

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish
of Stretton
St Matthew's**



**Trustee Annual Report and Financial Statements for Year
ending 31st December 2025**

Registered Charity Number: 1132920

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Acknowledgement

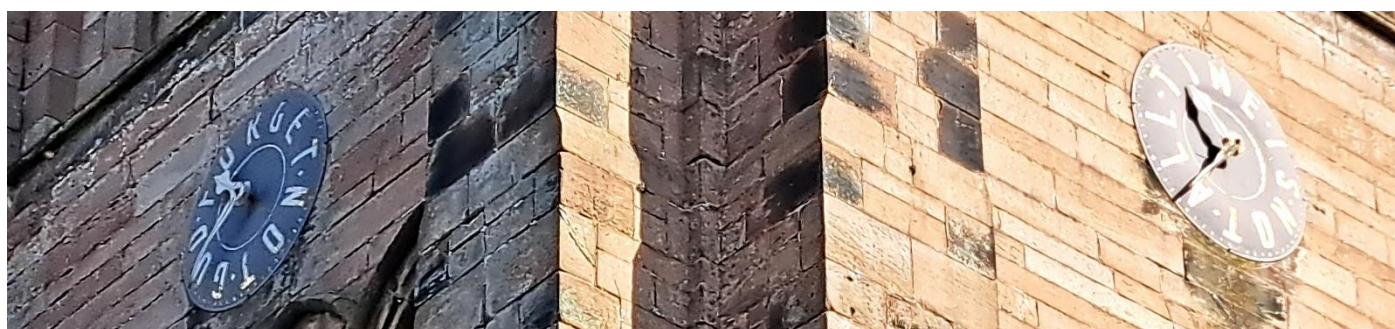
This report pays tribute to all those in the congregation; the PCC and the Clergy team for all their work and ministry in supporting our church, often not seen, but for the benefit of the whole parish.

St. Matthew's Church

St. Matthew's Church is situated in the village of Stretton in Warrington with the parish boundaries encompassing Appleton and Stretton, and bordering Appleton Thorn and St Cross Church which is within the Benefice. The Parish of St Matthew's Stretton is in the Deanery of Great Budworth and is part of the Diocese of Chester.

The Church is a Grade II listed building with a rich heritage dating back to 1827.

The Church is built of red sandstone with Westmorland slate roofs and has a bell tower accommodating a ring of eight bells. It also has a tower clock with two unique clock faces (there are only about half a dozen church clocks in the country which have letters instead of numbers). During the year restoration work was undertaken so the clock is now working again and striking the hours.



The Parish was originally in a rural village location, but now, north of the M56, is becoming part of the south Warrington conurbation, whilst remaining more rural south of the motorway. The recent housing developments have increased the population. New housing is proposed south of the church, which will place the Church at the heart of a housing community, rather than its previously rural position. This will be part of the South East Warrington Urban Extension which will create 4,200 new homes across 6 neighbourhoods.

The Church considers itself very fortunate to have such a beautiful building, although maintenance of the fabric continues to be a challenge.

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is an integral part of the Church family. It is located next to the Church which facilitates the use of the Church by the School. This allows children of all ages to familiarise themselves with the building, not just for faith-related activities, but for its history, architecture, and heritage.

The Church Hall is opposite the school, and is used on weekdays by a Pre-School as well as several local groups such as Brownies and Stretton Parish Council as well as Church groups and is available for private hire, e.g. for celebrations. There is an ongoing effort by the Church Hall Management Committee to market the benefits of hire within the local community.



The Vicar's Report 2025 – the Reverend Alan Jewell

As I produced last year's report, it occurred to me that it might be the last time I ever had to do such a thing. It turns out, I was wrong, and here we are again!

I wrote last year's report, covering the year 2024, shortly after the national Day of Reflection which marked the fifth anniversary of the first lockdown of the COVID19 pandemic. I spoke then about the shadow of those events still hanging over us. One more year on, we still live with the memory of those days.

The work of recovery has continued during 2025, but we are now also beginning to look ahead — both to the future of our churches and, for me personally, to retirement and the end of my time as your vicar.

Looking back over the past year, we give thanks for the life and witness of our two church communities. St Matthew's and St Cross are different in character, yet together they form a single benefice, sharing in the calling to worship God, to serve our communities — Stretton, Appleton, and Appleton Thorn — and to make known the love of Christ. As in every year, there have been both challenges and encouragements, and signs of quiet faithfulness alongside moments of growth and change.

Worship

Our regular pattern of services has remained broadly unchanged. At St Cross, we continue to gather for Holy Communion each Sunday at 9.30am. At St Matthew's, the main Sunday service is at 10.45am, with Holy Communion on the first and third Sundays, and Morning Worship on the second and fourth Sundays. Morning Worship is intended to be more all-age friendly. On those Sundays, a small and faithful group gathers at 8am for Holy Communion. In addition, an informal contemporary evening service is held on the first Sunday of the month, drawing people from across the benefice, and which is much appreciated by those who attend.

We also have, from time to time, a united morning service — usually on the fifth Sunday of the month, or the Sunday after Christmas or Easter (when clergy tend to disappear), or when we have an episcopal visit — as we did for Holy Cross Day (14 September) when Bishop Mark, the Bishop of Chester came to a service at St Cross.

At St Matthew's, it is encouraging to see the continued presence of families with young children, particularly at Praise & Play and Sunday morning worship. We are grateful to those who lead activities for children during communion services. At St Cross, the absence of children remains a challenge. Nevertheless, both churches offer a warm welcome to all who come.

Morning services from St Matthew's continue to be livestreamed and recorded. We have improved things considerably since the days of our improvised and makeshift technical set-up, and this provision enables those who are unable to attend in person to remain connected with the worshipping life of the church.

We are grateful, as always, to all who contribute to our worship: those who lead, read, preach, and pray; those who prepare our buildings, arrange flowers, ring bells, operate sound and projection, welcome visitors, and provide hospitality. Special thanks go to Linda Buckley, our Reader who leads and preaches across both churches.

Life Events

In 2025, our two churches together were responsible for 31 baptisms (up from 19 in 2024), 6 weddings (down slightly from 7 in 2024), and 23 funerals (very similar to the 22 in 2024).

Of the 31 baptisms, 27 were at St Matthew's and 4 at St Cross; of the 6 weddings, 4 were at St Matthew's and 2 at St Cross; and of the 23 funerals, 17 were conducted on behalf of St Matthew's and 6 on behalf of St Cross.

Baptisms

The number of baptisms was particularly high in 2022, as we had a post-pandemic catch-up, before falling again in 2023 and 2024. It is encouraging to see a significant recovery in 2025, especially at St Matthew's. This suggests that, while patterns of connection with the church may fluctuate, many families continue to seek baptism for their children.

Weddings

Weddings show a more gradual decline since 2022, when, again, there was some catching up to be done. The fall in numbers of church weddings reflects wider social change. Nevertheless, each wedding remains a significant pastoral opportunity, bringing us into contact with couples and families at an important moment in their lives.

Funerals

Funerals continue to form a substantial and consistent part of our ministry. The majority are, as one would expect, for those in later old age, often giving thanks for long lives well lived. However, there are also occasions when we are called to minister in situations where death comes much earlier than expected. Such services can be particularly demanding pastorally, as families struggle to come to terms with loss that is untimely and difficult. Both church congregations also found themselves saying goodbye to much-loved members and offering support to their families.

All in all...

Taken together, these patterns highlight a familiar feature of parish ministry: our strongest points of contact with the community are often at the very beginning and the end of life. This offers both an opportunity and a challenge — an opportunity to offer care, welcome and the hope of the gospel at significant moments, and a challenge to build deeper and more sustained relationships with people and families in the years between.

As always, I am grateful to all who support our 'Life Events' ministry: the vergers, churchwardens, administrators, musicians, flower arrangers, bellringers, and other clergy who assist with services. And, again, Linda Buckley, who offers a significant funeral ministry often based on personal and scouting connections.

Parochial Church Councils

Both of our Parochial Church Councils have continued to exercise their responsibilities for the governance of the church, sharing in oversight of our worship, mission, safeguarding, finances, and the care of our buildings. I am grateful to all who serve on the PCCs and Standing Committees of St Matthew's and St Cross for their commitment, wisdom, and willingness to take responsibility in the life of the church.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains a standing priority in both churches, and PCC members have engaged with this not simply as a matter of compliance, but as part of our shared commitment to creating a safe and healthy church culture.

Finance

Both PCCs have also continued to monitor finances carefully, recognising the pressures that we face, while also giving thanks for the generosity and faithfulness of those who support our life together, and for the hard work of our Treasurers - Matthew Heywood at St Matthew's and Tracy-Anne Clancy at St Cross.

Further information about church finances for the year 2025 is available elsewhere in this report.

Fabric

The care of our buildings has again been a significant area of attention. At St Matthew's, attention has been given to ongoing fabric issues, including drainage in the basement and improvements to lighting, as well as general maintenance of the building. We are very grateful to the Community Payback Team who work in the churchyard each week, keeping it in a very good state.

The PCC has also begun planning for the celebration of the church's 200th anniversary in 2026, which offers an opportunity both to give thanks for the past and to look ahead with hope.

At St Cross, the PCC has continued to give careful attention to the upkeep of the church and churchyard, managing the ongoing responsibilities that come with maintaining an historic building with limited resources. The life of St Cross continues to be sustained by a small but faithful congregation, and I am grateful for their quiet commitment and service. Thank you to 'Team Thorn' for work inside and out.

Further information about church buildings is available elsewhere in this report.

Vacancy

During the year, both PCCs have also begun to look ahead to the period of vacancy that will follow my retirement. While this will bring challenges, it also represents an opportunity for others to take on new roles and responsibilities, and for both churches to continue to grow in confidence and shared leadership. If you think you might be able to help, please speak with a Churchwarden or with Reader, Linda Buckley.

Volunteers and Community Life

Both churches continue to depend on the generosity of volunteers, and I am deeply grateful to all who give their time and energy in so many different ways. From Linda, our Reader, churchwardens and PCC members for both churches, to those who clean and prepare our buildings, organise events, and offer hospitality, much of the life of the church is sustained by work that is often unseen.

Community

Both St Matthew's and St Cross continue to host regular opportunities for community connection, including weekly coffee mornings and a variety of social and fundraising events. At St Matthew's, activities such as the Singing Kettle and the monthly quiz continue to bring people together in an enjoyable and accessible way, while also

supporting the work of the church. The Christmas Tree Festival is always a highlight and 'the start of Christmas' for many. At St Cross, regular gatherings play an equally important role in maintaining community connections. Both churches host musical evenings and other social events during the year.

We often think of these occasions as 'fundraising', but they are, just as importantly, helpful in building relationships and offering a sense of welcome and belonging within our communities.

Both churches also have good relationships with local schools: St Matthew's has an obvious connection with Stretton St Matthew's CE Primary School, but St Cross also has very good links with Appleton Thorn Primary School – not a church school, but they often mark festivals with services in church. I have taken collective worship and assemblies in both schools, and at Grappenhall Heys.

Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, we do so in a time of change. The coming year will bring the celebration of the 200th anniversary of St Matthew's, as well as the beginning of a new chapter in the life of the benefice following my retirement.

Times of transition can be unsettling, but they also offer opportunities for renewal.

In April this year, at St Matthew's we are marking the repair and refurbishing of the tower clock. As you know, the two clock faces are unique in having letters instead of numbers. They spell out two phrases:

'Time is not all' and 'Forget not God'.

Writing an annual report reminds me that so much of what we do is shaped by time – the daily, weekly, seasonal and annual cycles that govern our lives. In the annual report, we are invited to look back over a calendar year. We are also looking forward to all that lies ahead. What the church clock says is that time is not the whole story. The psalmist reflects on God's eternal faithfulness and our transitory experience, and prays:

Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90.12)

The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that:

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven. (Ecclesiastes 3.1)

We give thanks for all that has been, and entrust the future to God.

Alan Jewell

Vicar, St Matthew's, Stretton, and St Cross, Appleton Thorn

Aim and Purpose.

Aim

The primary objective of all Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) is the promotion of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility to co-operate with the incumbent – the Reverend Alan Jewell – “in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.” (The PCC (Powers) Measure 1956).

At St. Matthew’s the mission statement is “[Sharing the love of Jesus with all through friendship, prayer and service.](#)” The Church exists to serve its Parish – the whole local Community – not just its congregation.

Structure, governance, and management.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and is a Registered Charity (Charity No. 1132920). The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, the Church Representation Rules 2023, and the Charities Act 2011.

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting by those on the electoral roll, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules and the Charity Commission Guidance. They are the charity trustees who are “persons having the general control and management of the administration of the charity” (Charities Act 2011).

The PCC is chaired by the Vicar and meets monthly, with the exceptions of August and December. Meetings alternate between a full business meeting and a discussion meeting of one or two items only. This allows for the business meeting to deal primarily with the operational and financial management of the Church, with reports from sub-committees, and any urgent business. The discussion meeting allows for in-depth debate on key items and is important both for the education of members and to allocate more time for topics which may have greater medium to long term significance than could be given in a bigger agenda.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 18th May 2025, two people were newly elected, having previously been co-opted, and one member was re-elected.

Stephen Edwards was elected as churchwarden for a further year. There were no other nominations for churchwarden.

Maddy Murdoch, as Parish Safeguarding Officer, maintains the diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard to ensure that appropriate checks, actions and training are in place.

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops’ guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

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

Ex Officio	Revd. Alan Jewell
Church Warden	Stephen Edwards
Lay Representatives on The Deanery Synod	Linda Buckley Stephen Edwards Carol Rylett
Treasurer	Matt Heywood *
Secretary	Stephen Edwards
Elected Members	
Elected until 2028	Jean Doherty
Elected until 2026	Carol Rylett
Elected until 2028	Laura Matheson
Elected until 2028	Matt Heywood

The Standing Committee of the PCC meets monthly to consider any matters between PCC meetings, and to set the agenda and to ensure that relevant papers and information are ready to inform decision-making. It also has the responsibility to transact the business of the PCC between meetings.

The PCC is assisted The Church Hall Management Committee which is a sub-committee of the PCC, concerned with the running of the church hall.

St Matthew's is represented on the Deanery Synod by the Vicar and three lay members. Our Reader is the Lay Chairman. The Deanery Synod is an intermediary between the PCC and Diocesan Synod and usually meets three times per year. The Deanery Synod is made up of Clergy and Laity members from across the Great Budworth deanery. It met three times during the year to hear reports from the Diocesan Synod, to discuss the Diocesan Strategy, the church's work at Creamfields and other matters.

Public benefit

A key responsibility of the PCC is to identify how our activities are focused on achieving public benefit and positively impacting on the lives of people in our congregation and community. The Strategy work has focused significantly on how the Church can outreach

and build increasingly stronger links with the local community. The incumbent, Alan Jewell, and the PCC are very aware of the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on “Charities for the advancement of religion” (2011) and are keen to demonstrate how this is being achieved in practice.

Objectives and Activities

Strategic development to enable recovery and growth.

The church has returned to a more normal situation post COVID, and we continue to explore new areas of development.

Continuing to develop links and promote positive action beyond the Church building into the Community.

This involves communication and events.

Develop and progress our work on eco-church.

Eco Church is a scheme run by A Rocha, UK equipping churches to care for God's creation through their worship, buildings, land, community engagement, and individual lifestyles. There is a survey tool which assesses a church's current position and has advice on how to become more Eco-friendly.

Promote the Diocesan strategy.

The diocese's previous four streams of the strategy have coalesced into three strategic priorities, which are:

- **Building Local Strategic Partnerships-** focusing on collaboration and shared mission, between neighbouring parishes, which may include ecumenical ventures or joint projects with schools, chaplaincies, or charities working in the same area.

The forth-coming vacancy will create opportunities for closer links with the other parishes in the deanery as ministers visit to take services.

- **Developing New Leaders-** “for most of us, leadership simply begins with loving God and neighbour in practical ways.” “We long for a diocese that is younger, bolder, more diverse, greener, safer, and more just. That requires leaders from every background and walk of life. Some will help us grow younger or braver; others will help us become more just, welcoming, or sustainable. The more diverse we are, the safer and more inclusive we become.”¹

There are opportunities within St. Matthew's for people to take on leadership either of individual events or projects, or as part of the PCC. We have a couple of Occasional Worship Leaders.

- **Establishing New Christian Communities-** This was previously phrased as “new worshipping communities”. “This strategic priority is intentionally local. Every parish, chaplaincy, and mission context is invited to explore new or renewed ways

¹ Chester Diocese website [Strategy - Leadership | Chester Diocese](#)

of gathering around Jesus — creating spaces where people can meet Him and one another in authentic community.”²

For St. Matthew’s this will involve welcoming the occupants of the new housing planned as part of the South East Warrington Urban Extension into our existing community, as we have done with the recent housing developments.

Meeting our Objectives – Performance and Review

Strategic development to enable recovery and growth

Building on the work of the previous year four areas were identified for further work:

- Service provision
- Children & young people
- Nurturing Discipleship
- Events

Service provision

We maintained the adopted service pattern:

- First and third Sunday 10:45am Holy Communion
- Second and Fourth Sunday 8am Holy Communion, 10.45 Morning Worship
- Fifth Sunday: A United Service with St. Cross.
- A monthly Contemporary Evening Service.

The main Sunday morning service is streamed on YouTube and the church’s website, and is watched by people who are not able to get to the service. This is one of the positive things that came out of the COVID pandemic.

Children & young people

We continue with Children’s Activities during the 10.45am Holy Communion services, supported by several volunteers. It mainly consists of activity sheets which are done around one of the tables at the back of the church.

If there is sufficient demand for Children’s Activities on a Sunday morning, and there are sufficient numbers, then the church hall is available.

Nurturing Discipleship

During Lent and Advent, we hold a weekly service of Compline (or 'Night Prayer') which includes a reflection led by Alan or Linda. These usually follow a theme that encourages church members to consider how their own faith and discipleship might develop.

Coffee after services on Sundays and Thursdays often provides opportunities for church members to discuss matters that have arisen from worship and preaching.

Church Fellowship

² Chester Diocese website [Strategy - Communities | Chester Diocese](#)

The Church Fellowship has 25 members across the benefice. This year's speakers have included Medical Detection Dogs, St. John's Ambulance who explained automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) and taught CPR, travel talks, the Parish Council and the Vicar whose talk on ecclesiastical matters also included a tutorial on ukeleles.. Other activities have included Afternoon Tea at Fryer's Garden Centre, and a Christmas meal at The Cat and Lion. At Christmas the Fellowship supported Warrington Open Door at Christmas.

The Singing Kettle.

The Singing Kettle has regular gatherings on the fourth Thursday of every month in the Church Hall with refreshments and an informal sing-along.

Events

A number of events were put on during the year for the local community, with the intention of reaching beyond the regular congregation:

Stretton's Past Unveiled

In June, Clare Olver gave a talk on Stretton's history covering Landowners, Lives and the Shadow of Slavery.

Quizzes

Linda Buckley has run a monthly quiz, which is hosted by the Stretton Fox.

Musical evenings

Two musical evenings were held in July and December featuring local musicians, St. Matthew's Primary School, the Appleton Thorn choir and the Singing Kettle band leading everyone in song.

Heritage Open Days

On 20th September the Church was open as part of the national Heritage Open Days. The tower was also open up to the Ringing Chamber, and several people ascended to learn about bell ringing.

Christmas Tree Festival

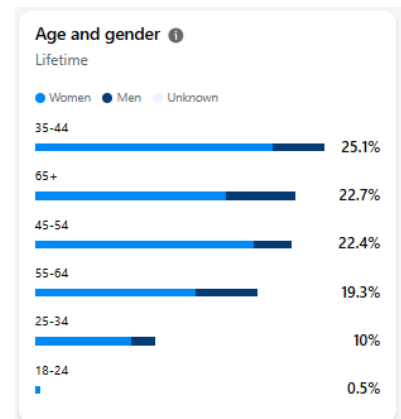
The annual Christmas Tree Festival was held over the last weekend in November and the first in December with local businesses sponsoring and decorating the trees.

Continuing to develop links and promote positive action beyond the Church building into the community.

Communication is mainly electronic, using the church's website and Facebook page.

Facebook

Our Facebook page has 570 followers (555 last year) of whom 83.4% live in Warrington, but with sharing to other local pages our posts can reach more than double that number, with approximately a third engaging with the post (commenting, liking or sharing). The graphic shows our audience profile:



You Tube

We continue to stream our main Sunday service live on You Tube, which benefits members who are not able to get to the church. Our YouTube channel had 78 subscribers, and a monthly audience of 53, with 1,000 views in 2025.

Website

Our website (www.stmatthewschurchstretton.org.uk) attracts over 1,000 visitors per month.

This objective is ongoing - the website and our Facebook page require a continual flow of postings to keep them relevant.

Develop and progress our work on eco-church.

We have started the new format Eco-Church survey to benchmark ourselves against the criteria covering five key areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings and energy
- Land and nature
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

The survey raises simple ideas which could be done as part of our Eco Strategy. It requires a small committee of people familiar with how the church operates to complete the survey, and to develop our eco-strategy.

Promote the Diocesan strategy.

The PCC shares the aims of the Diocesan strategy as set out above.

Fabric

The PCC receives regular reports on the status of the fabric of the buildings, which requires a continued programme of repairs and maintenance.

A scheme for replacing the lights in the church with LEDs was designed but the lighting units were not considered to be aesthetically appropriate for a church setting, and an alternative consultant has been approached. Replacing the lights with LEDs will result in

all the lights working, and at a lower running cost.

Investigation of the basement drains continued. Old plans suggest that the vestry gutters drain through the basement, the gulleys are to be cleared to check if this is the case.

The clock mechanism was removed to the clock maker's workshop, and he got it working again on his bench. Re-fitting the clock in the tower began in November, and was operational in February 2026.

We continue to benefit from the work done by the Community Payback Scheme in maintaining the churchyard.

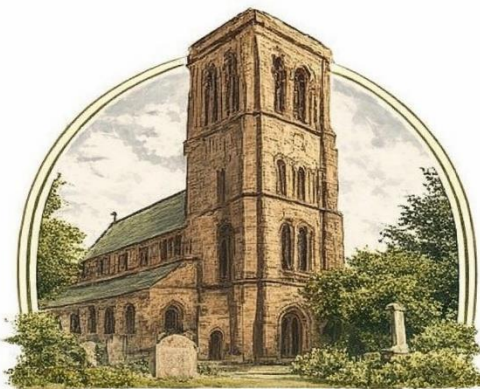
The current church building is over 150 years old. The PCC makes the minor repairs required as funds allow, and is aware that in time more expensive work will be required to the walls and roof.

Looking Forward to 2026

Whilst the challenges the Church faces are not underestimated, the church is growing in numbers across all ages. The PCC keeps the changes which have been made under review, and will make adaptations as necessary.

In December 2025, the Vicar, Revd Alan Jewell, announced his plan to retire at the end of May. Whilst this will lead to a period of uncertainty, the PCC remain optimistic about the year ahead which sees on 23 November the 200th anniversary of the laying of the first stone of the original church building. A year of events being planned, culminating on 9th November 2027 which marks the 200th anniversary of the consecration of the church.

St. Matthew's Church Stretton



200 YEARS
AT THE HEART OF
THE COMMUNITY

Financial Review

Income

Voluntary Giving

Total voluntary receipts from general unrestricted funds received were £55,447, received through planned giving, service collections, voluntary donations, and gift aid tax recovery. Compared with 2024, giving through Standing Orders decreased by 7%, while collections at services increased by £500.

The church is grateful for the many donations through 2025, including regular giving, one-off gifts in memory of loved ones, and specific donations towards the church hall repairs and clock restoration.

Other Income

Income from the Church Hall increased by £2,000 in 2025, due to greater use by the pre-school group. Although the number of regular users fell slightly, the hall continues to be a valuable source of income and a benefit to the community.

Fundraising events, including quizzes, coffee mornings and ad-hoc music events, raised £2,000. The annual Christmas tree festival raised £1,200, with 50% donated to a local community charity.

Expenditure

Parish Share

The largest expenditure item was the Parish Share, totalling £42,867 in 2025. This contribution supports diocesan mission and ministry, including clergy housing, stipend, pensions, new ordinand training, and shared diocesan costs. The contribution also assists churches with financial difficulties.

The amount due from the Church for 2025 was £85,734. The PCC, recognising ongoing financial constraints, contributed 50%. As of 31st December 2025, the unpaid balance stands at £84,486. This is not a legal liability and does not show in the Financial Statements. However, the PCC is regularly reviewing its parish share payment with the intention to increase payments when feasible.

Staff costs

The PCC employed a church hall cleaner during 2025 and paid a vergers for wedding and funerals. The vergers resigned at the end of December 2025, and the PCC intends to appoint a replacement as soon as feasible.

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC supported the clergy by paying Council Tax, Water, telephone, broadband and reimbursement for travel expenses amounting to £6,021. No further expense payments were made to persons related to, or connected to, the trustees.

Other charitable giving

The Christmas Tree Festival, this raised £1,214, of which and £607 (50%) was donated to WODAC (Warrington open door at Christmas). This is a local charity and the PCC are grateful to be able to support the local community.

Repairs

Routine maintenance and repairs continued throughout 2025 to ensure compliance with health and safety responsibilities. This included the removal of timber and other debris from the church basement, to allow investigative works into the church basement to continue. The car park wall was also repaired, with an insurance claim submitted for this incident.

Major Works

Major repairs were undertaken in the church hall to refurbish the toilets, during the summer holidays period. The PCC is grateful for a donation from the Stretton Old School Trust, which covered the cost of repairs. Work was also undertaken on the restoration of the church clock, through generous donations.

Reserves

The PCC continues to have a good reserves position, due to generous legacies given in the past. It is the policy of the PCC to keep two months general running costs as a general reserve, plus an additional amount to cover committed contract costs and minor repairs. Major building works, including those identified under the Quinquennial Inspection, will only be undertaken once additional funding is secured. The PCC is aware of the increasing priority of this major work. The reserve requirement under this policy is £25,000. Our current free reserves more than meet this policy and will enable the PCC to use the remaining reserves to support its cash flow during 2026, if required to continue its mission.

As of 31 December 2025:

- Unrestricted reserves were £65,506 – with these available to support the general running of the church
- Restricted reserves - £27,440

The investments are accumulation shares held with CCLA in The Church of England Investment Fund. These create capital growth rather than income.

Financial Recovery Plan.

Throughout 2025, the PCC continued implementing its Financial Recovery Plan. Repairs were kept to the minimum necessary for health and safety. High running costs remained a challenge, slowing progress towards financial recovery.

Looking Forward

Given the inability to pay full parish share, the continued deficit is a concern, with an increased requirement to undertake additional maintenance and repairs during 2026.

The PCC has looked to reduce costs wherever possible and will continue to do so in 2026. The PCC has also decided to continue to pay its Parish Share at 50% to ensure sufficient reserves if required.

Increased giving remains essential to support running costs and future repairs. The PCC is aware of its current dependence on regular donors and regular hall hirers. In late 2025, the church explored the Parish Giving Scheme to make regular giving more accessible, and the PCC has agreed to adopt the scheme. Alongside the upcoming 200-year anniversary celebrations, the aim is to encourage increase regular giving.

The church remains grateful to all those who contribute to the Church financially and in other ways.

Process for recruitment and appointment of trustees

The church runs an annual general meeting, where members of the electoral roll can stand to become a trustee of the church. To be nominated as a trustee an individual should be proposed and seconded by members of the electoral role.

Measures are in place to manage the recruitment and appointment of trustees; this includes all members signing the trustee eligibility and fit and proper persons declaration.

Going concern

The trustees are continually reviewing the operations of the church and its ability to deliver on its objectives. It is the opinion of the trustees that the charity remains a going concern.

Administration

Principal Address: St Matthew's Church
Stretton Road
Warrington
Cheshire
WA4 4NT

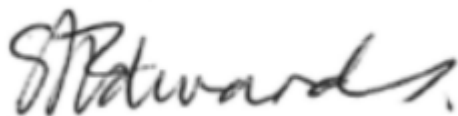
Independent Examiner: Janine Boyo BFP FCA MAAT,
Voisey & Co
Chartered Accountants
8 Winmarleigh Street
Warrington
Cheshire
WA1 1JW

Bankers: HSBC
11 Bridge Street
Warrington
WA1 2EY

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
1 Angel Lane
London
EC4R 3AB

Architect: Richard Williams BA(Hons) BArch RIBA
Williams Architecture
88 Cherry Lane
Lymm
Cheshire
WA13 0PD

Approved by the board of trustees on 17th May 2026 and signed on their behalf by:



Stephen Edwards
Churchwarden and Vice-Chair of Parochial Church Council
17th May 2026

Financial Statements Of the Parochial Church Council Of
The Ecclesiastical Parish Of Stretton – St Matthew's For
The Year Ended 31st December 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF STRETTON
(Registered Number: 1132920)

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthew's.

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthew's for the year ended 31st December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the Statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached



Janine Boyo BFP FCA MAAT
Voisey & Co
Chartered Accountants
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Date: 17th May 2026

Statement of Financial Activities – Accounts to 31.12.2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Donations and legacies	£55,447	£14,250	£69,697	£57,698
Income from charitable activities	£5,913	-	£5,913	£6,858
Other trading activities	£14,418	-	£14,418	£12,503
Investments	£596	£217	£814	£764
Other income	£2,668	-	£2,668	£2,413
Total income	£79,045	£14,467	£93,512	£80,237
Raising funds	£48	£320	£368	£436
Expenditure on charitable activities	£70,128	£9,712	£79,841	£77,754
Other expenditure	£6,564	£265	£6,829	£4,383
Total expenditure	£76,741	£10,297	£87,039	£82,574
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	£2,303	£4,170	£6,473	(£2,337)
Gross transfers between funds - in	£4,900	£4,940	£9,840	-
Gross transfers between funds - out	(£4,941)	(£4,901)	(£9,841)	-
Gains/losses on investment assets	(£456)	(£37)	(£492)	£6,523
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	-	£38,000
Net movement in funds	£1,808	£4,173	£5,981	£42,186
Total funds brought forward	£101,698	£23,266	£124,964	£82,777
Total funds carried forward	£103,506	£27,440	£130,946	£124,964

Balance Sheet (Summary) - Accounts to 31.12.2025

	As at 31/12/2025	As at 31/12/2024
Fixed assets		
Tangible Assets	£38,000	£38,000
	£38,000	£38,000
Current assets		
Investments	£41,654	£42,146
Cash At Bank And In Hand	£51,669	£44,993
	£93,324	£87,139
Liabilities		
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year	£378	£175
	£378	£175
Net current assets less current liabilities	£92,946	£86,964
Total assets less current liabilities	£130,946	£124,964
Liabilities		
	-	-
Total net assets less liabilities	£130,946	£124,964
Represented by		
Unrestricted		
Unrestricted - General Funds	£103,506	£101,698
Restricted		
Restricted Funds	£27,440	£23,266
Fund Totals	£130,946	£124,964

Approved by the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stretton – St Matthews on 17th May 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



Stephen Edwards
Churchwarden and Vice-Chair of Parochial Church Council

Supporting notes to accounts:

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
2. The fixed asset retained for the church use is the church hall at historical cost.
3. The PCC has considered its reserves in accordance with the policy set out in their report. The reserve requirement based on these accounts is £25,000 which is more than met by the PCC's free reserves.
4. Staff Costs: The PCC pays for the services of a Verger and paid for a Church Hall Cleaner for part of the year. There were no employee benefits to key management personnel in the previous or current years.
5. Transactions with Trustees: The incumbent was supported through payment of council tax, water rates, broadband, telephone and reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the Church, totalling £6,021