lead to an invitation to a JAM Club to All Age Worship and then perhaps eventually into an evangelism/discipleship course. However, with all these elements the question of human resources is an ongoing challenge.

## Transitions

The last year has also seen some significant transitions. Stan has passed on the reins of Treasurer to Patrick and Carolyn has stepped back from her roles as Pastoral Secretary and Bookings Manager. We continue to wrestle with how we find sufficient volunteers to run the work of the church well. And the question of pastoral care is one of the issues we'll be spending time reflecting on together.

## Next Steps

Many will know that my appointment in the circuit will end this summer after 4 years in the role. The Circuit Leadership Team is looking to appoint my successor from within the existing ministerial team by reshuffling ministerial responsibilities across the circuit. A plan has been made and we await the Superintendent contacting churches where ministerial oversight will change.

This means that this will be my final General Church meeting in Hockley and Hawkwell. It has been a privilege to serve alongside you.

All God's blessings for the future.

***Calvin***

## **Worship Team**

Writing this report is always an interesting exercise, as we are forced to look back over the last twelve months. This usually involves looking at last year's report to see where we finished!!



We have continued with a steady pattern of services. The first Sunday in the month is usually All Age Worship and led by our own minister, Calvin and the stewards usually plan this together. The third Sunday is generally a Communion service and the

second or fourth service is a service led by Anne who is our Worship Leader. That means once a month the Circuit designates a local preacher or one of the other ministers to lead our worship.

The quarterly plan is discussed with Calvin and the stewards from Rayleigh and Rochford churches so that important anniversaries and events can be catered for. Occasionally, we invite specific preachers or ministers to lead a particular service.

Three times a year there are Parade services which cover the main annual festivals – Harvest, Christmas and Easter. We try to share the planning with the leaders of the Uniformed Organisations but finding a suitable date when everyone is free can be tricky. There are also problems with the Leaders being available to supervise the children on the day.

These services, with their particular focus, result in money being sent to All We Can for projects in the developing world, food to HARP to support the homeless in Southend and gifts to Safe Steps for those affected by domestic violence.

From March to July 2023 Rev Calvin Sammuel was on sabbatical. Rev Norman Hooks was assigned to help Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley during this period, but only for two days a week and two services a month between the three churches, When Calvin took up a further role in the Connexion, after his sabbatical, this continued. Norman chaired some of the Church Council meetings and was/is a regular visitor to Welcome Wednesdays.

At the end of 2023, Calvin informed the Church Council that he was seeking an appointment abroad and that the Connexion had given him permission to do so. He will be standing down from stationing from August 2024. However, his appointment does not officially end until 2025 so there will be twelve months before a

new minister can be appointed to our section through the usual procedures, if one is available and a suitable match can be found.

The Circuit will rearrange the existing ministers to cover Calvin's three churches, in the meantime but as yet we do not know who this will be.

Anne, Gill and Muriel are the three stewards who share in all of the planning, making the rotas and setting the church up each week. Sandra is the communion steward, Peter and John the organist/pianist and June, George and Sandra door stewards. Nicola emails the notices and Ray distributes the paper copies to those who do not use the internet, Thanks go to all of these for the work they do in making the wheels turn smoothly.

We can always accommodate additional volunteers for reading on a Sunday, as Communion stewards and as door stewards so speak to Gill, Anne or Muriel if you think you can add your name to the rota and need more information on what is involved.

Thank you all for your constant support throughout the year.

***Muriel, Anne and Gill  
The Worship Team***

## **Messy Church**

Messy Church has a regular structure which starts with a welcome, then activities related to the story, the telling of the story and worship followed by sharing a meal together. Our numbers fluctuate but I still think that many of our congregation would be pleased to see the number of children and their families who are welcomed at our church to learn more about our faith and our favourite bible stories.

We hold Messy Church every third Tuesday in the month at 4pm – 5.30pm. There are a wide variety of arts and crafts and we

have suitable toys and books for any little ones. Then we go into church to share what we have made, have a story, sing songs and have a prayer. After that we go back into the hall to share a faith tea and everyone brings something to add to the table.

Messy Church has now celebrated its eleventh Christmas. Who'd have thought that we could still be welcoming young families once a month, all these years later. While our Nativity lacks a little finesse it does give every child a chance to take part and is enjoyed by all.



We are all looking forward to Easter. Our February Messy Church will be based on Lent and then, in March, we will make Easter gardens and celebrate the Easter story.

It is important to record grateful thanks to everyone who helps, in any way. It would be impossible without our many helpers. Rev Calvin has been a great support and it gives him an opportunity to meet and talk with our young families and to share in the activities with the children.

Special thanks to June, Sandra, Colin, John, Lianne and Clare who have all been amazing. We are all very tired by the end of a session but it is certainly very fulfilling. Thanks, too, to Nicola, who makes sure that we have a Facebook presence.

Please remember Messy Church in your prayers.

**Anne**  
**Messy Church Leader**

## **Treasurer's Report 2022-2023**

The willingness of members and friends to donate to the Church by a monthly Standing Order enables the Treasurer to know that some £10,000 will be received in the course of the year.



However, this is little more than half of the sum needed for the Circuit Assessment which is the first claim on our income so this report recognises the value and importance of money raised from letting the Church Hall, and records appreciation and thanks to those who devote time and energy to such activities.

A further source of income is the annual Gift Day. Down a little this year at just under £900. It was augmented by proceeds from outside Amos Estates, which raised over £299, and a generous donation of £1,000 from Brightstars, which created a sum well in excess of the amount needed to purchase and install a defibrillator to benefit the local community.

In this, my last report, I want to thank the Church for the privilege of being their Treasurer for a number of years and, in particular, to David for examining the monthly Bank Statements and banking the money and to Nicola for her ready willingness to assist me in any way.

I also want to warmly welcome my successor, Patrick, he is well versed in the ways and means of Methodist finance and experience in our own Circuit. The future of the finances is in safe hands.

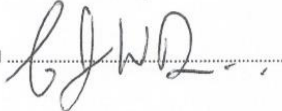
***Stan Rae – Church Treasurer  
from March 2023 to August 2023***

# Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2023

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>		
Bank Account	9,361.25	14,456.07
CFB Accounts	11,346.04	11,366.17
TMCP	62,983.94	62,231.74
	<hr/> 83,691.23	<hr/> 88,053.98
<b>Representing Accumulated Funds</b>		
Church Fund	-2,054.83	7,879.09
Property Fund	3,342.24	316.33
Building Reserve Fund	10,570.22	12,671.09
External Funds	256.74	0.00
Benevolence Fund	282.43	282.43
Youth Fund	725.11	725.11
Administration Fund	7,585.38	3,948.19
Trust 22071 William HJ Potter	62,983.94	62,231.74
	<hr/> 83,691.23	<hr/> 88,053.98

I have examined the books and vouchers presented to me and I certify that these accounts represent a true statement of the funds for the Hockley and Hawkwell Methodist Church as at 31st August 2023

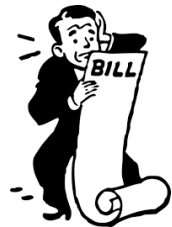
Signed .....  


C.J.W.Davis

Independent Examiner Appointed by the Church Council

## **Treasurer's Report 2023-2024**

After many years of exceptional service Stan Rae resigned as Treasurer effective from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. I was then appointed by the Church Council. Before and after my appointment I had many discussions with Stan. I would like to thank him for all the help and information he has given to me. Stan still has a superb memory and in depth knowledge and I have very much appreciated and enjoyed our conversations and I value what I have learnt from him.





We now have access to on-line banking which has helped considerably with keeping up to date and with prompt payment of bills.

Identified by Stan in his report for last year was the key factor of standing orders, and I am pleased to be able to report that the amount has increased from £750 per month to £835 per month.

A sum of approximately £1,000 has been raised from various events so far, including £489.46 from the Christmas Bazaar. Thanks to those who organised this and other fund-raising events.

I have noticed that there has been an increase in the amount which the Church is required to pay to the Circuit for the Circuit Assessment, the current amount being £5,006 per quarter. Despite the generosity of those paying by standing order, this means that the Church made a loss of £1981 in the first quarter. With so many pressures on our income as a result of inflation it is difficult to see how this loss can be reduced. Gift Aid will help. If you have not Gift Aided your regular offerings, please consider whether you can do so. Please ask Stan for the appropriate form.

I would also like to thank Nicola, for the part she has played in assisting Stan, David Clarke for his kindness and for continuing to collect and pay in offerings and other monies and Ros Hayman and Anne Sains for their assistance with paying out monies for bills. Finally, I would like to thank the Auditor, Chris Davis, for his work on last year's accounts, as well as for agreeing to continue as Auditor.

A copy of the balance sheet for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 follows this report and a full copy of the Accounts is on the coffee room display board.

***Patrick Smith - Church Treasurer  
from September 2023 to date***

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## **Property**

In the third month of the 2022-2023 Church Year the Church underwent a Quinquennial Review, the result was the best received for many years but there was still the challenging words detailing the work that was essential in the next 12 months. It is a tribute to the Finance and Property Committee that the work was completed one month less than the target, partly due to Colin's willingness to use his skills and Nicola's persistence with reluctant tradesmen, in particular the electrical system has been examined and improved.



A major incident occurred in July 2023 when a car, not for the first time, grazed the side wall of the vehicle entrance, rendering it irreparable. Estimates to replace it have not been easy to obtain but perseverance has prevailed and there are two now under

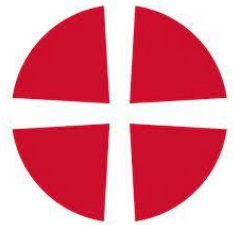
consideration. Work may have at least started by the time this report is read.

The Finance and Property Committee has got just 5 members. I want to thank all of them for their interest, commitment and concern.

**Stan Rae**  
*Property secretary*

### **Mission Planning**

Don't be bamboozled by the title! This just means how we are connecting and interacting with the wider community both here in Hockley, in the country and the world, spreading the news of God's love for everyone and growing his kingdom.



At the Annual Church Meeting in 2023, it was agreed that the Warm Spaces project had been meaningful for the Church family, even if there had not been a take up for those needing to keep warm. It was agreed that it should begin again in September as a regular event. In conjunction with other churches in the Churches Together group, we kept to a Wednesday and Welcome Wednesday was born!! It has been advertised throughout the area along with Drop In Mondays (Emmanuel) and Feelgood Friday at Bramerton Road.

As a result of the Visioning Day which took place last July, contacts have been developed with the Primary Care Network. They have run two events here, the second of which required the use of both the church and the hall and brought quite a number of people through. The church provided refreshments and that gave us the opportunity to chat with a wide range of people, many of whom had never been inside our buildings and were surprised at how extensive they were!

Contact was also made at the Visioning Day with Trustlinks, a mental health charity but did not progress because of a change of personnel there. Later, Rachel was invited to Welcome Wednesday, where there was some lengthy discussion about the work of the charity and how we might co-operate.

On a regular basis we support All We Can as a Partner Church and are committed to raising £600 a year. The gifts at Harvest and Christmas have usually covered this and there are sometimes other opportunities in the year to donate.

We have been longtime supporters of HARP the Southend charity for the homeless, sending food mainly at Harvest, but there is also a box in church for donations. Since the pandemic, there has been no winter night shelter. At Christmas, gifts are donated at the Toy and Gift service for Harp, usually toiletries.

The Safe Steps domestic violence charity in Southend is also the recipient of the donations at the Toys and Gift service and has been for a number of years now.

Our events are regularly posted on social media in an effort to raise our profile within the local community and create contacts with local families.

The Church Council has begun to explore possibilities for increasing our work among families and children, conscious that there is a missing generation in our church family. Our challenge, as always, is working out how such additional work might be resourced given that we have limited volunteers.

***Muriel***

## **Cradle Roll**

As always, I remember Cradle roll children's birthdays, also sending a card and small gift at Christmas. Our Cradle roll families form a very special part of our Church life attending and taking part in Services and Messy Church and not forgetting helping to decorate the Church for Harvest and Christmas.



***Gill***  
***Cradle Roll Secretary***

## **Eco Church**

The Methodist has a target of becoming a net zero emissions church by 2030. The Eco Church awards are a way of making progress towards this goal.



Last year we made some excellent progress and became a Bronze Award Eco Church. As part of this, some work was done with the Beavers to help improve wildlife friendly plants in the car park garden border and they also installed a bug hotel. We completed a full survey of our land, buildings, worship activity and community engagement.

The Church Council has agreed that we should continue with our work and aim to achieve a silver award.

We need to complete a new survey to identify the specific areas we need to focus on to achieve this.

Thanks to all members of the congregation for supporting this work during the year. I hope we can continue our work and achieve the silver award.

Below are just a few examples of the questions we will need to answer:

- Our church organises events providing an opportunity for local people to engage with local leaders on local environmental issues (e.g. local MPs, AMs or council leaders);
- Our church (either alone or as part of a local network) organises environmental awareness-raising events (e.g. film evenings, Fairtrade events etc.);
- Our church is involved with local conservation work (eg. at an A Rocha UK Partner in Action or RSPB/Wildlife Trusts nature reserve);
- At least some of our church members (either alone or as part of a local network) have organised and/or participated in a community clean-up project (e.g. local litter-pick);
- Our church actively promotes Eco Church to other local churches;
- Our church has committed to pray for a specific overseas environmental project;
- Our church participates in campaigns concerning national environmental issues;
- Our church keeps the congregation informed about the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on Christian communities elsewhere in the world; and
- Our church financially supports an environmental charity.

**Ros**

### **Pastoral Visitors**

At present we have 24 members and 23 on the friends list. We have also recently welcomed Anne and Ben into our Sunday congregation. There have been no new members accepted since Rev Brenda Gutberlet was our minister.



The members and friends have been split into six groups each with a pastoral visitor but we are now down to four visitors.

Carolyn has had to step down from being the Pastoral Secretary and we sadly Kay Deedman passed away in December so there is a need to review how we, as a Methodist Church manage the pastoral care of those in our church community which is why this will be the topic for a wide-ranging discussion at the Annual Church Meeting this year.

Please do your best to be there and share in the decisions made in this important area of our Methodist Way Life.

### **Thank you, Carolyn**

Carolyn's association with Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church goes back a long way during which she has been an active member, involved with young people, serving as a steward and leading church services as a Worship Leader. Most recently she has had the dual role of Lettings Officer and Pastoral Secretary. Her success in attracting hirers for the Church Hall was the sole reason for our receiving £14,000 in Local Government grants during Covid. Her thoughtfulness for the needs of others, shared with the congregation, assisted the Church to be a caring community.

Carolyn's retirement has been well earned and we wish her every blessing.

***Stan***

### **Defibrillator Project**

After several months of research, grant applications and fund raising the church has been able to install a Defibrillator on the front of the building.

Thanks to all involved in the fundraising day outside Amos Estate Agents and particularly to June Parkhurst for initiating contact to make this happen.



We had a generous donation from Brightstars and our Gift Day donations for this year also went into the fund.

We selected London Hearts as the provider and were able to apply for matched funding from the government which enabled us to purchase a cabinet and pay for an electrician to install it.



The defibrillator is fully automatic, and although training for its use is not essential Adam Markam will bring a defibrillator and Resusci Annie to Welcome Wednesday on 27th March to show how it works. There is video training and information available from London Hearts which we can access.

The defibrillator has been registered with 'The Circuit' which is the national database, used by the ambulance service.

*Ros*

### **Fundraising**

We should begin by saying a BIG THANKYOU to everyone who has helped or supported our events, they wouldn't happen without you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



This year our first event was a talk and slide show given by local historian Paul Taylor. Paul freely gives his time and has a wealth of local information to go with the slides, and this made a fascinating evening. Thank you, Paul, also Mike for his technical support.

Our second event was our annual Pancake and Coffee morning, as usual this proved very popular.

HUGE thanks go to John and June for serving drinks and selling pancakes! Graham, Ivor, Ray and James (James, Graham and



Ivor made a brilliant Pancake making team!). While Ray coped with the demands of the car park. Also, for their willingness to help out wherever needed, Vivien, Nicola, Lianne. Lastly, Mike for supplying the background music.

Watch this space for our next event and keep your diaries free for 16th November for The Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church Christmas Bazaar. June and Gill.

***June and Gill***

### **Church Lettings**

This year Carolyn has had to give up her sterling work on lettings - looking after our regular hirers and arranging one-off events. The income from the hire of the Hall and Church is a vital source of finance for us and we shouldn't underestimate the importance of the work Carolyn has done. Thank you, Carolyn.



We have 7 regular, weekly lettings, which include a number of keep fit activities, 2 choirs and a theatre group for young people; three of the uniformed organisations meet here, along – of course - with Brightstars. We're also now hosting Primary Care Trust Health Check Days as part of our outreach and these seem to be making more people aware of our Church and its role in the community.

Children's party bookings have declined since the pandemic but there have been a few enquiries lately.

The Church Council is currently in the throes of setting up new arrangements for lettings.

***Mike***

## **Thursday Club**

The Thursday Club is still going strong after many, many years.

For this we must give our eternal thanks to Kay and Michael Deedman who were the major instigators of starting up The Thursday Club (The Young Marrieds Club) over sixty years ago.



Sadly, we lost Kay before Christmas but she will always be in our thoughts and memories.

Memories of many garden parties and church events that we have so much to thank Kay and Michael for.

Our events over the last year have included visits to garden centres and to Hyde Hall. We have also found out more about each other with our talks entitled "This is Me." We do love our garden centres and amongst others have visited Swallow Aquatics and Meadowcroft, their cafes have been quite nice too.

With food in mind, we have also met up for meals at various venues including the public houses, The Plough and Sail at Paglesham, The Shorehouse at Shoebury and Kings restaurant in Rayleigh for their fish and chips.

Our intellectual expertise has also been tested with a number of mind-boggling quizzes, perhaps University Challenge next.

We do love our theatre and have been lucky to see local productions at The Palace Theatre which have included The Sound of Music, Nativity The Musical and The Hunchback of Notre Dame.

We recently decided upon our program up to Easter and are keeping busy by visiting some new venues in the coming year.

***Ray***

## **Communication**

We continue to try to keep members and friends in touch with events at the Church through emails, Notices, The Link and posters, etc. We still have a few members and friends who can't access emails so paper copies are taken round to them whenever possible. We also try to promote the Church and its activities in the local community via our website and Facebook and through fundraising activities – the last play an essential role in bringing new people into the premises.



With Nicola's help we've expanded the use of local Facebook Groups to publicise the Church and its activities. Nicola also keeps our own Facebook page up to date with our activities and items from the Methodist Church of GB website. If you've never looked at our Facebook page, please have a look.

<https://www.facebook.com/hockleymeths/>. You don't have to log in just to look. If you have your own Facebook account please Follow us; if you're just looking click "Like" or "Comment" if you see something interesting, it helps raise our profile.

The latest addition to our publicity material is a tall, vertical banner designed by Billy for the defibrillator fundraiser held outside Amos Estates. The startling hand motif is one we could re-use (as we already have – on the Church information leaflet).

The Notices are now on a 2-3 week cycle, mainly distributed by email but with Ray still distributing a few paper copies to members without email. The Link is only published before the principal festivals – one will be coming out before Easter; again it will be mainly distributed by email but with Ray distributing a few paper copies. You can also see the latest edition on the Church website <https://www.hockleyhawkwelldmethodist.org.uk/>

The website is currently being redesigned – Church Edit, who host our website, are preparing new pages using material they have been given. The basic information at present on the site will be retained but once the pages have been redesigned we'll have the opportunity to update it. Watch this that space!

David and I are still sharing the preparation of services on the laptop and presenting them in Church. The laptop was replaced last year and we seem to have had fewer glitches recently. I'm afraid you're never going to be entirely free of operator error, though! It's a pity that more local ministers and preachers don't make use of the multimedia facilities.

Thank you again to David, Billy and Nicola and Ray for their contributions – and to Muriel for proofreading and idiot-control!

**Mike**

## **Brightstars**

Brightstars commenced another year on the 11th September 2023, with many Mums, Grandparents, and carers returning after the summer

break. The numbers of adults attending are slightly down from the earlier part of the year where we typically had 40 – 45 adults but recently only 30 – 38. There is no plausible explanation other than children may have started pre-school, school or parents having different schedules, commitments/classes etc. but on a bright note there is always new interest being shown and new ones joining, even if they do not necessarily attend every week. Also, out of the blue some you have not seen for quite some time suddenly pop in.

The logo for 'Brightstars' features the word 'Brightstars' in a red, cursive-style font. The letters 'i' and 's' have small blue starburst graphics above them. The entire logo is set against a white background.

It is so satisfying to watch the little ones that we welcome in as babies in arms to suddenly see them tottering off and exploring all the toys and interacting with others. We very often hear that the children always can't wait for Monday morning and should

they be passing by the Church they always want to go in, believing playgroup is open.

We always find it difficult to provide a Christmas party, but we make it as festive as possible with Christmas card making, a chocolate gift, mince pies and hot sausage rolls plus a round of Jingle Bells at singing time. We had a surprise on our last day before the Christmas break when we were presented with a generous Costa's gift voucher from all the families.

As always, we thank our valuable helpers, Eleanor, Lianne, Claire and Ray for all the support they give us.

***Sandra, June, Colin and John***  
***The Brightstars Team***

### **Flower Arranging**

Linda has once again produced some lovey displays this year using a variety of silk flowers and foliage supplemented with fresh flowers for some special occasions throughout the year. We received a donation of £38 this year and have spent a total £94.90. We added some additional silk sunflowers and a little more autumn foliage to our collection this year.



**Mothering Sunday:** Linda arranged the silk Tulips in the large vases with some of the spring flowers we already had.

**Easter:** Linda used the two floor standing artificial arrangements of spring flowers and grasses which stood at the front of the church. We added fresh daffodils on the windowsills. For the summertime vases Linda used some beautiful artificial yellow roses which she combined with some of the purple spring flowers, they looked very realistic.

**Harvest:** Linda's Daughter In law, Angela, was a great help in creating a harvest scene for the front of church including a hand painted rural scene and our scarecrow made his annual appearance. Ros and Linda did a fresh fruit and veg display in front of the pulpit our new sunflowers were displayed in the big vases.

**Remembrance Sunday:** Just as we did last year we used the paper homemade poppies which some of our young people had helped to make. Although these are fragile they are easy and inexpensive to refresh for next year.

**Christmas:** Linda arranged the two big vases with beautiful dark red Poinsettia flowers and some sparkly foliage, she has kindly donated them to our stock for use in future arrangements. We are very pleased that the silk flower arrangements have worked so successfully this year providing both colourful and seasonal displays.

*Ros and Linda*

### **1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Beaver Colony**

It's been full steam ahead for the Beavers throughout 2023.

The Beavers have been working hard to earn lots of Beaver Badges this year. Starting with the Air

Activities badge we learnt all about different aircrafts and made paper gliders. This was followed with a trip to Southend Airport where Beavers were able to visit the Vulcan and had the chance to sit in the cockpit.



Whilst working on the Gardeners Badge, Beavers have been busy making a Bug Hotel to sit in the Church flower beds in the carpark. Ros came along to help the Beavers plant some sunflower seeds and lavender bushes to encourage the insects to move into their new home.

The Disabilities badge saw a visit from a local guide dog puppy in training, Wilma, and for the International Badge we did some food tasting from around the world.

It has also been a busy year for District events too, starting with the swimming gala. Beavers used all their swimming skills to take part in 3 challenging relay races followed by a fun swim. We are proud to say 1st Hockley Beavers took 3rd place.

In April, Beavers had the opportunity to have a sleepover at Belchamps and take part in the Fun day and Renewals of Promise. On the Saturday Beavers were able to take part in a range of activities, from wall traversing and archery, to tomahawks and obstacle courses to name a few. This was followed on the Sunday by a rather wet Renewal of promise but still fun was had by all.

The District fun run saw Beavers and cubs taking part a variety of different activities including beanbag balancing, hurdles, cargo nets, mini maze & tyre jumping, all while running round the running track.

We had 4 Beavers take part in the Beaver Hike, starting at Cherry Orchard, walking around Hockley woods and back again. Just over 7 miles in total. We may have had blisters at the end but it was an amazing achievement.

Our highlight of the year was a space themed sleepover, held at the church. 15 Beavers and 4 Leaders took part. Beavers took part in a number of activities that were out of this world, including balloon planet making, giant spaceship junk box modelling,

constellation drawing and space games. After an evening meal of meteor meatballs, we cooked s'mores on the BBQ and sang songs round our indoor campfire before watching a space movie until it was time for bed.

To finish off the year, we held our Christmas party down at CJ's Bowling. With a game of bowling and a meal, and of course, Christmas jumpers were compulsory, a great time was had by all. That brings us to a close for 2023. I would like to say thank you to all the Beaver Leaders, Young Leaders, Parent Helpers, the 1st Hockley Scouting Group, the wider District Scouting team and the support from the Methodist Church, without them this wouldn't be possible.

**Lianne (Aka Robin)**  
***1st Hockley Beaver Leadership Team***

## **2nd Hockley Brownies**

2nd Hockley Brownies continues to meet at 17:30 – 19:00 hours each Wednesday evening during Term time. We currently have three leaders – myself, Georgina Elkington and Helen Metcalfe. We are supported by two amazing young leaders (aged 13 & 14). One is volunteering for her Bronze Duke Of Edinburgh Award and the second as a Guide Helper.



We have 15 girls currently enrolled with another 4 starting after Easter. This will almost take us to capacity.

We have been working towards the girls Feel Good Stage 2 Badge this term. With a session about well-being by our own Peer Education trainer Georgina.



We are looking forward to obtaining our Pancake challenge badge shortly and a District outing with other Rainbows and Brownies to Monkey Buzzes for an evening.

Thank you for your continued support of our unit.

***Kat & team***

## **1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Rainbows Unit**

The Rainbows have had a very busy year and everyone has been working very hard towards a range of different badges. We have had the honour of presenting bronze and silver awards to some of our girls.

We have welcomed new Rainbows and said goodbye to older ones as they have moved onto Brownies. With our numbers staying at our capacity of 24. We have completed craft activities, cold cooking, sports activities, celebrated national reading week, Christmas and Chinese new year.



Each week we have run a “Bring what you can, take what you need table” Which proved very popular, the items we had left over at Christmas were donated to the local food bank.

In September Georgina organised our first ever 1st Hockley Rainbows sleep over. For this to happen busily in the background a range of different grants were secured to support the sleep over and purchase appropriate equipment. Including 12 new two man pop up tents. This allowed the girls to sleep in tents inside the hall. It also contained all their belongings, with

some travelling lighter than others. We took 20 girls to Guidewoods in Hockley with a large team of leaders to support, and the girls and leaders had a fantastic time with everyone earning their Rainbow sleepover badge and Unicorn interest badge. The highlight for leaders being the nine hours the girls all slept overnight. The next sleep over is booked for September.

At Christmas Anne Sains was kindly able to lead us in our Christingle service supported by Mike on the technology. Family and Friends joined us as we all joined together and made a vast number of Christingles. We had our Assistant County commissioner visit to present Snowy Owl (aka Sandra Allison) with her 40 years' service to Girlguiding and special thanks award for all her tremendous work with our girls throughout all her years. This was a surprise for her, and I think she has just about forgiven us. The girls were so pleased to share in her celebration and see a grown up get an award. All the girls were also able to be presented with the badges they had earned.

As we move towards warmer times we will be revisiting Guidewoods as we did last year for a few evenings to take part in activities around their beautiful woodland site. This will also introduce the newer girls as we did last year to Guidewoods ready for the next sleep over.

During the spring term we will be visiting Monkey Bizzness in Hockley along with other Rainbows and Brownies from our district. It will be a time for playing and party food.

For summer term we have booked a visit from Guide Dogs when we are at Guidewoods and we are very much looking forward to meeting Declan.

If it wasn't for the support of the Church and our adult volunteers we wouldn't be able to offer such a wide range of activities during term time. So, thank you to everyone for the time, commitment,

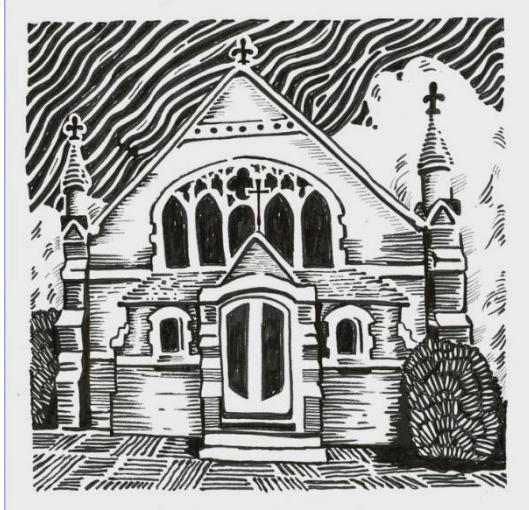
and endless support as we are all aware it is not just an hour a week.

If any young lady would like to join Rainbows, Brownies or Guides they can visit the website to register their interest and the appropriate leader will be in contact with them.

Register at [Register a Child](#)

Thank you for all your support..

**Sally-Ann**  
**Unit Leader 1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Rainbows**



Thanks to everybody for contributing to the Annual Reports for 2023-2024, to Nicola for assembling them and to Billy for the front cover.

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