

TAUNTON MINSTER
Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
Saint Mary Magdalene Taunton

ANNUAL REPORT and ACCOUNTS

2025



To know Christ better and
make Christ better known

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name: Taunton Minster (PCC of St Mary Magdalene Church, Taunton)

Location: Taunton Minster, Church Square, Taunton TA1 1SA

Correspondence Address: PCC Secretary c/o Benefice Office, Whirligig Lane, Taunton TA1 1SQ
e-mail: office@tauntonminster.org
www.tauntonminster.org

PCC Membership as of 31 December 2025:

Alan Ladd*	-	Acting Chair
Reverend Louise Bale*	-	Associate Vicar (Non-Stipendiary)
Reverend Gwen Smith*	-	Associate Priest (Non-Stipendiary)
Reverend Caryl Plewes*	-	Curate
Lesley Webb*	-	Churchwarden
Ray Tully* `	-	Churchwarden
Claire Mort	-	Deanery Synod
Marléne Phillips	-	Deanery Synod
Paul Hughes	-	Deanery Synod
Georgina Morgan		
Sandra Jordan		
Caroline Lee		
Victoria Black		
Alli Saltrese-Taylor		
Charlotte Brand*		
Nicola Johnson		
Andrew Crookes		
Robin Williams		
Nick Mort		
Julia Trigg		
Nigel Birkett (Co-opted)		

*Standing Committee members

PCC Secretary	-	Jonathan Drew*
Legal Advisor	-	Andrew Lewis
Honorary Treasurer	-	Nigel Birkett

Day-to-day Management	-	Standing Committee
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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. In accordance with statute the PCC is registered with the Charity Commission under No. 1134818.

Appointment to the PCC

The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the current edition of the Church Representation Rules.

PCC Organisation

The PCC meets at least 10 times a year. Each member is also a member of one of the 3 main Committees: Worship, Youth and Children, Environment, Communications and Finance & Property. A Standing Committee comprising the Chair, Associate Priests, Curates, Churchwardens, PCC Secretary and normally two representative members of the PCC, meets as necessary between PCC meetings.

ACTING CHAIR'S REPORT

Annual Report to APCM

INTRODUCTION

Taunton Minster is a Church of England parish church in the diocese of Bath & Wells. We are at the heart of Taunton and support our community by being the Civic Church for the town and reaching out in many different ways to its population. We are part of a Benefice which includes St John the Evangelist. Our mission is "To know Christ better and make Christ better known" and our church is welcome to everyone, a place of fellowship, prayer and quietness when needed.

MINISTRY TEAM

We experienced some major changes during the year. During February our previous Curate the Rev, Jamie Fox was licensed to be the new Rector of Wiveliscombe and the Hills. In June our new Curate, the Rev. Caryl Plewes, was ordained at Wells Cathedral and joined us in July. She and her husband Mike already make a significant contribution to the work of the Minster.

Finally, following a summer resignation, in October we said goodbye to the Rev Tobie Osmond our Vicar, together with his family, as he set off on a new lifestyle venture. His farewell celebration was supported by many people from our church, Benefice and local community which resulted from Tobie's work in strengthening our external links during his time with us.

We are now in a period of "Vacancy" and we are extremely grateful for the work of our remarkable team, the Rev Louise Bale, Rev Gwen Smith, Rev Caryl Plewes and supported by Rev Ben Whitworth and our Lay Worship Assistants, Valerie Gaskell and Alli Saltrese-Taylor, who continue to deliver our established pattern of worship.

CHURCHWARDENS & STAFF

The role of Churchwardens is never easy as they play a significant part in the smooth running of our church and are in fact our Bishops' representatives here at the Minster. So our grateful thanks must be extended to Ray Tully and Lesley Webb for their hard work during the year. Sadly following a serious illness Ray has been on long term absence since October.

This coincided with the start of our Vacancy when Churchwardens take on extra responsibilities. Lesley has given a significant amount of time and effort in dealing with all her duties during this difficult time.

Our loyal staff also deserve our thanks for their support during the year namely Miles, our Music Director; Margaret & Susanne our Administration team; and Jason & Brian our Verger team.

VOLUNTEERS

Our church has a reputation for offering a warm welcome to everyone and with the amenities of the Gifts & Books Shop and Coffee Shop a place of fellowship and learning. None of this is possible without the blessing of those who volunteer their time and talents here at the Minster. To our Deputy Wardens, Sides People, Welcomers, Team Leaders, Committee representatives and every other Volunteer in whatever capacity a huge thank you. We always need more so don't be shy!

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Thanks to the Clergy Team we continue to provide a broad range of services throughout the month, a feature that is celebrated by our congregation.

The Minster has a strong musical tradition and our adult choir and choristers go from strength to strength. Thanks to Miles our choristers in particular have grown in numbers during the year and how joyful it is to see them play a big part in readings and prayers during our family services. Our Father Willis organ is well played by Miles, Andrew and John and this year we have had the benefit of our young student Henry joining the team. Sometimes overlooked lets not forget our Flower Team who adorn our church every week and at special festivals with their wonderful displays.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Friday evenings are reserved for our children and young people. The church is full of excitement with Young Readers, Choristers, and Noise participating in their various activities. Tekna also meets on a Sunday morning during the service.

Thanks to the kind and generous donations of grants, legacies and gifts from our congregation we were able to launch our project to refurbish our Coach House specifically for the use of children, families and young people. Recently completed this will be a resource not only for our church but also for our community. Now known as the Minster House, watch its development grow over the coming year as we align with Young Somerset and other charitable organisations.

In addition, our links with local schools continues to grow and many visits to our church take place especially around the key festivals of Christmas and Easter. Led by our Ministry Team and volunteers, if you enter the church during one of these visits you will witness great joy and satisfaction from everyone involved.

PASTORAL CARE

Another unsung but essential service appreciated by all who use it, is available from our Clergy Team, our Pastoral Care Coordinator Margaret Austin and her team, together with our Prayer Ministry team. Confidential support is given to all in need.

SAFEGUARDING

A Church of England hot topic, Alli Saltrese Taylor has led a small team in ensuring everyone who enters the Minster comes into a safe and secure environment. They have worked really hard to ensure we have the correct policies and procedures in place throughout the church and continue to offer guidance and training where needed. Application and compliance is essential to all who lead or are involved in many of the activities that take place.

CONCLUSION

There are many groups and activities too numerous to mention in my report but please review them all in the special brochure provided. But I must mention the important governance work which takes place principally by my colleagues on the PCC and our associated committees. We meet ten times a year and sub-committees generally meet quarterly. I thank them for their dedication to the sometimes overwhelming tasks presented, especially during the Vacancy, and also for their kindness and patience with me!! Finally, our special thanks as a church must be to Nigel Birkett (Treasurer) and Margaret Allen (Assistant Treasurer) for all their exemplary service during this and previous years in keeping us financially viable, providing transparent reports and maintaining sound financial records. Nigel now steps down as Treasurer and is replaced by Jonathan Drew with continued support from Margaret and newly appointed AC Mole LLP Accountants.

Alan Ladd
Minster PCC: Acting Chair

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The big money story of the year is the successful development of Minster House. The first-floor flat is let, our young people are using the ground floor Mission Hub on Friday nights, and Young Somerset are using it during the day from Tuesday to Friday. All this is thanks to the great response from members to the early summer appeal for donations to cover the shortfall needed to complete the project. Our faith has been justified!

The vision to provide for the growth of our work with children and young people first became a reality in 2017 when the Diocese decided to sell the old vicarage. After much deliberation on our proposal to take over the ground floor garage, semi-detached to the vicarage in the corner of the churchyard, the Diocese agreed but only if we included the derelict flat above. Although we were reluctant to take on the additional cost this would entail, we agreed knowing this could give us a source of additional income for the long term.

Planning permission for the development of what is now known as Minster House was granted in August 2018. At that stage, we had to find money to meet Solicitors, Architects, Planners, Surveyors and Valuers costs for all the work planned for the Grade 2 listed property. Covid intervened to delay matters but a successful grant application to the All Churches Trust in 2021 together with a significant legacy helped mitigate those professional costs and enabled us to carry out re-roofing work which also kept alive the Planning Permission.

More legacies funded the completion of the Coffee Shop development and then continued to be received over the next 3 years to encourage us to move this project forward. So, in 2024 we went out to tender against a background of steep increases in the cost of building materials. However, we overcame the shock of the tendered prices and moved forward in faith before news came of a large grant from the Garfield Weston Charitable Trust.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this project over the years. It provides Taunton Minster with a wonderfully versatile ground floor space and an income to support our ministry amongst young people.

Beyond this project our general finances have had a solid year. Planned Giving fell slightly over the year but this was offset by a strong increase in visitor donations. Magdalene's Coffee Shop and the Gifts and Books shop continue to make a substantial contribution toward our overall costs, with over £76,000 net profit. This is despite a 32% increase in costs, partly due to rental costs for a new coffee machine.

We were able to raise our Benefice Share contribution by 8% to £94,000 but less than the £107,000 requested by the Diocese. With the 5-year period of transition to a lower level of expected contribution from our Benefice now into its 2nd year, our challenge for 2026 is to raise our contribution to just over £100,000.

RESERVES POLICY AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS

Our General Fund reserve remains at £45,000 representing just 2 months' expenditure. With our Benefice Share payment still below the requested contribution, we shall continue to hold our Reserve at that minimum level as we seek to raise our contribution to the annually adjusted sum sought.

We have been challenged to make up for shortfalls in our level of contributions over the last 5 years but have responded to assure that we will do all we can to at least fully meet the annual contributions requested in the years ahead.

We face increased cost challenges as identified by the last quinquennial inspection of the church building and the ever-growing cost of managing the weathering of the tower. With HM Government restricting the grant funding available to cover the cost of VAT on repairs to Listed Places of Worship, for the first time we have experienced our application for such a grant turned down as the pot of funding had been used up.

All these challenges serve to emphasise the need to reverse the decline in the level of Planned Giving, not only to meet the inflationary pressures we face but to fulfill our responsibilities to support less fortunate parishes in our Diocese through our Benefice Share contribution.

As we move into a new phase for our finances following the growth of our income from our shops and lettings, we are now supported by the professional accountancy firm A C Mole LLP who are experienced in the structural requirements for charities reliant on transactional as well as voluntary income.

TAUNTON MINSTER (Parochial Church Council of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton)

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

	Note	2025	2024
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	5	-	-
Investment		-	-
		-	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		4,062	4,844
Debtors	6	19,327	18,587
Short Term Deposits		104,099	284,276
Cash at bank and in hand		30,353	12,977
		157,841	320,684
LIABILITIES			
Creditors - amounts falling due in one year	7	26,868	9,584
		130,973	311,100
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		130,973	311,100
Total assets less current liabilities		130,973	311,100
Creditors - amounts falling due after one year		-	-
TOTAL NET ASSETS		130,973	311,100
PARISH FUNDS			
	8		
Unrestricted		93,524	280,510
Restricted		37,449	30,590
		130,973	311,100

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on



Alan Ladd
Acting Chair

26th March 2026

TAUNTON MINSTER (Parochial Church Council of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton)

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 December 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS	
				2025	2024
INCOME					
Voluntary Income	2(a)	159,236	46,345	205,581	232,175
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	116,488	3,452	119,940	117,696
Church Activities	2(c)	17,157	-	17,157	12,177
Investing activities	2(d)	6,261	1,327	7,588	11,755
Extraordinary items	2(e)		69,970	69,970	6,742
Total Income		299,142	121,094	420,236	380,545
EXPENDITURE					
Church Activities	3(a)	231,777	2,440	234,217	213,668
Activities for generating funds	3(b)	36,938	1,898	38,836	32,960
Extraordinary items	3(c)	216,629	109,897	326,526	27,073
Total Expenditure		485,344	114,235	599,579	273,701
Net Income before other recognised gains and losses		(186,202)	6,859	(179,343)	106,844
Revaluation of stock in Gifts & Books shop		(782)	-	(782)	412
Net Movement in Funds		(186,984)	6,859	(180,125)	107,256
Balances brought forward 1 January 2025		280,508	30,590	311,098	203,842
Balances carried forward 31 December 2025		93,524	37,449	130,973	311,098



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

TAUNTON MINSTER (ST MARY MAGDALENE TAUNTON PCC)

On accounts for the year
ended

31 December 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1134818

Set out on pages

6 - 15

(If additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2025

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Chris Mawstone

Date:

17/04/2026

Name:

CHRISTOPHER MAWSTONE

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

FCCA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: 2336624

Notes to the financial statements

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP (FRS102).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of 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 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 purpose 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 balances remaining unspent at the end of the 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 or designated purposes.

Income

Planned Giving, collections and donations are recognized when received. Tax refunds are recognized when the incoming resource to which they relate are received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Dividends are accountable when receivable, interest is accrued for gross.

Expenditure

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 1983.

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 financial statements. Subsequently no individual item has cost more than £1,000 so all 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 price of £2,500 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

TAUNTON MINSTER (Parochial Church Council of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton)

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 December 202 5

2. INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS	
			2025	2024
2(a) Voluntary Income				
Planned Giving	82,636	-	82,636	84,878
Plate Collections	13,672	-	13,672	13,421
Gift Aid reclaimed	22,589	4,250	26,839	24,979
Donations, appeals etc.	16,462	42,095	58,557	11,602
Legacies	23,877	-	23,877	97,295
	159,236	46,345	205,581	232,174
2(b) Activities for generating funds				
Fund raising events	5,307	3,452	8,758	9,742
Bookshop	13,439	-	13,439	13,795
Coffee Shop	94,429	-	94,429	91,143
Magazine	3,314	-	3,314	3,016
	116,488	3,452	119,940	117,696
2(c) Church Activities				
Letting of church properties	14,780	-	14,780	9,394
Fees	2,377	-	2,377	2,783
	17,157	-	17,157	12,177
2(d) Investing activities				
Interest	6,261	1,327	7,588	11,755
	6,261	1,327	7,588	11,755
2(e) Extraordinary items				
Church Weekend Away event	-			6,742
Minster House Grants	-	25,000	25,000	-
Sale of investment	-	44,970	44,970	-
	-	69,970	69,970	6,742
TOTAL INCOME	299,142	121,094	420,236	380,545

TAUNTON MINSTER (Parochial Church Council of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton)

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 December 2025

3. EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL FUNDS	
			2025	2024
3(a) Church activities				
Mission and Charitable Giving				
Home	200	1,683	1,883	953
Overseas	50		50	244
	<u>250</u>	<u>1,683</u>	<u>1,933</u>	<u>1,197</u>
Ministry: Diocesan Benefice share	94,000		94,000	87,000
Other ministry costs	3,198	10	3,208	3,036
Church running costs	34,579		34,579	34,010
Repairs, renewals & general upkeep	20,090	747	20,837	13,750
Salary and fees	68,998		68,998	61,357
Office & domestic costs	10,662		10,662	13,318
	<u>231,777</u>	<u>2,440</u>	<u>234,217</u>	<u>213,668</u>
3(b) Activities for generating funds				
Cost of fund raising events	5,964	1,898	7,862	7,666
Bookshop	7,032		7,032	7,210
Coffee Shop	23,942		23,942	18,084
	<u>36,938</u>	<u>1,898</u>	<u>38,836</u>	<u>32,960</u>
3(c) Extraordinary items				
Minster House: Mission Hub	216,629	94,024	310,653	19,858
Build retention due Sept 2026		15,666	15,666	
Youth Evangelism Grant		207	207	
	<u>216,629</u>	<u>109,897</u>	<u>326,526</u>	<u>27,073</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>485,344</u>	<u>114,235</u>	<u>599,579</u>	<u>273,701</u>

4 Trustees and Staff remuneration and other transactions

Salary and fees were paid to the Verger, Music Director and Facilities Officer. Fees were also paid to Organists and Administrators. The total donations received from the Trustees or any related parties without conditions amounted to £49,000

Contributions to the C of E Church Workers Pension Fund for benefit of two employees totalled:£1,831 including for Life Cover.

TAUNTON MINSTER (Parochial Church Council of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton)

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 December 2025

5	FIXED ASSETS		2025	2024
	Tangible Investments		-	-
	Depreciation		-	-
			<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
6	CURRENT ASSETS: SUNDRY DEBTORS			
	Tax recoverable - Unrestricted		19,327	15,703
	Tax recoverable - Restricted			434
	Unrestricted debtors			2,451
			<u>19,327</u>	<u>18,588</u>
7	LIABILITIES: SUNDRY CREDITORS			
	Unrestricted		9,917	9,269
	Restricted		16,951	315
			<u>26,868</u>	<u>9,584</u>
8	PARISH FUNDS	31/12/2024	Movement	31/12/2025
	Unrestricted Funds			
	Designated Funds			
	Fabric fund	22,918	4,234	27,152
	Minster House: Mission Hub	192,752	(192,752)	-
	Tower fund	5,834	(4,515)	1,319
	General fund reserve	45,000	-	45,000
	Music Fund	(1,433)	1,433	-
	Total designated funds	<u>265,071</u>	<u>(191,600)</u>	<u>73,471</u>
	General Fund	15,437	4,616	20,053
	Total unrestricted funds	<u>280,508</u>	<u>(186,984)</u>	<u>93,524</u>
	Restricted funds			
	Vicar & Churchwardens REd: acc income	4,707	1,189	5,896
	Vicar & Churchwardens Disc fund	2,919	128	3,047
	Flower fund	2,229	(154)	2,075
	Bell fund	14,570	(162)	14,408
	Minster House: Mission Hub	-	6,040	6,040
	Youth Evangelism Grant	207	(207)	-
	Church weekend Fund	1,160	-	1,160
	Bellringers Fund	4,796	25	4,821
	Total restricted funds	<u>30,590</u>	<u>6,859</u>	<u>37,449</u>
	TOTAL FUNDS	<u>311,098</u>	<u>(180,125)</u>	<u>130,973</u>

9 SCHEDULE OF CHARITABLE AND MISSION GIVING

	From Collections and Events	From Church Funds	TOTAL
Bath & Wells ZAMBIA Fd		50	50
Greater Churches Association		100	100
National Churches Trust		50	50
Somerset Churches Trust		50	50
Rifles Benevolent Soc	700		700
MS Society	400		400
Ron Tickner EdTrust	244		244
Royal British Legion	214		214
Childrens Society	125		125
	1,733	250	1,933

2025 RESTRICTED and DESIGNATED FUNDS

FABRIC FUND

Unrestricted (designated)

Balance as at 1 January 2025		22,918
Income		
CBF inc	1,764	
Memorial window	600	
LPOW Grants	1,694	
Bike Rack donations	2,719	6,777
		29,695
Expenditure		
Etch Designs	395	
Professional fees	2,148	2,543
Balance as at 31 December 2025		27,152

MINSTER HOUSE: Mission Hub

Unrestricted (designated)

Balance as at 1 January 2025	192,752	
Income		
Legacies	23,877	216,629

Restricted

Income		
Donations	41,510	
Sale of Investment	44,970	
Grants inc Youth Evangelism	25,207	
Gift Aid Tax Refund	4,250	115,937
		332,566
Expenditure		
Building Contractor	274,140	
Electricity & Water supply	21,130	
Professional fees	11,079	
Fittings	3,878	
Build retention (Sept 2026)	15,666	
Sundry expenses	633	326,526
Restricted Balance as at 31 December 2025		6,040

TOWER FUND**Unrestricted (designated)**

Balance as at 1 January 2025 5,834

Restricted

Income Donations 585

6,419

Expenditure Survey & Repairs 5,100

Unrestricted Balance at 31 December 2025 1,319

VICAR & CHURCHWARDENS' RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FUND**Restricted**

Balance at 1 January 2025 4,707

Income CBF Fund income 1,199

5,906

Expenditure 10

Balance as at 31 December 2025 5,896

VICAR & CHURCHWARDENS' DISCRETIONARY FUND**Restricted**

Balance at 1 January 2025 2,919

Income CBF Fund income 128

3,047

Expenditure -

Balance as at 31 December 2025 3,047

BELL FUND

Balance at 1 January 2025 14,570

Expenditure: Bell ropes (Nov 2024) 162

Balance as at 31 December 2025 14,408

