

St Mary's Church Chartham



Annual Meeting of Parishioners
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

18th May 2025

Agenda

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

18th May 2025, 11.30am (after Sunday service)

1. Opening prayers, welcome and apologies
2. Minutes of the last Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 28th April 2024
3. Election of church wardens to serve for the year 2024-25

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

18th May 2025, 11.45am

I. Minutes of previous APCM held on Sunday 28th April 2024

II. Reports

1. Electoral Roll Report
2. Annual Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the activities of the parish of St Mary's Chartham
3. Financial Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024
4. Churchwarden's Report
5. Deanery Synod Report
6. Safeguarding Officer's Report
7. Reports on Church organisations and activities
8. Priest-in-Charge's Report

III. Elections and Appointments

9. Elections of parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC
10. Appointment of the independent examiner for the coming year until the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

IV. Questions and recommendations from the floor

V. Closing prayers

I. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners

28th April 2024 11.30 a.m.

Present for the meeting:

Rev Louise Vincer, Jane Arnott, Tim Kidd, Laura Gilbert, Robin Slowe, Elspeth Barber, Bruce Gough, Simon Hickman, Dee Hickman, Diana Withers, Alexandra Pearson, Mike Potts, Ann Eastbourne, Matt Pearson, James Spencer, Genista Spencer, Tony Frost, Bronny Slowe, Janet Onslow, Marina Griffin, Mark Axton, Sarah Harman, John Gilbert, David Arnott, Meriel Pickett, Muriel Ritchie, Peter Thomas, Trish Foster, Julie Lawford, Adam Pleasance, Brenda Pleasance.

1. Opening prayers, welcome and apologies:

Apologies were received from Pippa Kiss, Vicky Travis and Emily Renshaw-Kidd. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev Louise Vincer.

2. To receive the minutes of the Vestry meeting of Sunday 30th April 2023

Minutes proposed: by Brenda Pleasance and seconded by Muriel Ritchie.

3. To elect church wardens to serve for the year 2024-25

Jane Arnott is willing to continue as Church Warden for a second year.

Meeting closed.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

28th April 2024, 11.45 am

1. Minutes of last APCM held on Sunday 30th April 2023

The minutes from April 2023 were checked and approved by the PCC. These were proposed by Tim Kidd and seconded by Jane Arnott.

2. Parochial Church Council elections:

Tony Frost is standing down from the PCC – he was thanked by Jane Arnott and presented with a small gift.

Laura Gilbert and Matt Pearson are standing for the second time on the PCC.

Tim Kidd has been re-elected as the Treasurer.

Robin Slowe and Diana Withers are standing and have been elected to the PCC.

3. Electoral Roll Report – Tim Kidd

Last year the Electoral Roll was 83 and this year has 91 members.

4. Finance – Tim Kidd

- a. Financial Report
- b. Approval of the 2024 Accounts
- c. Appointment of the Independent Examiner

The Finance report was presented and explained by Tim Kidd. Total Income was £55, 283 this year. Last year it was £58,196. Almost £2,000 has been paid in gas bills. £30,000 available for use. Other funds are restricted for specific purposes e.g. the fabric fund, children's work and the ladies group.

The finance report has been audited and approved and signed off by Independent Auditors.

The finance report was proposed by Adam Pleasance and seconded by Bronny Slowe.

Parish share has been paid in full for the past 3 years, but the new Parish Share will increase significantly once Rev Andrew Edwards starts in post as 0.5 post, but he and his wife will be living in the Rectory full time. He will be working for the church for 3 days a week and Sundays. He will be working for the St Mary's church alone now that St. Mary's church has been approved as a benefice.

Tim reminded the meeting that the church members need to pull together and concentrate on the fundraising and giving to ensure that the church can meet the financial commitments of the Parish Share for the next financial year.

Dee Hickman thanked Tim for preparing the finances.

David Arnott asked whether money would need to be spent on the Rectory before the new Vicar and his wife move in – Tim confirmed that any refurbishment that is needed is the responsibility of the Diocese.

Ian Johnson is the Independent Examiner for the Church Accounts – his role was approved and agreed by the APCM.

5. To receive the Annual Report of St Mary's Chartham,

Jane Arnott – Church Warden's report – new Vicar has been appointed.

Louise was thanked for her prayerful leadership and care for her service to St. Mary's for the past 3.5 years. Louise was presented with gifts from the church.

The font which has been damaged accidentally, has been repaired. New cupboards by the organ are providing valuable extra storage.

Eco friendly church – the church continues to use eco friendly cleaning products and to buy Fair-Trade tea and coffee.

Fundraising – Tim and Emily thanked for the coffee and cake concert and for Octoberfest, which have raised considerable amounts of money for the church.

The date for the next Quiz night has been confirmed as the 15th June.

Safeguarding report – Reinhard Guss – C of E are trying to protect vulnerable individuals through the safeguarding standards and on-line training.

John Gilbert – Fabric report – The Quinquennial report on the fabric of the church will be carried out next year.

David Arnott – thanked Tim Kidd for his help with the production of the magazine. Some individual subscribers to the Parish Magazine give more than £8.00 for the year's subscription for the magazine, which adds to additional revenue for the church.

Lent group – Rev Garth thanked for the Lent Groups this year.

Laura Gilbert thanked by Mike Potts for Family Time Together (FTT)

Peter Thomas thanked for this work as the Organist.

Dee Hickman – Flower arrangers – thanked for all the beautiful flower arrangements.

Janet Onslow – asked that those who organise the distribution of the parish magazine and those who distribute the parish magazine are thanked.

Coffee and cake concerts – Dee and Simon Hickman thanked for all their work in organising the refreshments. Dee confirmed that approximately £17,000 has been raised for the church from the coffee and cake concerts.

Simon Hickman and Robin Slowe gave reports on the home groups.

6. Interim Minister's Report – Revd Louise Vincer

Dawn Stamper has been licenced as the new Priest for Upper Hardes and Stelling. St. Mary's Chartham is now becoming a benefice in its own right.

Chartham Primary School – a small team have now delivered 2 assemblies at the school for the children.

Garth Barber was thanked by Louise.

Hospitality is growing at the church and is noticed and appreciated – this needs to continue.

Robin Slowe thanked for the Family Praise services.

Rev Louise noted that there are many gifts for contributing to the life of the church in the members of the congregation and these can continue to be encouraged and developed to support the life of the church.

Children's work has grown and developed over the past 3.5 years with an increase in the numbers of children participating in Live Wires and Family Time Together – explaining to the children the good news of the Christian faith.

Louise encouraged the church to move forward under Andrew's new leadership after he has been licenced in July.

7. Deanery Report

8. Questions from the floor

No questions from the floor.

9. Date of next PCC Meeting.

The PCC will meet after the APCM. The Standing Committee members will continue to be: Jane Arnott, Tim Kidd, Laura Gilbert and Vicky Travis.

10. Date of next APCM meeting – to be confirmed once Rev Andrew has commenced his Ministry in July.

11. Closing prayers – the Grace was said by all present at the meeting.

II. Reports

1. Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll for parish of St. Mary's, Chartham was renewed for 2025. A new roll was published by 3rd May 2025, this was advertised on the church door.

A copy of the new roll has been exhibited for not less than 14 days on or near to the principal door of the church.

The 2024 Roll totaled 92. It is hereby certified that the number of electors upon the Church Electoral Roll of St. Mary's, Chartham, as prepared for the Annual Meeting held in the year 2025, is: **75**

The Church Electoral Roll Certificate has been posted on the church door for not less than 14 days and will be sent to the Diocese no later than the 1st July.

Tim Kidd, Electoral Roll Officer

2. Annual Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the activities of the parish of St Mary's Chartham

It has been a busy year for the PCC from April 2024 – May 2025.

The members of the PCC this year are:

- Rev Andrew Edwards
- Jane Arnott – Church Warden and Vice Chair of the PCC.
- Laura Gilbert – Secretary for the PCC
- Tim Kidd – Treasurer for the PCC
- David Chadwick – Deanery Synod Representative.
- Robin Slowe
- Sarah Challender
- Pippa Kiss
- Vicky Travis
- Matt Pearson
- Mark Axton
- Diana Withers
- Mike Potts (co-opted by PCC)

Standing Committee members for this year:

- Rev Andrew Edwards
- Jane Arnott
- Tim Kidd
- Vicky Travis
- Laura Gilbert

Name	Date of appointment	Date current term ends
Jane Arnott	Deanery synod representative Church Warden Vice Chair of the PCC	April 2026
Tim Kidd	Treasurer.	April 2027
Laura Gilbert	PCC Secretary – (re-election 2 nd term)	April 2027
Mark Axton	April 2022 (re-election for 2 nd term).	May 2025
David Chadwick	Deanery Synod representative,	April 2026
Sarah Challender	April 2023 (1 st term)	April 2026
Pippa Kiss	April 2023 (re-election for 2 nd term)	April 2026
Matt Pearson	April 2024 (re-election 2 nd term)	April 2027
Mike Potts	Co-opted by PCC Sep 2024	May 2025
Robin Slowe	April 2024 (1 st term)	April 2027
Vicky Travis	April 2023 (re-election 2 nd term)	April 2026
Diana Withers	April 2024 (1 st term)	April 2027

The following PCC and Standing Committee meetings have taken place since the last APCM:

- 17.6.24 PCC
- 22.7.24 Standing Committee
- 1.8.24 PCC
- 12.9.24 Standing Committee
- 26.9.24 PCC
- 24.10.24 Standing Committee
- 7.11.24 PCC
- 9.1.25 Standing Committee
- 23.1.25 PCC
- 27.02.25 Standing Committee
- 13.3.25 PCC
- 10.4.25 PCC

Key dates and events during the year

28th April 24: Annual Meeting and farewell to Rev Louise Vincer

17th July 24: Licensing of Rev Andrew Edwards as Priest-in-charge

30th September 24: Harvest Supper

1st October 24: Pastoral Scheme making St Mary's Church a single parish benefice came into effect. The Parish of Lower Hardres with Stelling became part of the Wye Benefice

23rd November 24: Christmas Market

9th March 25: PCC agrees to the motion to 'enable the presentation to be made of the current Priest-in-Charge Rev Andrew Edwards as the next Incumbent of the Benefice' of St Mary's Chartham. This will take place later in 2025.

PCC Meetings

At each PCC meeting, the Treasurer's report for the preceding month is reviewed and discussed. Any important financial decisions are discussed, and financial decisions are taken.

A worship report is presented by Rev Andrew Edwards and the way that previous services such as the Christmas and Easter Services have been experienced are reviewed and discussed. Ideas for future services both indoor and outdoor services are considered and planned. The roles and responsibilities for the Welcome Team members have been written and agreed to bring clarity to this important role.

A report from the Church Fabric Team is present and discussed. PCC re-appointed John Bailey as the architect for the quinquennial inspection of the church building due in 2025.

A Church Warden's report is presented and discussed as needed.

Safeguarding and Safer recruitment is reviewed and discussed as needed at PCC meetings. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have regard to the House of Bishop's guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults (see Safeguarding Officer's report below)

Children's work for both Live Wires and Family Time Together are discussed and reviewed as needed. The person specification and role description has been created and agreed by the PCC for future appointments to the children's work teams.

Eco church is discussed as needed – with current work ongoing for the church to meet the requirements to meet the standards for the bronze award.

Dr Laura Gilbert, PCC Secretary

3. Financial Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024

Please note the figures in the report below are for illustration purposes, you should refer to the accounts for actuals.

INCOMING RESOURCES

Tax efficient planned giving fell slightly from £28,778 in 2023 to £28,044 in 2024.

Collections at services fell slightly by £200 to £4,250

All other giving and voluntary receipts (unrestricted) include giving via the Sum-Up card machines £3238, Wall boxes £595, other one-off gifts, Total £3,875 up £564.

Gift Aid recovered increased by £4,318 to £9,957. This was affected by the date when Gift Aid was claimed and paid as this only appears in the accounts when it is paid into the bank. Manual Gift Aid claimed is shown to end Oct 2024 £5,981, some of this income related to giving in 2023. Gift Aid is now paid monthly through the Parish Giving Scheme so is complete to Dec 2024 £3,976.

Our income increased a little from 2023, total **Voluntary income** 2023 was £42,218. **Total voluntary income** 2024 increased to £46,127. However taking the above factors into consideration, it could be argued that the increase in giving by approx. £4,000 can be explained mainly by Gift Aid claim timing.

Activities for generating funds (unrestricted) decreased from 2023 by £705 from £5,105 in 2023. Fundraising Activities £2,265 and Coffee & Cake Concerts added £2,135, totalling £4,400.

Investment income (unrestricted) was down slightly £533 in 2024.

Income from church activities (unrestricted). Statutory fees were down £1,883 due to lack of 2024 weddings, funerals income was £970. £3,185 from Parish Magazine surplus and £1,893 from Church Hire helped the total recover to £6,006, just down slightly from 2023 by £671.

Total incoming resources(unrestricted) went from £55,283 up to £57,533.

RESOURCES EXPENDED

Total this year for **Church activities (unrestricted)** increased to £47,701 up from £39,474. This significant increase of £7,597 is mainly due to an increase in Diocesan Parish Share Contribution. From July 2024 we became a stand-alone parish with a 0.5 priest and house, previously this was split with Upper Hardres and Stelling Parish as part of a benefice.

We did contribute 100% of the Diocesan Parish Share Contribution in 2024. This amounted to £46,419. This payment can only come from unrestricted funds.

Church expenses (unrestricted) were £12,864 against £9,654 in 2023, an increase of £3,230. Church running expenses £8,534 include, bank fees, general expenses £830, cleaning £1,230, insurance £3,832, subscriptions £1,946, admin support. Church utility bills £4,314 included internet £329, electricity bills £1,350 and gas bills £2,517, (not including Nov and Dec '24 which added another £2,000!, but will be paid in 2025).

Total resources expended (unrestricted) in 2024 was £60,223 up £10,879.

Total incoming resources (unrestricted) £57,533 less **Total resources expended (unrestricted)** £60,223 gives a deficit of (£2,690) – down from surplus £5,920 in 2023.

2024 saw the value of The CBF CofE Investment Fund - Income Shares increase a little so this was adjusted up £400.

CURRENT ASSETS Cash was £67,945 plus Investments £19,647 = £87,592

PARISH FUNDS

Unrestricted £30,987 (Share Investments £19,647 & £11,340 unrestricted cash current account)

Restricted £56,640

Total £87,592

PCC of St Mary's Church, Chartham

Statement of financial activities For the period to 31 December 2024

2	<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u>	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
2 (a)	Voluntary income:				
	Tax efficient planned giving	£28,044		£28,044	£28,778
	Other planned giving			£0	£40
	Collections at services	£4,250		£4,250	£4,450
	All other giving and voluntary receipts, including Special Appeals	£3,875	£1,323	£5,198	£3,311
	Gift Aid recovered	£9,957		£9,957	£5,639
	Grants			£0	£0
	Legacies received			£0	£0
		£46,127	£1,323	£47,450	£42,218
2 (b)	Activities for Generating Funds - Gross receipts from fundraising activities	£4,400	£577	£4,977	£5,105
2 (c)	Investment income - Dividends, interest, receipts from property etc.	£533	£1,556	£2,089	£781
2 (d)	Income from church activities:				
	Statutory fees retained by the PCC (weddings, funerals etc)	£970		£970	£2,853
	Gross receipts from trading (e.g. hall lettings, magazine, bookstall). NOT fundraising.	£5,036	£5,893	£10,929	£3,824
		£6,006	£5,893	£11,899	£6,677
2 (e)	Other receipts - Any other receipts not already listed	£466	£3,091	£3,557	£502
Total incoming resources		£57,533	£12,440	£69,973	£55,283

PCC of St Mary's Church, Chartham

Statement of financial activities
For the period to 31 December 2024

£57,533 £12,440 £69,973

3	RESOURCES EXPENDED	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
3 (a)	Costs of generating funds - Fund-raising activities (costs and payments)	£287	£200	£487	£235
3 (b)	Church activities				
	Mission giving and donations		£1,440	£1,440	£0
	Diocesan parish share contribution	£46,419		£46,419	£38,389
	<i>Other ministry costs</i>		£2,501	£2,501	£0
	<i>Worship Choir and organ</i>		£25	£25	£0
	Clergy and staff expenses	£652		£652	£1,085
		£47,071	£3,966	£51,037	£39,474
	Church expenses				
	Mission and evangelism costs			£0	£0
	Church running expenses	£8,534	£4,197	£12,731	£6,597
	Church utility bills	£4,315		£4,315	£3,057
	Cost of trading			£0	£0
	<i>Parish magazine costs</i>		£6,890	£6,890	£0
	<i>Sundry Expenses & Refreshments</i>	£16	£10	£26	£0
3 (c)		£12,864	£11,097	£23,962	£9,654
	Major capital expenditure				
	Major repairs to the church building			£0	£0
	Major repairs to church hall or other PCC property, including redecoration			£0	£0
	New building work to the church, church hall, clergy housing, or other PCC property			£0	£0
		£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		£60,223	£15,263	£75,486	£49,363

PCC of St Mary's Church, Chartham

Statement of financial activities

For the period to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2024 £	TOTAL 2023 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary income:	£46,127	£1,323	£47,450	£42,218
Activities for Generating Funds - Gross receipts from fundraising activities	£4,400	£577	£4,977	£5,105
Investment income - Dividends, interest, receipts from property etc.	£533	£1,556	£2,089	£781
Income from church activities:	£6,006	£5,893	£11,899	£6,677
Other receipts - Any other receipts not already listed	£466	£3,091	£3,557	£502
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	£57,533	£12,440	£69,973	£55,283
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Costs of generating funds - Fund-raising activities (costs and payments)	£287	£200	£487	£235
Church activities	£47,071	£3,966	£51,037	£39,474
Church expenses	£12,864	£11,097	£23,962	£9,654
Major capital expenditure	£0		£0	£0
Other payments				£0
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	£60,223	£15,263	£75,486	£49,363
NET INCOMING RESOURCES BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES	-£2,690	-£2,823	-£5,513	£5,920
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES (Recognition of The CBF CoE Investment Fund - Income Shares)	£440		£440	£1,652
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	-£2,690	-£2,823	-£5,513	£5,920
OTHER NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS				£4,609
BALANCES B/FWD 1 JANUARY	£33,237	£59,428	£92,665	£80,484
BALANCES C/FWD	£30,987	£56,605	£87,592	£92,665

PCC of St Mary's Church, Chartham

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments		£19,647	£19,207
		£19,647	£19,207
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors		£0	£0
Current Accounts		£7,002	£10,674
Deposit Accounts		£59,262	£62,152
Cash in hand		£1,681	£632
		£67,945	£73,458
LIABILITIES			
Creditors - amounts falling due in one year		£56,605	£59,428
NET CURRENT ASSETS / LIABILITIES			
		£11,340	£14,030
Total assets less current liabilities		£30,987	£33,237
Creditors - amounts falling due after one year			
TOTAL NET ASSETS			
		£87,592	£92,665
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted		£30,987	£33,237
Restricted		£56,605	£59,428
Endowments			
		£87,592	£92,665

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 4.05.25 and signed on its behalf by,

The Revd Andrew Edwards (PCC Chair)



Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the SORP 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Restricted funds represent (a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and (b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes.

Also included in unrestricted funds, Two Income shares accounts. Held under client name *Canterbury Diocesan Board of Finance as Custodian Trustees' with The CBF CoFE Investment Fund - Income Shares*. These shares were introduced at 'Bid Market Value' and are adjusted to 'Bid Market Value' from Statements supplied to us. Dividends are recognised as general unrestricted investments income.

Incoming resources

Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognized when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Dividends are accounted for when receivable, interest is accrued. All other income is recognized when it is receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Resources expended

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.96(2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). For anything acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the financial statements. Subsequently no individual item has cost more than £1,000 so all such expenditure has been written off when incurred.

Equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years. Individual items of equipment with a purchase of £500 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Investments are valued at market value at 31 December.

2.(a) HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

A Heritage Lottery Fund grant was obtained in 2017 to address urgent repairs to the church. The grant was split into two phases with the development phase completed during 2017 and the delivery phase completed at the end of 2018. The total grant received was £145170. The majority of final payments were made in January and the retention fee was paid December 2019.

4.(b) PAYMENTS TO PCC MEMBERS

A small immaterial portion of the expenses paid to the Priest-in-charge may have related to his/her services as Chair of the PCC. No other payments or expenses were paid to any other PCC member, persons closely connected to them or related parties.

I have inspected the accounts of the PCC of St Mary's Church for the year ended 31 December 2024 and can confirm this summary appears to be a true reflection of the financial situation for that year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Johnson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ian Johnson
Independent Examiner

4. Churchwarden's Report

This year we welcomed Rev Andrew Edwards as our Priest in Charge at St Mary's. Andrew's installation service in July was a very joyous occasion. Since July, the congregation has enjoyed his energy and ideas and growth in the numbers attending Sunday services.

As churchwarden, I am aware that a huge amount of administration takes place in the running of the church. I would like to say a huge thank you to Tim Kidd for all he does as treasurer and everything else, which includes sorting the clock, singing in the choir and more.

Another big thank you goes to Laura Gilbert, John Willis and Robin Slowe for sorting the church inventory and a mound of paperwork. We have now been able to sign off our records, which is wonderful.

The Fabric Committee has worked hard over the past 12 months and I would like to thank John Gilbert, Tim Kidd, Mark Axton, Philip Kiss for all they do to keep the church functioning. I am aware that members of the Fabric Committee give of their time freely to attend to lots of different tasks. A lot of what they do is unseen, but so essential. Thank you.

Finally, thanks to Robin Slowe for assisting in compiling the Fabric Report below.

Fabric report covering January to December 2024 for the APCM on 18th May 2025

Following permission from the Diocesan Advisory Council. The old iron registers safe, deemed surplus to requirements, was sold. Following a valuation of £200-300 by Canterbury Auctions it was sold privately for £200. This kept it within the village and avoided additional transportation and auction costs.

Cupboards donated to the church have been added to the side chapel to improve storage.

Following permission from the Diocesan Advisory Council. Two pews at the back of the nave, deemed surplus to requirements, were rehomed. A donation for church funds was given.

A stonemason was contacted for a quote to repair the stone on the outside of the church. ***Since that time a quote has been received in early 2025, and the PCC has elected to defer the work until the quinquennial inspection due in July 2025 when the architect can advise.***

Church main doors: Geoff Challis quoted £245 to repair outer & inner doors. ***These repairs to the doors have since been completed and the doors are working well.***

Concern was expressed about flowers growing on church walls. ***Further advice will be sought when the quinquennial inspection takes place in July 2025.***

The PCC considered removing the aisle carpet in the centre of chancel and sought advice from the DAC. ***Since that time the carpet distortion became more severe, creating a worsening trip hazard and necessitating the removal of the aisle carpet. The PCC asked the DAC for advice on the best way to clean the exposed tile floor. The DAC recommended contacting our designated architect for advice.***

To facilitate entering and leaving the church when it is dark, motion sensitive lights have been installed:

- above the outside of the doors into the church porch
- inside the porch
- and above the inside of the door into the main church building

Jane Arnott

5. Deanery Synod Report

No Deanery Synod meetings were held in 2024. There were two Deanery Roadshows, one in March, the other in October, which members of the PCC attended. It has been reported that planning is already underway to have Deanery Synod meetings in 2025.

David Chadwick and Jane Arnott, Deanery Synod representatives

6. Safeguarding Officer's Report

Summary

Since the 2024 APCM:

- There have been no safeguarding incidents.
- 7 meetings of the Safeguarding Group were held.
- Liaison with the diocesan safeguarding leads is working well.
- Safer recruitment is prioritised and carried out for roles involving work with children and vulnerable adults, and all new appointments to roles are also carried out following the Church of England guidance.
- Three members of the safeguarding group are signed up to the Church of England safeguarding hub system, which will facilitate the audit of our parish against the National Safeguarding Standards, due in November 2026.

Safeguarding incidents

- None to report

St Mary's Safeguarding Group

- Membership: Incumbent, Parish Safeguarding Officer, Parish Disclosure Officer, Church Warden, PCC member, interested members of the congregation welcome. Particular thanks to Pippa Kiss for supporting the group with the extensive administrative work required, and to Gerard O'Sullivan for continuing to monitor and arrange DBS checks as Parish Disclosure Officer.
- The main focus of work remains implementation of "Safer Recruitment" to all new appointments to all roles within the church.
- We continue to work towards completing it for those who in their roles spend time on their own/unsupervised with adults who may be at risk of harm, for example providing lifts to and from church.
- A clarification of the terminology "vulnerable adults" was provided to the PCC, and clarification given on what does and what does not constitute a "role" that requires the application of Safer Recruitment. It clarifies that while any activity that is carried out as part of the church requires safer recruitment this does not apply to one-off help at events or services, and does not apply to activities organised by individual

people or groups of people who happen to know each other due to their contact in church.

- Safer Recruitment requires a process that is now well established at St Mary's, Although it needs to be publicised better so that everyone is aware what any new appointment to any volunteering role requires before the person can take up the role, which is as follows:
 - o A role description and person specification, if not available already are developed in collaboration with the lead for the role, which outlines the responsibilities and any requirements for training and DBS checks. These are then shared with the prospective volunteer.
 - o The volunteer completes an application form and names two referees.
 - o The volunteer completes relevant safeguarding training and if required applies for DBS check through the Parish Disclosure Officer.
 - o Once references and any DBS are cleared an appointment conversation is held with the lead for the role, including setting of an annual review.
 - o Only at this point is the volunteer "safely recruited" and able to take up the role.
- Three members (Andrew, Reinhard and Pippa) are signed up with the Safeguarding Hub and Dashboard, the CofE wide tool that facilitates Parishes meeting their safeguarding requirements, and compliance being more easily auditable, as will be needed by November 2026. Discussions are to be held with the Disclosure Officer as to whether the paper based current system for following up and renewing DBS check could also be transferred.

National Safeguarding Standards

The Church of England National Safeguarding Standards are a comprehensive set of standards that allow Parishes to check that they are fully compliant with the expectations of the Church of England in respect of safeguarding.

The full set can be found here online: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/national-safeguarding-standards>

Please see the summary and overview below:

The Standards and Quality Assurance Framework are essential for the Church to understand the quality and, most importantly, the impact of its safeguarding activity. In addition, the Standards provide a simple construct which integrates the complexity of all safeguarding activity in the Church. All such activities, at all levels across the Church, will relate to at least one Standard. Thus, the Standards provide a means of connecting and integrating what might otherwise be experienced as disconnected activities and also enable the Church to easily communicate its commitment to safeguarding.

The Five Standards are:

1. **Culture, Leadership and Capacity:** Church bodies have safe and healthy cultures, effective leadership, resourcing and scrutiny arrangements necessary to deliver high-quality safeguarding practices and outcomes.
2. **Prevention:** Church bodies have in place a planned range of measures which together are effective in preventing abuse in their context.

3. **Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk:** Risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes are of a high quality and result in positive outcomes. The assessment and management of risk is underpinned by effective partnership working.
4. **Victims and Survivors:** Victims and survivors experience the timeliness and quality of Church bodies' responses to disclosures, and their subsequent support, as positively meeting their needs, including their search for justice and helping their healing process.
5. **Learning, Supervision and Support:** All those engaged in safeguarding-related activity in Church bodies receive the type and level of learning, professional development, support and supervision necessary to respond to safeguarding situations, victims and survivors, and respondents, effectively.

Each Standard contains:

- A statement of the Standard itself.
- An explanation of why it is important.
- A series of 'What Good Looks Like' Indicators - these are detailed criteria that show how well a Standard is being achieved.
- Details of relevant House of Bishops' Guidance and Code, training, resources and tools that can be used to help gather data relevant to the indicators. These are important as they will equip Church bodies with the means to undertake quality assurance work locally, but also in a way that is consistent across other bodies.

It is not expected that every Church body will be able to meet every indicator overnight. The Standards set out the direction of travel and will enable Church bodies to identify both their strengths and areas for development, which will in turn inform their strategic planning in respect of safeguarding.

These standards are the basis for the National Audit of Safeguarding that the Church of England is currently carrying out. There is a timetable for the National Audit, and **every Parish in the Canterbury Diocese will be audited in November 2026**. It is therefore recommended that there is regular liaison with PCC to ensure that we are on track for this exercise.

Reinhard Guss, Parish Safeguarding Officer

7. Reports on Church organisations and activities

a) Children's Work Report

i) Live Wires Children's Group

'Live Wires' Children's Group (3 - 11 years) learn from videos or stories based on the lectionary reading for the Sunday adult service, using Roots resources (subscription funded by church budget). The children love creating something which they can take home with them as well as a chance to show their crafts to the adults in church and thoroughly enjoy doing this!

This year the children have been learning about both Old Testament and New Testament stories, ranging from Samuel, Ruth and Job through to Jesus's life, Pentecost

and Christmas activities too. They help in Family Praise services and some of our older children (8-9 years) lead interactive prayers.

Live Wires is growing! The number of children has increased from 4-6 last year to up to 14 when all the registered children are present. Thanks to donations to our funds, we are now able to meet in the Village Hall which gives us space for games, songs and other noisy activities! Currently we have just two regular leaders, so we really need at least one more leader and helper to join us on the team!

Bronny Slowe

ii) Family Time Together

Family time together continues to meet from 3-4.30pm on the second Sunday of the month. The children and parents watch a short cartoon version of a bible story – we have covered stories from both the Old and the New Testament this year. The story is followed by a song with actions which is linked to the story. This is followed by a prayer and then three craft activities linked to the story – which the children can then take home with them.

The joy of Family Time Together is that the numbers are continuing to grow with 10 – 18 children attending the sessions, together with their parent or parents. The children and their parents work on the different crafts together. The session concludes with refreshments of cakes and a drink, and this allows time for parents to get to know each other and for the children to play and have fun together.

Laura Gilbert

b) Choir Report

The church choir has played an important part in services this year. The choir have covered a variety of music and continue to challenge themselves. We had a membership drive with a 'Come and sing for Christmas' campaign, which welcomed some new singers, including a junior group who sang in the carol service. We are very glad to have increased our permanent membership and are very pleased to have Rev Andrew singing bass! We have a lot of fun and friendship at Tuesday evening rehearsals and will continue to consider new ways of encouraging membership. We are, as ever, so grateful for the time and talents that Peter Thomas so willingly gives to St. Mary's. We were please to mark his 80th birthday with a choir party.

Emily Renshaw-Kidd

c) Coffee and Cake Concerts.

Our Coffee and Cake concerts go from strength to strength. They are a great opportunity to welcome friends from our community of Chartham and beyond, as well as creating a regular source of income to the church. We are so grateful to all of the performers, many of whom are professional musicians and give their time and talents for free. We would also like to thank the people who help make the monthly concerts happen,

especially Dee, the people who sell raffle tickets and everyone who provides the cakes and other refreshments.

We are very happy to have bought a new digital hybrid piano for the church using choir funds and some legacy money from two past members of our church family, Gordon Luck and Kenneth Wilde, who both loved music. This will enable us to branch out in our performances and invite a more diverse range of performers. It will also make the church a more attractive hire prospect for concerts.

Emily Renshaw-Kidd

d) Flower Arrangers' Report

As I write this report, we have recently had Mothering Sunday with daffodil posies created by the congregation and palms for waving at Palm Sunday along with Bryan, the donkey. This year Easter was celebrated with white lilies with some pink flowers and an Easter tree decorated with coloured eggs. The Easter celebrations included a large cross in the churchyard which sends a great message to the community, especially with outdoor services planned.

We also like to celebrate Pentecost, Harvest and Remembrance Day, along with Christmas and if we are invited, we arrange wedding flowers as well. In between, we take turns to put flowers in church, apart from Lent and Advent.

We are a small group and are always on the lookout for new talent and flower appreciators. If you or anyone you know would like to join us, you would be most welcome so please be in touch. We would love to have new people.

Dee Hickman, 07928673483

e) Chartham Parish Magazine and Village News

The magazine has had another successful year with each issue consisting of 44 pages. From April 2024 the cover price went up to £1 but most readers pay £8 subscription for the year. As per last year, July and August will be a single issue as will December and January. Many thanks go to the regular advertisers. Their revenue plus the almost 400 subscriptions mean that the magazine raises approximately £1000 for church funds. The magazine is a church publication and has considerable church and Christian content. As such, it could be thought of as a form of outreach to the village community. In addition, the magazine promotes Village News with regular articles from: WI, Archives, League of Friends of Kent and Canterbury Hospital, The Ladies Group, The Royal British Legion, Lord Whisky Animal Sanctuary among others.

I would like to include more articles from the local community. These could be: reminiscences of Chartham, letters, forthcoming events, book reviews, poems, recipes, photographs etc. Please send all contributions to the address at the bottom of this article.



The magazine would not be in its present form if it wasn't for the technical prowess of Tim Kidd and I thank him for all he does.

Many thanks go to those who collect the magazine from the printers and sort them into the requisite distribution bundles. The team of distributors is invaluable, and I thank them for their loyalty and legwork.

David Arnott (Editor), magazine@stmaryschartham.org

f) Ladies Group

I'm really pleased to report that over the past 2 or 3 years the Ladies Group has continued to grow in number. We now have 27 women in our group, quite a lot of us having been members since we started the group in 2012 with a meal in Cafe Rouge and most women in the church in attendance. During this time we've had some wonderful meetings, with subjects ranging from dancing and singing, to Agape Love and from How to Begin Writing Simple Poetry to Holidays at Home in Cathy's garden (we played croquet on the small green in front of her house) to Foodbanks. After a Foodbank talk, with permission, we put a yellow food bin in our church and every few weeks it's contents were taken to All Saints Church, the collection point and given to Rev'd Phil Greig the Vicar in Charge at that time. The yellow bin still lingers in the church entrance, but it has now been superseded by the village hall and people also take donations to the Morrison's collection point or donate on-line.

During the past couple of years we have chosen to have more speakers, some from our own church and some outside speakers. This year we have had talks on Working With Natural Dyes, Poisons in the Books of Agatha Christie, Local Elections, Living with Epilepsy and how to Prevent Strokes.

We are pleased to welcome all to our meetings, male or female and a special welcome to people who are new to our church.

There are now three of us organising Ladies Group:

Cathy Arnold, Diana Withers and Maggie Williams-Chadwick.

g) Midweek events

The Advent Communion services during the month of December, followed by a soup lunch, were a lovely way of preparing for Christmas and it was wonderful to be joined by new people each week. The Lent Group, using the book 'How to Pray' by Bishop John Pritchard, attracted around 20 people each week, both longstanding church members and newcomers to St Mary's. We learnt a lot from both the book and each other about prayer and then enjoyed a soup lunch together. Thank you especially to Cathy and Martin Arnold for coordinating and setting up for the lunches and to all the talented cooks who made such delicious soup. Our next midweek service and lunch is for Ascension Day on Thursday 29th May.

There is clearly an interest in our village for a midweek community event that brings people together over lunch or a cup of coffee, please let me know if you would like to help set up a more regular midweek social event at St Mary's.

Rev Andrew Edwards

h) The Green House group

Our group usually meets weekly in Bronny & Robin's home on The Green. We meet to share our experiences of how we live out our faith, and to support each other in our faith journey. Mutual support in a 'confidential safe-space' is a core principle of the group.

Our raison d'être is:

- Fellowship and support
- Bible study
- Prayer

We may have a theme – during Lent we used the book "How to pray" for our studies - or we may take the Bible reading from the previous Sunday, and the preacher's sermon, as our starting point. We discuss how we believe this reading speaks to us as individuals; how it guides us in our daily lives; and how we believe that God is speaking to us about how we live out our faith and the challenges we encounter in this.

We find that this fellowship helps us in the many challenges we face in our lives as followers of Jesus Christ.

Robin Slowe

i) Shalmsford Street House Group

Some eight members of the church meet fortnightly on a Tuesday evening to read and discuss aspects of the Bible. Over the last year we have studied the book of Isaiah and then our studies were based on John Pritchard's book, *Twenty Questions Jesus Asked*. Most recently we have been considering the readings from the previous Sunday services.

Very sadly our group leader, Simon Hickman died last August. We would like to thank Dee for continuing to host the group and providing hospitality. At the end of each meeting we have a short time of open prayer where we have the opportunity to bring our concerns to the Lord.

There is space for a couple more people, so if you are interested in joining the group please have a word with David or Jane.

David and Jane Arnott

j) Lay Reader Training

I would like to thank Rev Andrew for being my supervising minister for my lay reader training. Thanks, also to the PCC for giving me a grant to purchase books and pay for travel. Thanks to the congregation for encouraging me to lead services or preach. I have almost finished the first-year course. Just a few more lectures and two more essays to write!

David Arnott

k) Eco Church Report

God has made us to be custodians of His creation. St Mary's Church recognises and teaches that care of creation and taking action to address the climate and nature crises are integral to Christian faith, life and worship.

Earlier this year the PCC endorsed St Mary's to be part of the Eco Church. The priorities were to assess the current position and explore strategies, using the A Rocha framework, to move forward effectively, collectively and transform the way we act.

A Rocha is "The Rock" in Portuguese and began from a conviction that, as the "earth is the Lord's, and everything in it" (Psalm 24:1), worship of the Lord must include caring well for what is His.

St Mary's is part of a bigger Eco Church community, including the Diocese of Canterbury. Other churches are aiming for "Gold", but we are at the start of our journey and aiming for the bronze level before Christmas 2025. It can be done and lots to do.

So far, we have looked at the five areas (Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement and Lifestyle) required to reach the Bronze level; implemented some "quick wins" eg a SMART meter; engaged with members of the church, listening to their ideas and how they make contributions to looking after God's creation. Part of this has been raising awareness of "Walk Church", very much enjoyed by members of our congregation. Also, we have been researching into an effective heating system for the church whilst being mindful of capital outlay, comfort of church users, protecting the building's heritage and acknowledging that the church is God's people. In addition, we have been publicising what St Mary's Eco Church is doing through different mediums, such as, Facebook, church website, service sheets, the church magazine and in general conversation.

On our journey so far, there has been no financial outlay incurred however, going forward, there will be a need to fund raise and seek out available grants to take our responsibility towards care of creation and progress further. There is much we can do individually and as a church to be informed, open to change and act on to transform our mindsets and help creation.

As Pope Francis said in 2020, we have a moral imperative to act on climate change.

Sarah Challender – Eco Church Lead

8. Priest-in-Charge's Report

Thank you very much to St Mary's PCC, to all the members of St Mary's Church and to everyone in the wider parish for welcoming Jo and me so warmly to Chartham. We are very much enjoying being part of the life of the village.

I remember very clearly the beautiful sunny evening on 17th July when I was licensed as Priest-in-Charge by Bishop Rose and then installed (literally) in my vicar's stall by Arch-deacon Will. Since then, I have been happy to begin to get to know people and to settle into the regular pattern of Sunday Services, church meetings and visits in the parish. Some personal highlights for me during this time have been the Harvest Festival, the Christmas Carol and Crib Services, the special Mothering Sunday Service with craft activities, our outdoor Good Friday event with some wonderful singing led by accordion and guitar and of course Bryan the donkey, leading our Palm Sunday procession into church.

Throughout this time, it has been wonderful to be able welcome new people to St Mary's and especially to see the growing number of children coming to our 'Live Wires' Sunday School in the morning and 'Family Time Together' on a Sunday afternoon. I remarked in a sermon a few weeks ago that we can see that the children are helping to renew our church, bringing enthusiasm and life and encouraging us to worship God in simpler and more joyful ways. I would like to take this opportunity to thank especially the leaders and helpers of our children's activities for their dedicated hard work over a long period of time which has enabled this new flourishing in our church to take place. As the numbers of children increase, I would also like to encourage anyone who feels they might be able to help with our children's activities to have a look at the Children, Families and Young People page of our website for more information on how to join the Children's Team.

https://www.stmaryschartham.org/Groups/345463/Children_Families_Young.aspx



In a growing church there can be new challenges in organising activities and enabling each member to contribute to the church's life and worship. I remember hearing many years ago about 'Every-member Ministry', linked to St Paul's description of the church as a body with many different parts, each part contributing something unique and important to the whole.

St Paul writes; "there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you' nor again the head to the feet 'I have no need of you'. On the contrary the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable."

We are very fortunate to have such a diverse congregation with people who are gifted in many ways, from good cooks to good singers, from those who have great ideas to those who are great at repairing things. We have members who are gifted at praying and those who are gifted at organising, those whose focus is on life in the church and those whose focus is on life outside the church. It is wonderful and good to know that there is a place and a role for all of us to flourish and contribute to the wider church community.

Two thoughts arise from this, the first is a question – have we had the opportunity to fully work out what our gifts are and what our role might be in the church and wider world? And if we are thinking, ‘well there is no role for me, I’m not important enough’... do we dare to take on board Paul’s assurance above that whatever view we have of ourselves this does not make us any less a vital part of the body of Christ? One way of exploring this question is through a free 8-week course offered by our Diocese called ‘Deepening Discipleship’. This is ‘for anyone wishing to explore discipleship, their gifts and sense of calling whether in church or in the local community’. A new course is starting in Canterbury on 5th June and one or two people are planning to attend from our church, why not join them? (<https://www.canterburydiocese.org/our-life/spirituality-discipleship/explore-discipleship/deepening-discipleship/>)



The second thought is: as our church grows, we may need to further develop teams of people who work together to contribute to church life. There are currently a wide variety of roles within the church such as choir member, flower arranger, welcomer, hospitality provider (tea, coffee, cake, soup etc), church fabric maintainer, children’s leader, magazine distributor, intercessor, reader etc. Some of these are already organised into teams with a team leader to coordinate them, other roles are less structured. I believe that over the coming year we may be able to form more teams as a way of supporting the different roles within the church. This could also make it easier for each team to link to a member of PCC so that all parts of the church body can be represented and contribute to the decisions that we make. Please do let me know what you think about this and please do share any ideas that you have for the future life and ministry of our church with me.

My prayer at this time is that, as we continue our adventure of faith, of trust in God, we may also continue to be surprised and encouraged by signs of new life in His church and be ready to set out with Him, and with each other, on new paths and new ways – wherever He is leading us.

Thank you for all that you contribute to the life of St Mary’s Church and thank you for inviting me to join you on this wonderful adventure with God.

Rev Andrew Edwards