

# PARISH PROFILE GREYFRIARS, READING

JANUARY 2025



**TO SEE  
READING  
TRANSFORMED  
BY THE LOVE  
AND POWER  
OF JESUS**

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# INTRODUCTION

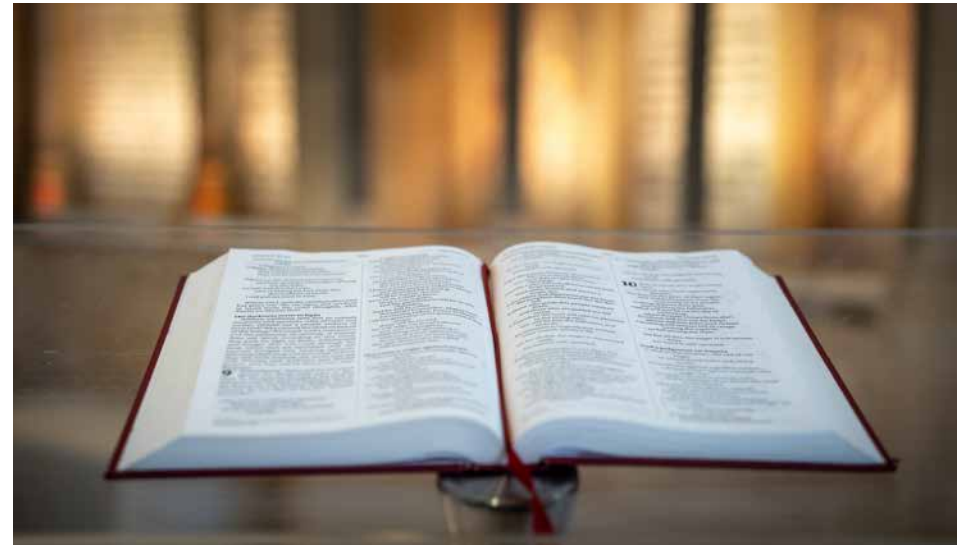
**W**e are delighted that you are interested in the position of Vicar of Greyfriars in Reading.

This document will introduce you to our church and parish, to help you discern whether God may be calling you to join us in our mission and ministry as we seek to know, love and serve Jesus in our communities in and around Reading.

**Greyfriars** is a vibrant, gathered church in the centre of Reading, a growing town with a thriving economy.

The diverse civic population is drawn from many different cultures and faiths and also includes several areas of significant urban deprivation.

We have a strong evangelical heritage with a traditional understanding of the authority of Scripture, an openness to the leading of God's Spirit, and a history of care for the needy dating back to the Franciscan 'Grey Friars' around 1311. New Hope Community Church was planted within the parish of Greyfriars in 2001, with a vision of incarnational mission to the local community.





It is an exciting time for us, following the completion of our new church Centre, as we are looking to expand the use of this building and the adjacent Atrium with Bookshop and Coffee Shop to underpin our outreach and evangelism. We are looking for a leader for this next phase, to help us discern God's vision for us and to disciple current and future church members in serving him and loving our neighbours.

We are aware of the challenges facing our church in following Jesus and sharing his good news in today's social, cultural and economic contexts. We want to be deeply rooted in the Bible and prayer and to reach out with love and welcome, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

You will read in this profile about the wide range of activities in the life of the church. There is an opportunity for our next Vicar to lead us in growing sustainable Christ-centred ministry and mission to Reading and beyond.

*We have included throughout some quotes from our consultation with church members and partner organisations, on the characteristics of and future vision for Greyfriars.*



*'A beacon of light in Reading town, drawing people of all backgrounds to the King.'*



## BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Reading is a historic town in the Berkshire Thames Valley, with excellent connections to London. It is the home of the Reading Festival and the University of Reading and is a dynamic and vibrant place to live. Greyfriars sits in the heart of this busy town, surrounded by shops, businesses, and homes.

Greyfriars is a lively, large and growing, diverse and missional church with a history of planting out and resourcing other churches across the town and it has a developing, and vital, ministry to refugees and asylum seekers.

It has a thriving children's and youth ministry and is outward looking and supportive of the wider deanery, which is developing a deanery plan to resource work with children and young people through partnerships and collaboration.

After the completion of a long and visionary building project, this is an opportunity to lead a large church, working with a great team, to a new, impactful future, embracing Oxford Diocese's Common Vision: to become a more contemplative, more compassionate, more courageous and more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

**The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft**  
Bishop of Oxford



# SUNDAY WORSHIP

**F**or our gathered worship at Greyfriars and New Hope we currently have four Sunday services, led by a mixture of clergy (who do not robe) and lay people. All services include an emphasis on Biblical teaching and look to the leading of the Spirit through worship. Support is offered through prayer ministry, and communion is shared once a month in each service.



## GREYFRIARS — 9:30AM

Our largest gathering of around 300 people, with a wide age range including many young families. Emphasis on Bible teaching and contemporary sung worship, led by a band. After 15-20 minutes, around 80 children and young teens leave for their own activities. This service is also streamed on YouTube with around 40 live views, building to 100+ on catch up. One service a month is all-age.

## GREYFRIARS — 11:30AM

A reflective atmosphere, with around 60 to 70 people. A mixture of sung worship combining “the best of the old and best of the new”, accompanied by both organ and keyboard with occasional choral and other instrumental support. The service has a liturgical structure and centres around Biblical exposition.



## GREYFRIARS — 6:30PM

A relaxed atmosphere, with up to 150 people, many in their 20s and 30s, including a small number of university students. Some extended times of band-led contemporary worship and participatory ministry, both in prayer and as part of the teaching element.

## NEW HOPE

10:30am: New Hope is currently in a period of seeking God's direction, so Sunday gatherings are informal but always include sung worship, prayer, Bible study, and group discussion. The services have previously followed a simple pattern of contemporary worship, teaching and prayer. Currently, around 20 adults and 10 children attend on average.



# MINISTRY & MISSION ACTIVITIES

**A**longside our Sunday gatherings, a wide range of activities take place throughout the week, founded on our vision to **see Reading transformed by the love and power of Jesus**, under the three strands of **equipping, reaching out** and **resourcing**.

“

*‘[The youth group] is big enough so we can do fun stuff together but not too big that it becomes nebulous (people getting lost)... we all come together when we’re in need.’*

## EQUIPPING

**Small groups** are key to discipleship and pastoral care. We have many groups with different focuses: geographically-based groups; 20s/30s age-based groups; a student group; women’s groups; Farsi-speaking group; worship teams.

**Prayer** has always been foundational at Greyfriars and New Hope and we have a regular pattern of various prayer gatherings in person and online, with the Prayer Room as a resource on site.

**Children** and **Youth** are a vital part of our church family. On Sundays we have five age-based Kids’ Groups and a Youth group during the 9:30am

service, and midweek we have BYTE (Big Youth Thursday Evenings) and a Sixth Form Group.

**Tuesday Special** is our ministry to adults with additional learning needs, providing accessible worship, teaching, fellowship and support.

There is a programme of **Women’s ministry** events, but it has been difficult in recent years to gain traction for **Men’s ministry** and to find potential leaders.

Every year a significant number of people from our church family head to the New Wine festival in the summer. Smaller groups attend Spring Harvest, Greenbelt, Keswick and other Christian gatherings.







## REACHING OUT

A small **Pastoral Care** team, alongside the clergy, support the housebound, those in hospital and the Greyfriars Nursery staff team. Other pastoral ministries include the **Side by Side Compassion Café** bereavement ministry and **Recovery Church** for those recovering from addiction. Greyfriars recently became a **CAP Church**, running the **Christians Against Poverty** Money Course, and is involved in **A Bed for the Night**, a winter night shelter for rough sleepers.

In recent years we have developed a flourishing **Sanctuary ministry**, offering welcome and hospitality to people from all around the world fleeing violence and persecution. We partner with the City of Sanctuary, Church of Sanctuary and Welcome Churches movements. Our initiatives include a busy weekly drop-in at the Atrium and an English class with lunch afterwards, cooked by people from the sanctuary seeker community.

**The Atrium** acts as a space throughout the week for us to reach out in welcome, friendship and support for the local community, both informally and through **Bible Story Time**, **Pop up Puppet Club** and **Crafty Corner**.

We have **Parent and Toddlers groups** at New Hope and at Greyfriars, and New Hope also has links with the **local primary school**, E.P. Collier, including pastoral support for the staff.

“*‘Be a safe haven for the lost, the lonely, the forgotten and the ones who are helpless and in need.’*”

Discussions are underway with the new secondary school in the parish, River Academy, for a relationship from September 2025 onwards.

Our evangelistic ministry includes **Alpha** courses, which we run once or twice a year; we have tried a number of different formats. People come to faith and become part of the church family through these courses each time. **Easter** and **Christmas** are significant opportunities for the congregations to invite their friends and family to church and to follow-up Alpha courses. We have baptised a significant number of adults in recent years.

Greyfriars has a long tradition of involvement with **global mission** and currently supports approximately 23 Mission Partners in Africa, Asia and the UK with prayer and finance. [For more information, see Appendix 4.](#)

# RESOURCING

We have supported three local churches with people and funding, partnering in the revitalisation of [St Matthew's Southcote](#), [St John's Caversham](#) and [Reading Gateway Church](#) in South Reading.

As part of God's church in Reading, Greyfriars plays an active part in the Reading Deanery (seven reps) and Diocesan Synods (two reps). We stepped down from a formal role as a Resourcing Hub in the Deanery at the end of 2023 but will continue to work together to identify opportunities to resource mission and ministry. This currently includes support with preaching, funerals and music, as well as helping to lead a local network of youth workers. Reading has a long history of interdenominational cooperation, at times led by Greyfriars and now operating for evangelical churches as [Transform Reading](#).

The **Atrium Bookshop** acts as a vital resource to local churches, Christian charities and schools to provide books, merchandise and Bible study materials.

We formally partner with several **local Christian charities**, such as [The Mustard Tree](#) and the [Yeldall Manor](#) addiction recovery centre, to resource and reach out to the local community. Church members also give in time and finance to local charities from Street Pastors, a food bank and homeless refuge, to helping those facing sexual exploitation, to supporting disadvantaged children and delivering RE lessons in schools.



“We all have limited resources but how can we work together so we aren't duplicating or working in silo, but working to our strengths and seeing the power and blessing in being one church serving our town and beyond for Jesus?”







# OUR TEAM



**O**ur committed staff team includes the Vicar, Associate Vicar and Curate, working together with those employed by the PCC for mission and ministry focused on people groups (e.g. children, youth, community, worship) and spaces (e.g. verger, Atrium, Centre) as well as supporting our operations and finance.

[Details of the staff can be found in Appendix 5.](#)

Staff and volunteers come together in a range of teams, including safeguarding, Atrium management, pastoral care, children, youth and student ministries, and Sunday services planning.

We have a small number of faithful Licensed Lay Ministers who support the clergy with preaching, service-leading, occasional offices and pastoral work.

The PCC typically meets six to eight times a year and is supported by the Standing and Finance group and a dedicated Governance group. While not a formal requirement, the PCC membership also includes representatives of the following, to ensure good communication and oversight of strategic direction:

- **Greyfriars Ministries Ltd (GML)** – a company limited by guarantee which itself is wholly owned by the Greyfriars PCC and which manages the Greyfriars Nursery.
- **Greyfriars Missionary Trust (GMT)** – a separate entity from the PCC, which has responsibility for the oversight, management and finances of Greyfriars' global mission activities.



# OUR BUILDINGS AND SPACES



## GREYFRIARS CHURCH

Our main meeting place for worship is the church building, with a 700-year history and a Grade 1 listing. After the dissolution of the monasteries, with the main building's use as a guildhall, a poor house and a prison, there wasn't a worshipping community on site again until the reconsecration of the church building in 1863. The sanctuary was modernised and refurbished in 2000 to create a light, airy and flexible space amidst the ancient walls. It seats around 400 people and is equipped with modern sound and visual systems, as well as an organ.



## THE ATRIUM

Opened in 2021, the [Atrium](#), which adjoins the church, is a light, vibrant space with glass front and historical stone rear wall. Open and visible to the town of Reading, it includes a speciality Coffee Shop, a Bookshop with gifts, cards and other resources, a lounge area and displays by local artists. Open to the public during the day, it also hosts a wide range of events and is a base for our Sanctuary ministry. There is also a Prayer Room located at the far end of the Atrium. The majority of visitors to the Atrium throughout the week are not members of the church.



## GREYFRIARS CENTRE

The construction of the new [Greyfriars Centre](#) was completed in 2023. The Centre provides a base for ministry and mission, with space for courses, seminars, pastoral meetings and larger gatherings, and offers a range of venue options for external hire, from boardroom meetings to large-scale receptions. Our particular focus is for the Centre to be used by local community and community-serving groups. Facilities include a studio for music and video, a professional kitchen, a youth room, an open-plan church office for the staff team and a lounge. It is also home to children's groups and youth gatherings on Sundays. The Centre is connected to the Atrium via an indoor link and is also accessible through the small car park.



## 64 FRIAR STREET

Next door to the church, the former vicarage was bought and converted by the church in 2006 and let to GML for use by [Greyfriars Nursery](#).

[For more information, see Appendix 6.](#)



## NEW HOPE

We lease the New Hope Community Centre – home to our [New Hope](#) congregation – and clergy house from New Hope Ltd, a Christian charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) which is independent of Greyfriars. The CIO also owns an adjacent group of terraced houses that people live in to establish Christ-centred community within the church and the local area. The building is available for hire by the community during the week.

## SACKVILLE STREET

Greyfriars owns the Memorial Hall and 2–4 Sackville St, both linked to the Atrium. Our vision for 2–4 Sackville Street is to support local Christian charities with their office space needs, and it is currently hired out to [The Mustard Tree](#). The Memorial Hall is used by Greyfriars Nursery.

## OTHER BUILDINGS

We also own the curate's house at 26 Prospect Street, half a mile west of Greyfriars, and a further terraced house on Sackville Street, which is used for mission purposes.



# THE VICARAGE

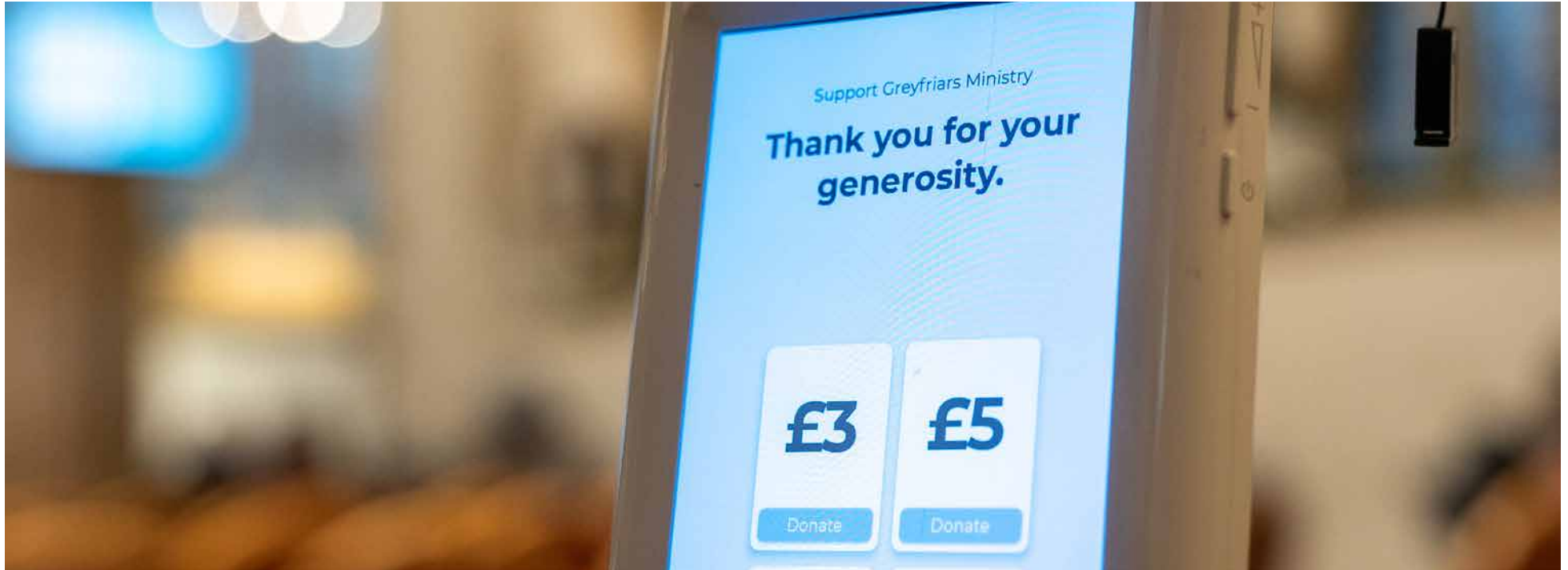


The Vicarage, at 28 Westcote Road, is a large, detached house in a quiet residential neighbourhood just over a mile to the west of the church.

The house is substantial, with four bedrooms (three of them good doubles), a very large lounge/drawing room, family/TV room, kitchen, separate dining room, and study. It benefits from off-street parking and a wraparound garden including a large lawn and outbuilding.







# FINANCES

Our finances include separate operational areas for the church and for GML (the Nursery), with surplus from GML's activities ordinarily being transferred to the church fund. We also have a fund for the recent major capital project to redevelop our buildings – now being used to pay the final amounts due on the construction of the Centre, largely the repayment of congregational loans.

Our Parish Share payments provide for two full-time stipendiary clergy and we have historically hosted a training Curate as well.

Over the last 20 years we have committed 10% of giving income and certain rents from GML to a tithe fund that is focused on the poor and needy, allowing us to support various Christian charities in Reading. The redevelopment fund has also been tithed to support capital development projects with a missional purpose.

[For details of our financial position, see Appendix 7.](#)

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES



*'Remain in the Word of God, grow in faith, Spirit-led ministries'*



## OPPORTUNITIES

Deeply grateful for all that God has done amongst us so far, we are looking for a Vicar who will take us on the next stage of our journey, growing and developing God's work in and through Greyfriars and New Hope. As a church we already have a deep and genuine desire to bring the good news of God's kingdom to the world around us, including to the poor and marginalised. We recognise the huge opportunity that our buildings and geographical position in the town centre and parish give us and we are keen to build on our existing activities, and to work with our civic and faith partners, to see

more people reached by Jesus' love. Our current outreach ministries are very important to us, but we are also keen to grow in how we share God's love with the wider world, including our rapidly-changing parish and wherever we find ourselves day to day.

Although there is great diversity across our four congregations, we are united by a deep love of God's word in Scripture and a desire for more of his presence in our lives through the Holy Spirit. As one family we want to grow as a welcoming, connected community and find new ways of developing and

releasing gifts of leadership and service within the church and for our local communities. Alongside our strong tradition of Biblical preaching, we long for even greater intimacy in our prayer and worship and increased depth in our individual and corporate discipleship. Ultimately, we recognise that we have a gifted and committed team of staff and volunteers, amazing resources in our buildings and strong relationships with our partners and so are praying for a leader who will continue to shape our vision of who God is calling us to be in the next season.



## CHALLENGES

While recognising all the blessings and opportunities that God has given us, we are also realistic about the types of challenge we face.

- Post-pandemic it has been harder to recruit volunteers to our ministries. We are a gathered church of people with busy lives: the capacity of many to be involved in on-site ministries is limited.
- Outreach to our parish, particularly the residents of the many new apartment blocks, needs fresh and creative approaches.
- We need to continue to build a sustainable financial and operational foundation for our ministries, ensuring good stewardship of the resources that we are given.
- Across our congregations we face a challenge in providing good pastoral care to all members of the church family, and particularly the elderly, the unwell, and the vulnerable.
- We know and acknowledge our dependence on God, yet it seems difficult for us to find ways to pray and intercede together.
- We risk being individual 'consumers' of church services rather than members of a body.
- We struggle to maintain the sense of a single church community across four congregations with only limited overlap.
- The New Hope congregation are in the process of discerning, in conjunction with the overall church leadership, God's particular call and way forward for them.

“

*'A community church, worked more clearly into the parish. The buildings being even more fully used for the community. Reaching out to the new young occupants of the many local apartments.'*



# PERSON SPECIFICATION AND ROLE DESCRIPTION

**T**hese requirements were formed after taking time as a church fellowship, across our congregations, our staff team and with our youth community, to pause and listen to God's voice together.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**We indicate below a range of qualities which will be valuable within the complexity of our setting, but the first 11 are the most important.**

1. Heart deeply rooted in Scripture, prayer, the work of Jesus and his Spirit and committed to discipling God's people and leading them into God's presence.
2. Passionate about introducing people to the living Jesus.
3. Holding a traditional evangelical understanding of the authority of Scripture, with a gift for preaching and teaching in ways that are relevant to a broad range of listeners, including a commitment to Biblical exposition.
4. Has been involved in the leadership of a large church or in a complex organisation with substantial resources to manage, including experience of leading a team, delegating and growing leaders.
5. Has led the development, communication and implementation of vision in a church environment.
6. Ability to shape a healthy and safe church culture, where people are authentically growing in their relationship with Jesus.
7. Valuing all members of the church community with a love for the poor and the marginalised, enabling ministry to those in need in the church and wider community.
8. Alert to tensions around sexual ethics, holding a traditional Biblical position on marriage and human sexuality, able to provide Godly wisdom to associated pastoral needs and lead a loving church community which welcomes all regardless of sexual orientation or differing views.
9. Has recently provided/overseen pastoral support for people of all ages and with diverse needs.
10. A good team-worker, with a collaborative and cooperative style that enables others to reach their full potential, and the ability to listen effectively.
11. Strong interpersonal skills – relating well to a wide range of people inside and outside the church family.

### Personal Qualities

- A person of humility, integrity and spiritual maturity.
- Open to the work of the Spirit in their own life and the life of the church, and eager to listen to God's voice in all matters.
- Supportive of a diversity of worship styles and traditions within the body of Christ.
- Fully affirming of the ministry of women, both ordained and lay.
- Resilient, with a good sense of humour.

### Experience

- Positive experience of working collaboratively with other churches across traditions for the good of the community.
- Experience of strengthening the biblical teaching ability of a church preaching team over an extended period.
- Involvement in town centre ministry that includes many who live some distance away from church.
- Experience of working with the poor, underprivileged and marginalised.
- Experience of supporting all phases of vocation and discernment including training curates.

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

We are looking for a vicar who will relentlessly pursue the presence of God in their own life and in order to seek his will and guidance for Greyfriars. In particular, they will:

### Mission and Outreach

- Lead us in discerning and implementing a vision for the strategic long-term growth and development of God's work.
- Continue to build a church which prioritises sharing God's love with those who don't yet know him.
- Work strategically with other churches, civic authorities and Christian charities.
- Be a trustee of Greyfriars Missionary Trust.

### Worship and Preaching

- Preach and teach God's word with authority and confidence to deeply challenge and inspire.
- Lead others into the presence of God; inviting him to release the work of the Holy Spirit and encouraging the expression of spiritual gifts within our church life.

- Encourage the continued development of worship so that Greyfriars is a place where the presence and power of Jesus are released to transform lives.
- Actively uphold the authority of Scripture in applying God's word to our modern world, enabling the church to address difficult issues in a loving and Spirit-led way.
- Continue to develop and grow prayer and prayer ministries to be even more at the heart of everything Greyfriars does.

### Leadership and Working Collaboratively

- Lead, inspire and work collaboratively with a large team of staff, volunteer lay leaders and ministry heads – placing a particular focus on leadership development and taking care of their wellbeing.
- Encourage and develop God-given gifts within the church family, encouraging and releasing people into their ministries within the body of Christ.
- Provide strategic and mission-focused leadership for the commercial activities of the church.

### Pastoral Care

- Encourage and foster the spiritual growth and discipleship of all members of the church.
- Encourage Greyfriars to be a church where all are loved and valued and where God's care and compassion are demonstrated practically for those in need.
- Work with others to ensure that appropriate pastoral care is provided within the context of good safeguarding practice.
- Encourage the growth of the network of small groups as a first point of pastoral care.

### Other Responsibilities

- In liaison with diocesan and parish safeguarding officers and in accordance with Church of England guidelines, ensure appropriate safeguarding practice in respect of all children and vulnerable adults and lead a culture of safety for all members of the church community.
- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as required in line with the benefice needs.



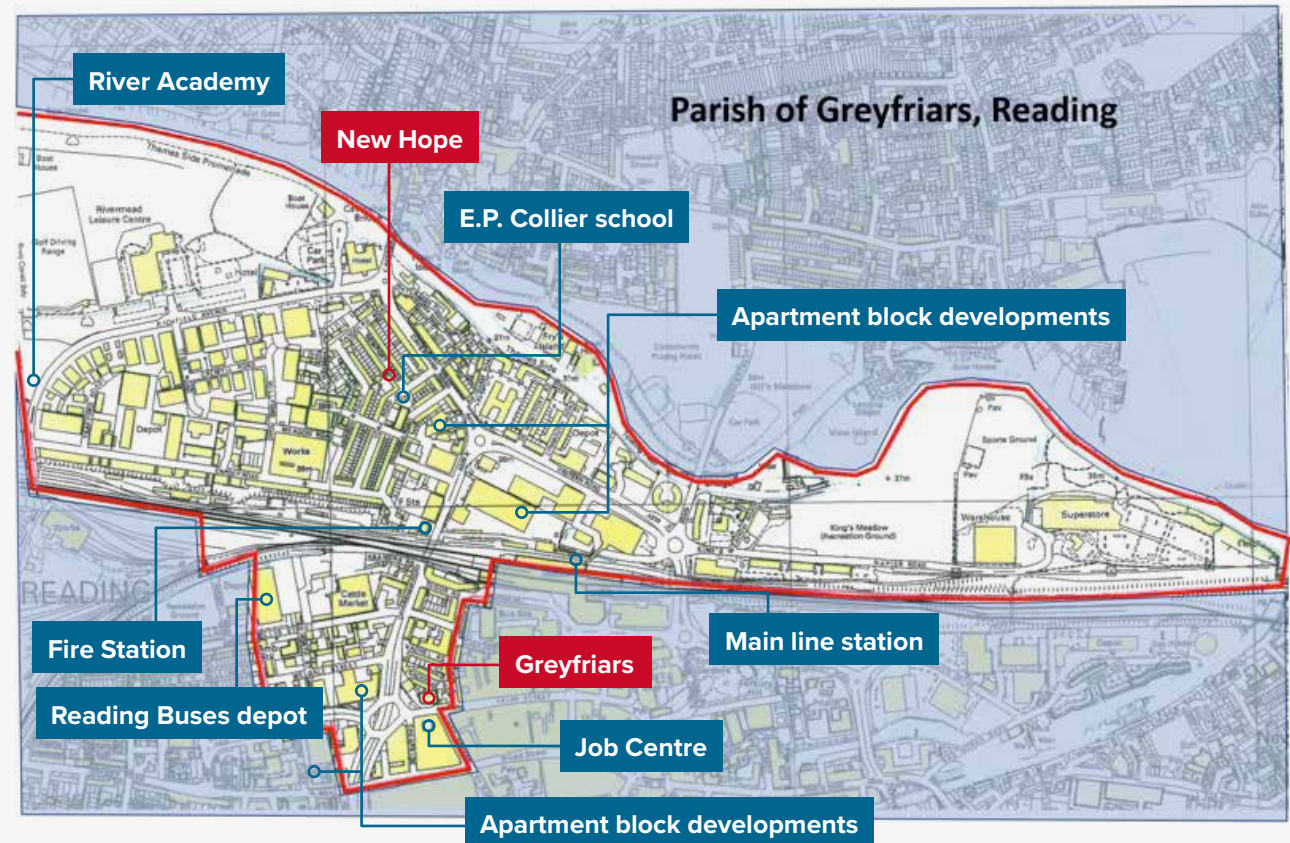
# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 THE TOWN AND THE PARISH

Greyfriars **parish** (ref. 270464) sits centrally in the town of **Reading**, which is the major economic, retail and leisure centre of the Thames Valley. Reading is growing rapidly, with a fluid population of 240,000 in the greater urban area, spread across three local authorities. We gather our congregations from across this area. Reading Borough itself has a very diverse population, with 46% now belonging to a Black and Minority Ethnic community, up from 35% in **2011**.

The town's thriving economy has seen a huge shift from its origins in 'beer, biscuits and bulbs' to specialising in business, insurance and new technology, with many major companies such as Thames Water, SSE, Microsoft and Oracle choosing Reading as their home. This is helped by being a major transport hub, situated on the M4 corridor and national rail network and close to Heathrow Airport and London.

However, prosperity has brought its own problems, with pressure on infrastructure, communities and the environment. The high cost of living, in particular the high cost of housing, has had a significant impact on local communities. Although Reading can undoubtedly demonstrate success and wealth, the town also contains wards amongst some of the most deprived in the country.

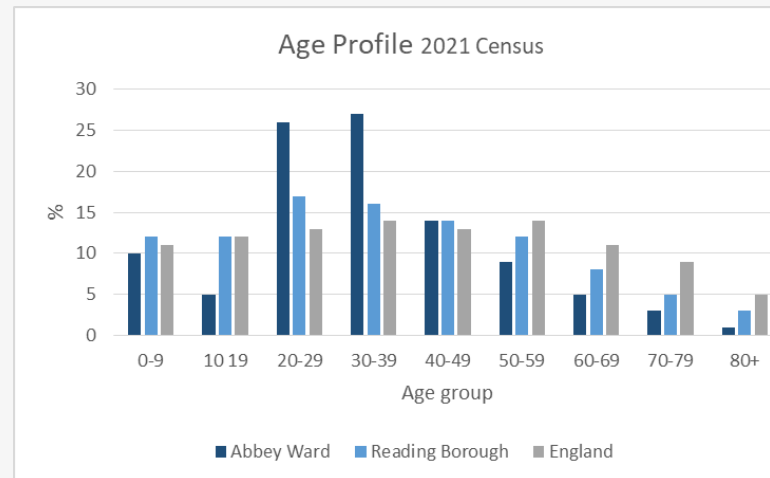


## APPENDIX 1 THE TOWN AND THE PARISH (CONTINUED)

Greyfriars' main site is on the edge of the town centre, but the parish extends to the north into residential areas, giving us both opportunities and challenges. We are cut off by a dual carriageway road and main line railway from most of the older residential area of the parish, and the establishment of the New Hope congregation in 2001 sought to address this. The parish area includes significant community features such as E.P. Collier primary school, River Academy secondary school, Reading station, the fire station (for which at times we have provided the chaplain), Job Centre and Reading Rowing Club and is adjacent to the ambulance and bus depots.

The population of the parish is growing rapidly, with several recent and proposed housing developments of high-density apartments, usually with gated access. The population of the old **Abbey Ward**, covering a similar area to our parish, was 13,500 in the 2011 census. By 2021 the revised and expanded **Abbey Ward** had the following **features**:

- A large proportion of young professionals aged 20 to 49 (67%) and comparatively few under 19s or over 70s
- A growing proportion from ethnic minority groups, especially Asian (28%)
- A decreasing number giving Christianity as their religion (31% down from 38% in 2018) and a rise in Hindus (15% up from 13%)



Ethnicity (%)	Abbey Ward	Reading	England
2021 Census		(2011 Census)	
<b>Asian</b> and Asian British	28	18 (13)	10
<b>Black</b> , Black British, Caribbean, African	9	7 (7)	4
<b>Mixed</b>	4	5 (4)	3
<b>White</b>	53	67 (75)	81

Religion (%)	Abbey Ward	Reading	England
2021 Census		(2011 Census)	
<b>Christian</b>	35	40 (50)	37
<b>Hindu</b>	12	5 (3)	2
<b>Muslim</b>	10	9 (7)	7
<b>Sikh</b>	1	1 (0.6)	1
<b>Jewish</b>	0.1	0.2 (0.2)	0.5
<b>No religion</b>	31	36 (29)	37



## APPENDIX 2

### AREA DEAN'S MESSAGE

The parish of Greyfriars lies at the heart of Reading Deanery, geographically, spiritually and missionally. It contains the largest of our churches, and the parish includes a significant part of Reading town centre. For many years Greyfriars has been a resource to the deanery, helping us revive struggling churches and bringing passion and energy to witness and service in the town.

The deanery needs this important work to continue, and we need a Vicar who will embrace partnership, working with the other parishes in Reading, across ecclesial traditions and sizes of church. The next Vicar of Greyfriars will need to be a deanery player who sees their role as resourcing the wider ministry of the church beyond their own parish. We want to continue planting and grafting new congregations, resource and train volunteers, and meet the needs of a growing town with significant new housing in and around Greyfriars church and parish. We need the new Vicar of Greyfriars involved in all of this ministry, working ecumenically where possible.

With its 29 parishes covering 24 benefices, the deanery has one of the largest synods in the country, despite covering a relatively small geographical area focused largely on the town of Reading itself. We have an active and well-attended Chapter, which meets regularly throughout the year. We work closely with churches from all denominations, particularly through the Transform Reading and Churches Together networks. The concentrated nature of Reading provides many opportunities to work together to bring God into the day-to-day lives of the town and the 250,000 people for whom it is home. The Deanery's Mission Action Plan (MAP) seeks to enable its parishes to deliver the underlying missional aim of making a difference in the world, by improving capacity for confident, collaborative leadership, creating vibrant Christian communities, and making disciples.

Recognising the size and variation in the deanery, we operate a dispersed leadership model, dividing the deanery into four operational zones (north, west, central, east/south). The Area Dean and

Deanery Lay Chair have assistants to help resource these zones. Each pair of Area Dean and Lay Chair provides frontline support to clergy and parishes and oversees vacancies in their zone. They also take their share of cross-deanery work. Greyfriars is in the central zone of the deanery.

Our priorities as a deanery currently are to support parishes as they rebuild from the shocks of the last few years, and discover new opportunities for mission and ministry. The Deanery is served by an effective and enthusiastic synod, whose meetings are structured to balance governance and administrative duties with opportunities to share good news and good practice, and to engage with a range of topics affecting the whole Church. We look forward to welcoming the new incumbent of Greyfriars and working alongside him or her within this forum.

**Revd Mike Smith**

Area Dean

## APPENDIX 3 NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH

**New Hope Community Church** is a congregation of Greyfriars which was planted within the parish of Greyfriars in 2001, with a vision of incarnational mission to the local community. It includes a group of terraced houses that people live in to establish Christ-centred community within the church and the local area. The church building and terrace are rented from New Hope Ltd, a charitable incorporated organisation, which built and owns the complex. During the week, the rooms are available for hire by the local community. The church was led for many years by Associate Vicars of Greyfriars with a dedicated focus on New Hope.

Since 2001, the community and demographic around New Hope has changed dramatically and it is now a popular location for commuters using nearby Reading station. Since the start of 2019, the church has been prayerfully seeking God's will for how our ministry can best match the changing context.

A difficult season of uprooting and a clear sense from God to let go and cling to Christ alone led in 2024 to a move, in agreement with Greyfriars' leadership, from having a dedicated Associate Vicar into trialling simpler forms of gathering under lay



leadership. Congregational numbers have varied over the years, at times with 40-50 people, but currently average Sunday attendance is around 20 adults and 10 children.



There is a clear opportunity for the new Vicar to work with the New Hope congregation and lay leadership to discern God's call and way forward in actively building God's kingdom in this area.

## APPENDIX 4

### GREYFRIARS MISSIONARY TRUST

Over the years Greyfriars Missionary Trust (GMT) has sent out many mission partners who have felt called from within the congregation. The trust currently supports approximately 23 individuals as mission partners working on long-term projects in the UK and around the globe, as well as a number on short-term projects, with prayer and/or funding.

GMT was established in 1975, as a separate entity from the PCC, largely to ring-fence funding for mission activities, and has had responsibility for the oversight and management of Greyfriars' global mission activities. Having a separate entity has presented a challenge in retaining the church's focus on global mission.

A new chair was appointed to GMT in 2023 with the objectives of:

- (a) increasing the level of mission activity;
- (b) integrating GMT into Greyfriars' legal and organisational structures;
- (c) raising the profile of and need to support global mission from within the church family.

The process of doing this is proceeding well and the trustees of GMT and the members of Greyfriars' PCC agreed a detailed strategic focus for Global Mission at Greyfriars summarised as follows:

#### **To go:**

Church members understand the calling to go to all peoples as ambassadors of a different kingdom to make disciples.

#### **To fund:**

Church members understand the importance of funding global mission.

#### **To support:**

Church members support those undertaking global mission in non-financial matters.

The GMT board consists of six trustees and a secretary. At least one trustee needs to be a member of the PCC and three trustees are currently PCC members. The Vicar of Greyfriars is an ex officio trustee and plays a key role in promoting global mission within the church family.





APPENDIX 5  
STAFF TEAM

The paid staff team currently includes the following members, in a mixture of full time and part time roles.

Associate Vicar
Curate
Executive Assistant to the Clergy (maternity cover)
Worship Pastor
Children’s Pastor
Youth Pastor
Youth Ministry Assistant
Children and Community Pastor (New Hope)
Student Pastor

Operations Manager
Operations Assistant
Bookings Manager
Facilities Assistant
Verger
Finance Manager
Finance Assistant
Atrium Manager
Atrium Curator
Bookshop Manager
Coffee Shop Supervisor
Coffee Shop Baristas

## APPENDIX 6 GREYFRIARS NURSERY

As part of its engagement with and ministry to the Reading community, Greyfriars has a day nursery in the building adjacent to the church, which was previously the vicarage. The **Nursery** is managed by Greyfriars Ministries Ltd (GML), a company limited by guarantee which itself is wholly owned by the Greyfriars PCC. GML's Board comprises members of the church, and any trading surplus that GML makes is gifted back to Greyfriars PCC.

The Nursery opened in 2006 after the Diocese agreed to move the vicarage away from the town centre. The PCC then purchased the old vicarage and modified it to fit its new purpose. The following decade saw a period of strong growth for the Nursery and eventual expansion, with GML taking on three satellite Pre-schools in other parts of Reading. The expansion proved not to be entirely successful, however, and a process of consolidation resulted in a return to a single Nursery at Greyfriars just as the pandemic struck. This period, and the pandemic itself, put a severe strain on GML's financial position but in 2023/4 it was able to return a significant surplus to the church.

The Nursery functions on a commercial basis, taking children from 3 months to 5 years, and is open from 8:00am to 6:00pm for 51 weeks of the year. Around 150 children attend on a full or part-time basis each week, and GML employs a total of 34 staff. It has a 'Good' Ofsted rating.

As part of Greyfriars' vision, the Nursery exists to express God's love to children and parents, and to the staff, by providing good quality care with a Christian ethos in line with Greyfriars' values. Its strapline is 'Growing life in all its fullness'. Wherever possible the church seeks opportunities to build connections with children, staff and parents. Currently groups of children (and staff) come to Bible Story Time in the Atrium two mornings a week, some of the older children come to Puppet Club in the Atrium, and there is a weekly 'Big Sing' for the Nursery children in the church. There are also special events in church for the Nursery at Christmas and Easter to which parents are invited, and church members go into the Nursery to read with the children and to do activities such as gardening with them.



APPENDIX 7  
FINANCE DETAIL

Broadly our finances can be divided into two operational areas and a major capital project which is now coming to an end:

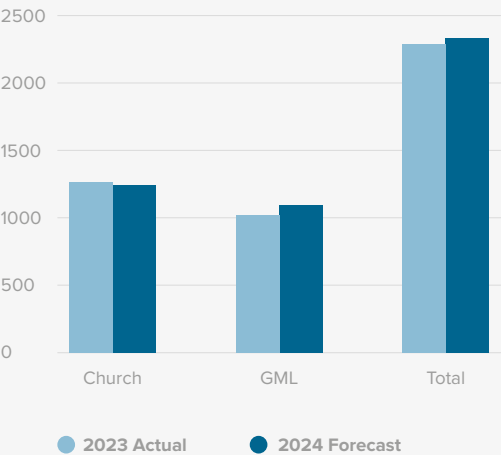
- Church ministry, including income from regular giving, ministry spend, staff costs, parish share, buildings maintenance, etc. The commercial activities, including the Atrium and Centre, do not generate a profit – they are primarily an expression of our missional outreach and Jesus’ love – but we are keen to ensure that they are sustainable and reflect good stewardship of our resources for God’s glory and the building of his kingdom.
- GML - the activities of Greyfriars Nursery. Surpluses from GML’s activities are ordinarily donated to Greyfriars for general use in the church’s activities.
- Development Fund, which held money raised for the construction of the Greyfriars Centre, a ca. £10 million project. The fund’s remaining activities relate to paying final amounts due from the construction of the Centre, largely the repayment of congregational loans. Income into this fund is also tithed.

The Diocese supports the cost of employing two clergy and historically a training Curate as well.

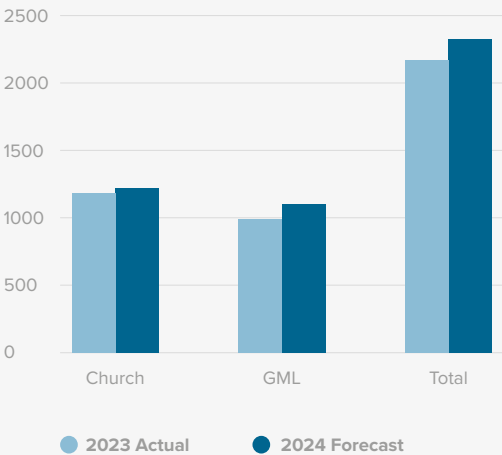
Over the last 20 years we have committed 10% of giving income and certain rents from GML to a tithe fund that is focused on the poor and needy, allowing us to support various Christian charities in Reading.

Church Finances: 2023 Actuals and 2024 Forecast

Income (£’000)



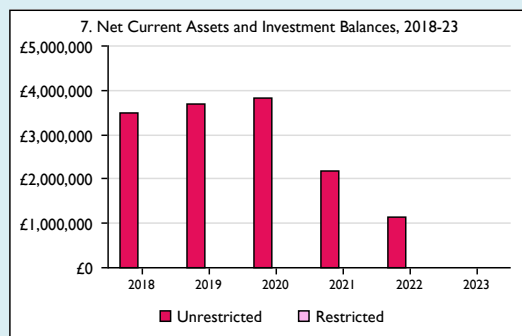
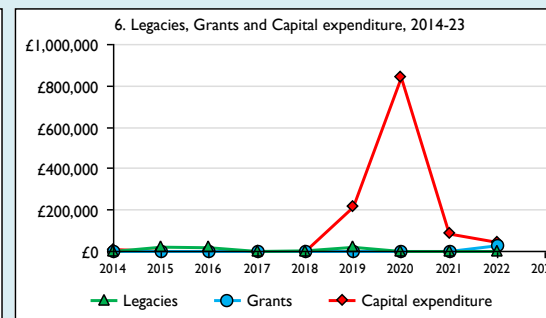
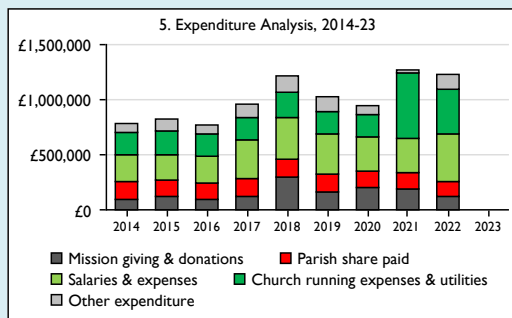
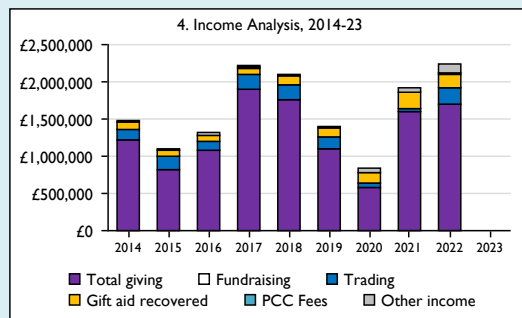
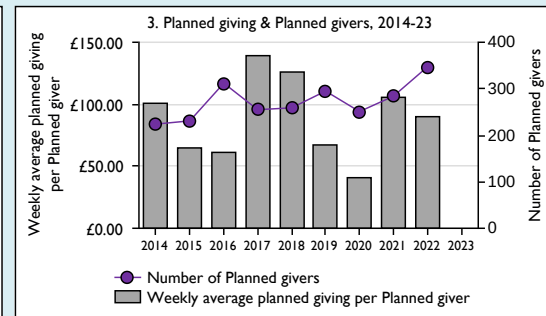
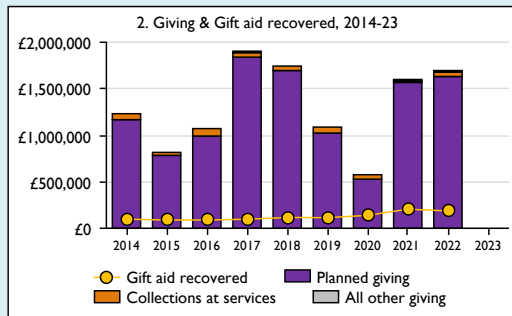
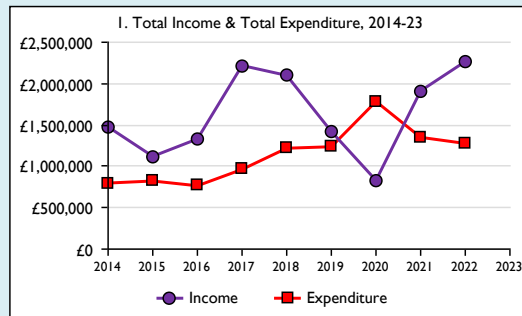
Expenditure (£’000)





## APPENDIX 7 FINANCE DETAIL (CONTINUED)

### Finance Dashboard for the Parish of Reading: Greyfriars in the deanery of READING



**Weekly average planned giving per planned giver (2023)**  
Parish: missing  
Diocese: £22.56

**Number of churches in parish (2024): 1**  
Parish code: 270464

#### Notes & definitions

This dashboard contains figures as submitted by churches currently in the parish; gaps may be the result of missing returns.  
Graph 2 shows a detailed breakdown of the **Total giving** figure in graph 4.  
Graph 3: **Planned giving** = Tax efficient planned giving + Other planned giving; **Planned givers** = Tax efficient planned givers + Other planned givers.  
Graph 4 shows income other than grants and legacies.  
Graph 4: **Total giving** = Tax efficient planned giving + Other planned giving + Collections at services + All other giving, including special appeals.  
Graph 4: **Other income** = Dividends, interest, income from property + Any other income.  
Graph 5 shows expenditure other than capital expenditure.  
Graph 5: **Other expenditure** = Fund-raising activities + Mission and evangelism costs + Cost of trading + Other expenses.  
Graph 5: **Running expenses & utilities** also includes governance costs.  
Graphs 1-6: Unrestricted and Restricted amounts have been combined.  
For further definitions please see the guidance notes attached to the Return of Parish Finance:

Variations from year to year may be the result of changes in the number of churches that submitted returns, or changes in parish/benefice structure.

Number of churches included in returns: 2014 1; 2015 1; 2016 1; 2017 1; 2018 1; 2019 1; 2020 1; 2021 1; 2022 1; 2023 0.

Produced by Data Services, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ. Date of production: 05/05/2024.

Every effort has been made to ensure that data are reliable. We would be pleased to be notified of any significant errors or omissions by email to [statistics.unit@churchofengland.org](mailto:statistics.unit@churchofengland.org)

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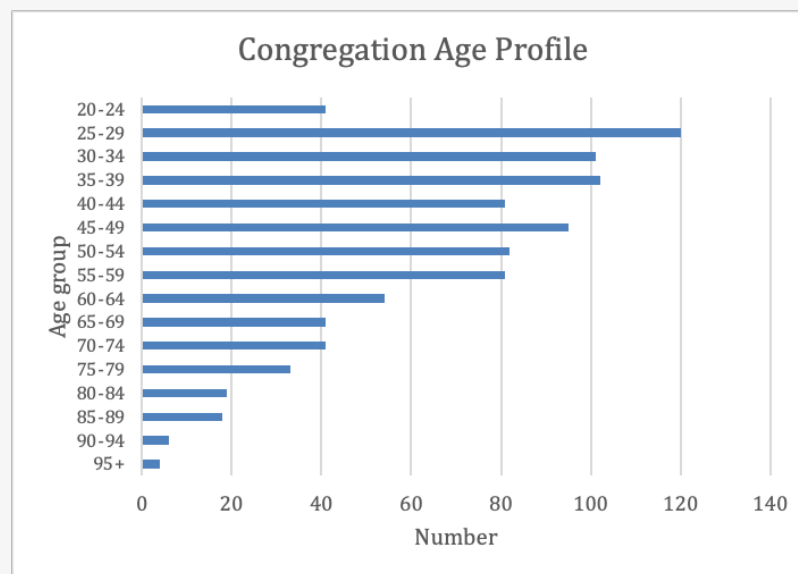
## APPENDIX 8 CONGREGATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Our church database reveals a comparatively young congregation. We have a large number in the 25 to 49 years age range (53%) and comparatively few over 70 years old (13%). We have nearly double the national church's proportion of working age (18 to 69 years: 88% cf. 46%) but a third of the proportion of over 70s (13% cf. 36%). Our gender profile is 55% female.

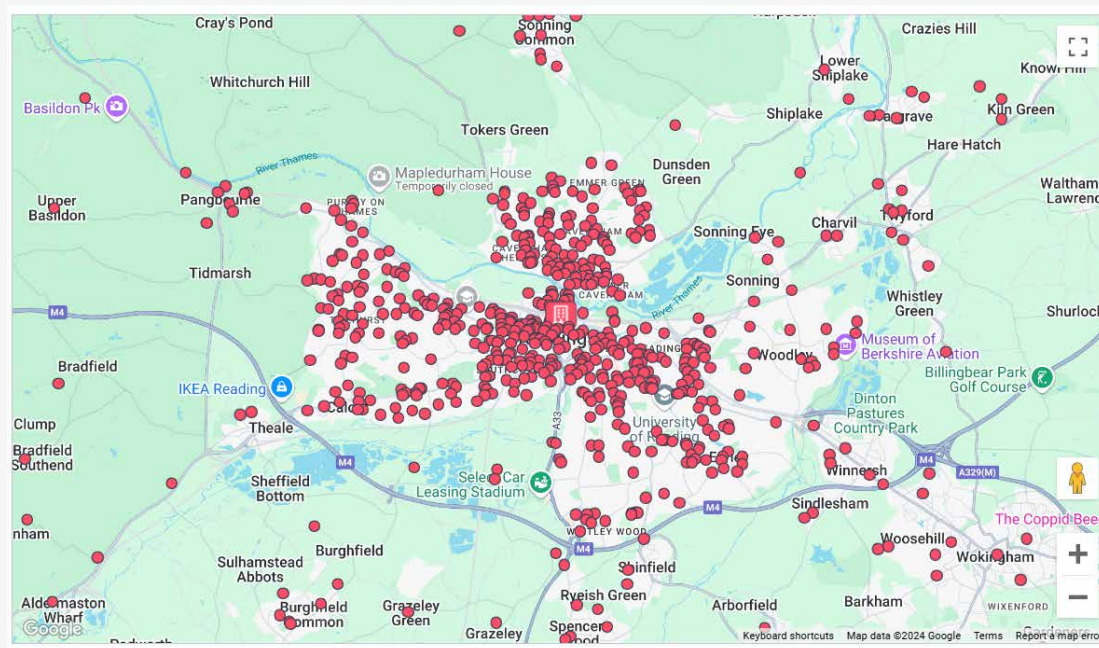
The gathered nature of the congregation sees nearly a quarter travelling at least 4 miles to attend and only a small number living close to the church: (<1 mile = 8%; 1-3.9 miles = 69%; 4-5.9 miles = 11%; 6+ miles = 12%)

Ethnicity data is not recorded for our congregations but anecdotally in recent years we have seen increasing diversity, although there is more to do in terms of reflecting our locality composition in our membership and leadership.

*Note: It is difficult to keep our database accurate due to the flow of new members and those moving away. Our records include fringe members who may not attend services regularly and some who attend other churches in the morning and our evening service. Data for under-18s is not recorded on the database.*



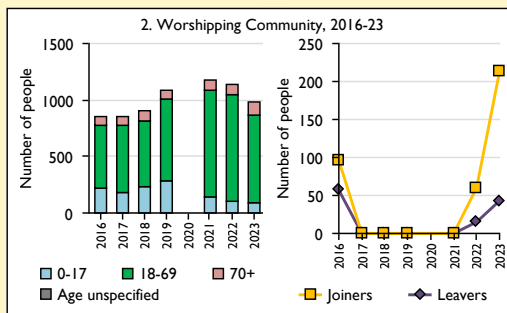
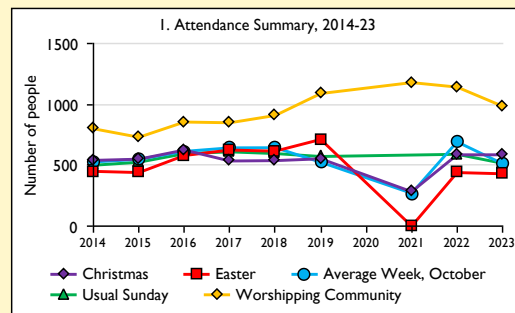
Congregation age profile  
from Greyfriars ChurchSuite,  
September 2024



Congregation home location from Greyfriars ChurchSuite, September 2024

## APPENDIX 8 CONGREGATION DEMOGRAPHICS (CONTINUED)

### sFM Dashboard for the Parish of Reading: Greyfriars in the deanery of READING



#### Parish Census and deprivation summary

Parish population (2021): 4221

	Parish	Diocese	National
% aged 0-19	16%	24%	23%
% aged 20-44	62%	33%	33%
% aged 45-69	19%	30%	31%
% aged 70 & over	3%	12%	14%
% Christian	31%	45%	46%
% non-Christian religion	27%	13%	11%

Parish deprivation rank (IMD 2019): 4380

(1=most deprived parish in the Church of England, 12,239=least deprived)

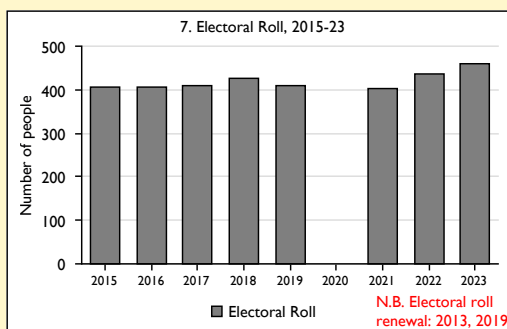
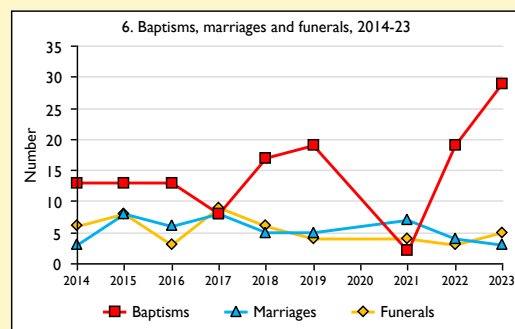
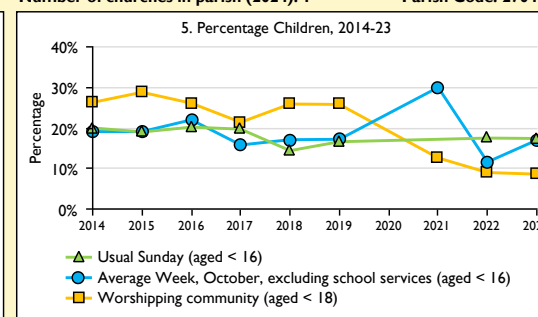
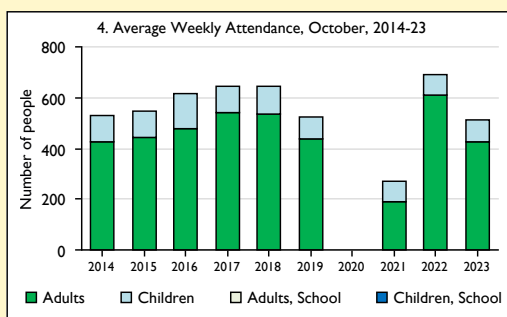
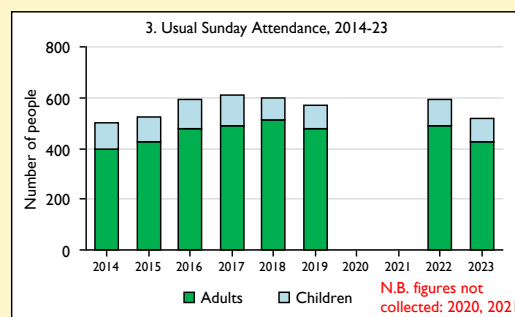
For more detailed census & deprivation info: see <http://arcg.is/1Ra54CS>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/researchandstats> and

<http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-england/poverty-map>

Number of churches in parish (2024): 1

Parish Code: 270464



This dashboard contains figures as submitted by churches currently in the parish. Attendance statistics: taken from annual Statistics for Mission returns.

Average weekly attendance: attendance at Sunday and midweek church services & fresh expressions in October; Figs 1 & 5 do not include attendance at services for schools.

Easter: Easter Eve & Easter Day; Christmas: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day.

Baptisms: all baptisms & thanksgivings.

Marriages: marriages and services of prayer & dedication after civil marriages.

Funerals: those held in church & at crematoria/cemeteries.

Because of pandemic-related church closures, Easter figures were not collected in 2020.

Census data: taken from the 2021 national Census.

Deprivation statistics: IMD taken from the English Indices of Deprivation, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Sept 2019.

The above statistics have been mapped onto parish boundaries so are approximations.

For more information, see: <https://www.churchofengland.org/researchandstats>

Variations in attendance from year to year may be the result of changes in the number of churches that submitted returns, or changes in parish/benefice structure.

Number of churches included in returns: 2014 1; 2015 1; 2016 1; 2017 1; 2018 1; 2019 1; 2020 0; 2021 1; 2022 1; 2023 1.

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## APPENDIX 9 OCCASIONAL OFFICES

### Greyfriars and New Hope Occasional Offices 2021-23

	2021	2022	2023
Baptisms — Adult	0	20 (8 under-18)	26 (5 under-18)
Baptisms — Child	2	5	3
Dedications	1	2	3
Weddings	6	4	3
Funerals — Church	3	2	3
Funerals — Crematorium	N/A	2	3



[greyfriars.org.uk](http://greyfriars.org.uk)