

The Parish of Central Exeter

Churches of St Mary Arches, St Olave, St Pancras, St Petrock, St Stephen

Giving breathing space; Living the values; Engaging with the city

The Parochial Church Council of the
Ecclesiastical Parish of Central Exeter

Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Introduction to 2025 Annual Report

There continues to be change within the shopping facilities along the High Street and within the city centre generally. We see the ongoing march of coffee shops and eateries as more people shop online. There is also a growth in rented housing, mainly for students.

As a parish we are acutely aware of the ever-changing pattern of activity within the city centre and try to provide some sense of long-term continuity through the continuing presence of our medieval churches – which are themselves important features of the city landscape.

Administrative Information

The Parish of Central Exeter is a charity which is registered with the Charity Commissioners, number 1134851. It is part of the Diocese of Exeter within the Church of England. The correspondence address is Parish Administrator, 3, Blackthorn Way, Cullompton EX15 1QH.

Parish Churches

St Stephen, High Street, Exeter EX4 3LN

St Olave, Fore Street, Exeter EX4 3AT

Daughter Churches

St Mary Arches, Mary Arches Street,
Exeter EX4 3BA

St Pancras, Guildhall Centre,
Exeter EX4 3HW

St Petrock, High Street, Exeter EX4 3DT

Team Rector

Revd Sheila Swarbrick

Ministry Team

Revd Sheila Swarbrick, 7 Lower Kings Avenue, Exeter EX4 6JT

Bank

Lloyds Bank, High Street, Exeter, EX4 3NL

Independent Examiner Clare W Lillington, Raddon, Station Hill, Chudleigh, TQ13 0EE

Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation rules.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2025 until the date that this report was approved are:

Ministry Team: Revd Sheila Swarbrick

Chair: Revd Sheila Swarbrick

The Churchwardens: Keith Walton, Betsy Allen

Representatives of Deanery Synod: Jessica Claridge, Celia Smith

The Elected Members from 2022: Richard Skinner, Viv Asher,

The Elected Members from 2023 Helen Evans, Claire Mayer

(There were no elections in 2024)

The Elected Members from April 2025: Richard Skinner (1 year) Viv Asher (3 years)

The following officers were appointed:

Treasurer: Sean Swarbrick

Secretary: Mary Keaney

Structure, Governance and Management

Committees

The Planning Committee (Clergy, Churchwardens) meets in between full PCC meetings. Other ad hoc committees and working groups are created and terminated as needed.

The full PCC met for 4 ordinary meetings (March, June, September, December) with one extra one on Safeguarding in February, all being face to face. The average attendance was 7. The June meeting began with an open one for all church members when the Archdeacon visited to talk about the future for Anglican mission in the city centre.

Aim and Purposes

Statement

'The PCC is required, as stated in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1966, to co-operate with the Parish Priest, in promoting in the Parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical'.

Objectives and Activities

The Parish's vision, goals and actions are stated in full in the Mission Action Plan.

Vision

Being part of God's mission of love and reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ, we are committed to:

- Giving breathing space
- Living the values
- Engaging with the City

Objectives (goals)

We will achieve our vision by working together with others as we pursue the following goals:

- To attract more people to enter and use our churches and find it a positive experience;
- To encourage visitors, church members and church users on their spiritual journey, challenging towards deeper levels of Christian commitment;
- To meet our on-going parish commitments, seeking efficient and effective use of our resources with other Anglican or Ecumenical colleagues.

In carrying out their work the Trustees take due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Continuing Activities

We have been able to keep all our churches open on weekdays and for the now established pattern of services at St Stephen's on the first, third and fifth Sunday of each month, St Pancras on the second, and St Olave on the fourth.

The lunchtime service of Communion in St Pancras has been maintained monthly on Thursdays at 12.00.

Voluntary organisations are able to use the churches for approved purposes on request and subject to terms and conditions.

Continuing activities (maintained in various formats throughout the year) include:

- Variety of worship services as outlined above.
- Summer concerts and other music activities
- Exhibitions
- 'Inner Room' poetry workshops
- Use of the parish website to communicate with and provide support to the parish members and the general public.
- Jewish Circle Dancing
- Prayers round the Cross bi-monthly
- Seeking Silence
- Book Club

Achievements and Performance

Church Attendance

There are 31 Parishioners on the church electoral roll of which 29 are not resident within the Parish. Average Sunday attendance in-church is about 18, Attendance in-church at Easter 2025 was 22 and 20 on Christmas Day.

Community use of Churches

St Stephen's continues to be the main church for community use. During the autumn of 2024 Safe Space had restarted its support work for people visiting the clubs on some evenings in this church but unfortunately this did not continue into 2025.

We have a regular use of St Stephen's by Exeter Network Church, of St Stephen's and St Pancras by the Romanian and Russian Orthodox churches.

St Petrock's continues to host support group meetings, the Exeter Guild of Bell-ringers plus their library, and we have developed a regular programme of exhibitions. With the main body of the Quire in Exeter Cathedral being out of use for renovation and excavation, the Dean and Chapter have been using St Petrock's for daily morning prayer and eucharist and St Pancras for a weekly communion service lunchtime on Wednesdays. This ceased in July.

St Pancras is on the register of Small Pilgrim Places and is open daily for private prayer, with monthly BCP Communion and monthly shortened lunchtime Communion services. Seeking Silence continues as a monthly time of meditation on the first Wednesday of the month.

St Olave's is the church used least by the community, largely because of its fixed pews.

In total in our churches, we hosted about 400 separate events including worship services, Bible study, prayer meetings, support groups, concerts and coffee mornings.

St Mary Arches is now leased to Unlimited Church – the Diocesan youth church and holds a number of activities to attract young people.

Parish Activities

We supported the Fore Street Flea Market in November with St Olave's taking part in this event. The Christmas St Nic's Fayre took place as a parish fundraiser as did the Thursday lunchtime concerts in July. This year we had 5 excellent concerts with a ploughman's lunch before.

Helen Evans who had launched and led Inner Room from its beginning in 2020 as a parish outreach project, realised she could no longer lead and indeed moved away from Exeter in September. Thus, Inner Room is now in hibernation. The Room to Write events which give participants prompts to write poetry continued independently and organised an event for National Poetry Day in October with the publication of a small anthology and poetry reading.

We decided at the April Annual Church Meeting to delete our Facebook page but have kept the website live and updated.

We continue to support the Exeter Community Initiative, St Petrock's Centre for the Homeless, as well as a programme of monthly giving to selected local, national and international charities.

We are ensuring that members of the PCC receive appropriate Safeguarding clearances and training to their level of involvement in the Parish.

Whilst the Parish is relatively secure financially, the number of people available or able to assist in preparing the church and assisting in the services is a concern. This situation is not unique to our parish and is a matter of concern to the whole Diocese.

Church Buildings.

The PCC has continued to undertake all the necessary repair and maintenance of the churches in the Parish, mostly resulting from normal wear and tear, pests and occasional abuse or vandalism.

Our architect Michila Wilks has begun work in St Olave's with the contractor Richard Hardy to deal with guttering, damp walls and a crack above the arch. We were able in the Spring to appoint a Buildings officer, Bethany Watts, on a self employed basis. She has started on the backlog of maintenance tasks and updating our Fire Safety, risk assessments and log books.

Links with other churches/organisations

The Revd Sheila Swarbrick has continued to provide a vital link between the parish and other churches in the centre of Exeter and Diocese at all levels both formally and informally.

Policy

The PCC is kept abreast of Parish responsibilities under the Safeguarding legislation by our designated representative. We have taken due regard to the guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The churchwardens and PCC members have completed their required Safeguarding Training. A Safeguarding policy document is in place. We have a Health and Safety Officer and our H&S policy is reviewed as necessary. We introduced a Data Security policy and have issued appropriate privacy notices and received and recorded consents for use of data as required by the General Personal Data Regulations.

Financial Review

The total income for the Parish in 2025 was £81,660 representing income derived from 'normal' parish activities. Expenditure of £97,078 gave us a deficit of £15,418

The target parish (unrestricted) income budget for 2026 has been agreed by the PCC at £50,217.

Reserves Policy

In 2013 the PCC agreed to a reserves policy of 4 times the monthly average expenditure, which equates to £23,500 for 2026

Approved by the PCC on 4 March 26 and signed on their behalf by:

Sheila R Swarbrick

Sheila Swarbrick PCC Chair

Parish of Central Exeter

Charity number 1134851

Financial Statement for 31
Dec 2025

Receipts	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total 2024 £
Voluntary Income				
Planned giving	7772.00		7772.00	8477
Gift Aid recovered	2423.54		2423.54	2659
Service collections	600.00		600.00	874
Recurring donations	2547.00		2547.00	2995
Non-recurring donations	4123.27		4123.27	4003
Grants	17524.59	27414.00	44938.59	23255
Total	34990.40	27414.00	62404.40	42263
Activities for generating funds				
Fund raising	1557.70		1557.70	2505
Church Activities				
Use of PCC property	12740.00		12740.00	15930
Fees retained	35.00		35.00	270
Total	12775.00	0.00	12775.00	16200
Other	2398.35		2398.35	2386
Churches Conservation	1632.80		1632.80	863
Total receipts	53354.25	27414.00	80768.25	64217
Investment income				
CCLA Deposit (interest)	879.27		879.27	979
Shared Interest (interest)	12.64		12.64	5
Total interest	891.91		891.91	984
Total receipts + interest	54246.16	27414.00	81660.16	65201

Expenditure	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total 2024 £
Parish giving	2785.00		2785.00	2395
Diocesan share	9424.00		9424.00	10757
Clergy expenses	100.00		100.00	
Up keep of services	0.00		0.00	6922
Church upkeep	37058.69	26973.00	64031.69	27690
Utilities	9514.79		9514.79	12525
Church admin	10109.81		10109.81	7969
Other	1112.75		1112.75	2407
Total expenditure	70105.04	26973.00	97078.04	70665

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total 2024 £
Receipts minus Expenditure	-15,858.88	441.00	-15417.88	-5464
Transfer of funds	0			
Balances 1/1/25	57520.24	8727.60	66247.84	72575
Total	41661.36	9168.60	50829.96	67111

Restricted funds

Church upkeep fund	9168.60
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Current account	16293.83	9168.60	25462.43	41772
CCLA Deposit	20308.29		20308.29	19429
Shared Interest	5059.24		5059.24	5047
Total	41661.36	9168.60	50829.96	66248

Liabilities - None

NOTES

Current Account	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
01/01/2025	£33,044.62	£8,727.60	£41,772.22
31/12/2025	£16293.83	£9,168.60	£25462.43

Deposit accounts	(All unrestricted)
CCLA	Shared Int Total
01/01/2025 £19,429.02	£5,046.60 £24,475.62
31/12/2025 £20,308.29	£5,059.24 £25,367.53

Churches Cons Trust for S Martins	192.40x4 + 215.80x4 = £1632.80
Funeral fees retained	£35
Fees to EDBF	£162

Church upkeep (unrestricted) expenditure includes:

Jl Pilkington (Verger)	£318.50 monthly	
JM Richards (cleaner)	£424.66 monthly	
Insurance S Petrocks	£2,630.88	
S MA (UC refund 80%)	£2,997.94	
S Stephens	£2,613.95	
S Olaves	£2,039.91	
S Pancras	£997.34	
Entry Group	£1,427.93	(S Stephens)
Inicio Architects	£2,883.41	
Barley Manor (S Stephens)	£3,171.60	
Barley Manor(S Pancras VAT)	£2,875.60	
Argos Fire Protection	£1,469.36	

Buildings Officer (Bethany Watts) Fees £2487 Expenses £80.70

Grants (unrestricted, one-off)

S Olaves Trust £960, £564.59
S Kerrians Trust £240
S Mary Mag Chapel Fund £400
SMA Church Lands £997.34, £849

Dec-25

(Caretaker & Administrator, Printing)
(Administrator)
(S Stephens Electricity)
(S Pancras Insurance & Electricity)

Utilities expenditure

Water	Jan-May £300	June onwards £73.50 monthly	
Electricity	S Stephen £5552.47	S Pancras £869.40	S Olave £1713.42

Church Admin (Mary Keaney) Fees £9706.63 Expenses £1303.59

Church upkeep (restricted) expenditure:

£12595 (Barley Manor - S Olaves)
£14378 (Barley Manor - S Pancras)

Church upkeep (restricted) income:

£5380 (Exeter Diocesan BF - S Olaves 23/6)
£7656 (S Olaves Trust 24/7)
£14378 (SMA Church Lands 8/12)
Total £27414

Approved by the PCC on

4/3/26

Sheila Swarbrick

Sheila Swarbrick (Chair)

and signed on its behalf by

S. J. Swarbrick

Sean Swarbrick (Treasurer)



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's
report on the accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Central Exeter

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2025

**Charity no
(if any)**

1134851

Set out on pages

As attached

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

**Independent
examiner's statement**

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn 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:

C.W. Lillington

Date:

20/02/2026

Name:

Clare Lillington

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

FMAAT

Address:

Raddon, Station Hill

Chudleigh, Newton Abbot

Devon TQ13 0EE