

# **THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WINCHCOMBE**

**WITH GRETTON, SUDELEY MANOR AND STANLEY PONTLARGE**



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**for the year January – December 2024**

**presented at the  
Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**Sunday 6 April 2025**

# WINCHCOMBE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT January - December 2024

### 1. LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

#### THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Meets to share with the Priest-in-charge in deciding, and in implementing, parish policy. It is legally responsible for the church buildings & furnishings and for parish property. The PCC is a charity, and registered with the Charity Commission during 2009.

The members of the PCC are (as of 6 April 2025):

#### CLERGY (EX OFFICIO)

Rev'd Capt. David Penny CA – Chair (2023)

#### CHURCHWARDENS (EX OFFICIO)

Simon Andrews (2018) (Vice Chair 2019, Churchwarden 2020)  
Sue Proctor (Churchwarden 2024)

#### ELECTED PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

##### ST PETER'S, WINCHCOMBE

Abbie Shurmer (2019)  
Cathy Wilcock (2020)  
Elizabeth Atkinson (2021) (PCC Secretary 2023)  
Morag Adlington (2024)  
Steve Carter (2024)  
Cliff Cocks (2024)  
Felicity Hall (2024)  
Chris Haslam (2024)

7 x vacancies

##### CHRIST CHURCH, GRETTON

Susan Fleck (2017) (Deputy Churchwarden 2019)

##### ST MICHAEL'S, STANLEY PONTLARGE

##### ST MARY'S, SUDELEY

Simon Andrews (2018) (Deputy Churchwarden 2022)

#### DEANERY SYNOD (EX OFFICIO – ELECTED EVERY 3 YEARS)

Geof Adlington (*Deanery Treasurer 2022*)  
Sue Crownshaw (2023)  
Charlie Bagnall (2023)  
1 x vacancy

#### ELECTED TO STANDING COMMITTEE (F&GP)

Chair  
Churchwardens  
Treasurer (Charlie Bagnall 2023)  
PCC Secretary  
Sue Crownshaw

#### PCC Co-OPTED TO FoSP

Simon Andrews (2023)

#### METHODIST OBSERVERS (NON-VOTING)

Trevor Upton

#### THE LOCAL MINISTRY TEAM 2024

Revd Mike Holloway  
Revd Michael Hand  
Revd Rob Pestell  
Revd Wendy Ruffle

#### ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

St Peter's Centre, Gloucester Street,  
Winchcombe, GL54 5LU  
Telephone: 01242 602067  
spc@winchcombeparish.org.uk  
www.winchcombeparish.org.uk

#### CHARITY NUMBER: 1138071

#### FINANCIAL ADDRESSES

##### PCC'S BANKERS

from 2023, The Cooperative Bank

##### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mrs Jennifer Soltau, F.C.C.A.  
Cotswold House, Gloucester Street,  
Winchcombe, GL54 5LX

**WINCHCOMBE PARISH**  
**With Gretton, Stanley Pontlarge and Sudeley Manor**  
**Sunday 6 April 2025 at 11.30 – St Peter's Church, Winchcombe**

**AGENDA**

**1. WELCOME AND PRAYERS**

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**3. ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

- a) Minutes of the AMP held on Sunday 17 March 2024
- b) Election of churchwardens

**4. ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

- a) Minutes of the APCM held on 17 March 2024
- b) Matters arising from the Minutes
- c) Review of progress and achievements
- d) Annual Report of the PCC as tabled:
  - i. Treasurers Financial Report on the Accounts and matters arising, including Independent Examiner of Finances Report
  - ii. Priest-in-Charge's Report 2024
  - iii. Churchwardens' Report including notes from the Deputy Churchwardens
  - iv. Report on Safeguarding
  - v. Report from the Deanery Synod
  - vi. Readers
  - vii. Pastoral Care report
  - viii. Music report included in Churchwardens' Report
  - ix. St Peter's Flower Arrangers' report
  - x. Report from the Bell ringers
  - xi. Report from Eco Church Group
  - xii. Stewards' report
  - xiii. Toddler Time
- e) Questions and discussion on reports
- f) General questions and discussion

**5. READERS TO BE EX-OFFICIO FROM 2026**

**6. ELECTIONS**

- a) Deanery Synod Members
- b) PCC Members

**7. THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

**8. ELECTORAL ROLL**

**9. CLOSING PRAYER**

### 3 ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

#### a) Minutes of The Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 17 March 2024, at St Peter's Church, Winchcombe

*Present: (PCC Officers Simon Andrews (Churchwarden), Charlie Bagnall (Treasurer), , Elizabeth Atkinson (PCC Secretary), together with approximately 45 others on the electoral roll – either in person or via on-line.*

1. **Welcome and Prayers:** *Revd David Penny welcomed those present and said how wonderful it was to be gathered here and opened the meeting with a prayer.*
2. **Apologies for Absence** *were received from Maxine Clare, Jennifer Soltau, Sue Proctor, Judith Skinner, Martin and Lynn Gorman, Penelope Kain and Kate Stebbings.*
3. **ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS:** *for those on the Electoral Role and those resident in the Parish – ie the whole community.*

##### a) Minutes of the AMP held on 21st May 2023

The minutes were made available prior to the meeting – in hard copy or by email.

The minutes were approved.

There were no matters arising.

##### b) Election of two Churchwardens

The meeting was asked to elect the Churchwardens for the coming year. There were two nominees for the two church wardens. They were Simon Andrews, one of the current Churchwardens, and Sue Proctor. The vote to elect them was carried unanimously. The meeting expressed their support and many thanks to Simon Andrews and Judith Skinner for their work since the last APCM.

There being no other business the annual meeting of parishioners closed and was followed by the Annual Parochial Church meeting.

Elizabeth Atkinson  
PCC Secretary  
March 2024

*Approved:*

*Date:*

#### b) Election of Two Churchwardens

## 4) ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

### a) Minutes of the APCM held on Sunday 17 March 2024

#### 1. *Minutes of the APCM held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023*

*The minutes were distributed prior to the meeting.*

*The minutes were adopted as accurate.*

#### 2. **Matters Arising:** nil

#### 3. **Review of progress & achievements:** *This would be covered by the reports as tabled including the priest-in-charge's report.*

#### 4. **Annual Report of the PCC as tabled** – *Hard copies were available in the back of Church for three weeks before the meeting, and the report was available electronically.*

- i) **Treasurer's Report on the Accounts:** The Treasurer summarised his circulated report, stating that aside from the restricted funds we ended the 2023 year with income exceeding expenditure by £95.00. This however was due to an unexpected legacy of £15,000. The balance sheet at the end of 2023 has improved thanks to an improvement in the stock market.
- Looking forward over the next five years, there are two options. Either we spend no money on anything other than essentials and we will still end up with a deficit or we spend money on the activities and ideas set out in the Parish Strategy and although we may still have a deficit we will have a church that is growing and feels alive and giving may increase as a result. One of the good signs already is that adhoc giving has increased over the last year, which shows people do love these churches and want them to continue to thrive.
- Alan Thomas raised a question over the budget for the Youth worker. It seemed on the high side. The Treasurer stated it that it included the salary and the associated on-costs such as NI and Pension contributions and also the inevitable set up costs of the new post. It is likely come in under budget as we are still recruiting for the post and therefore the expenditure will be delayed.
- Geof Adlington asked about the curate's house. He was informed it belonged to the diocese and they had sold it.
- David Penny expressed his thanks to Charlie for his stewardship and his positive outlook.
- ii) **Priest-in-charge Report:** David and Deborah thanked everyone for their support, love and welcome during his first year. He had spent the first part of the year getting to know the people in church and the wider community. He then spent the summer developing the Strategic Plan after consultation with key people in the Ministry Team. David mentioned that we can't achieve everything in the Strategic Plan at once. We are starting with a Fresh Expression on 30 March at the Winchcombe Abbey School. He is aware we all have different likes and dislikes in music and worship so he is trying to provide a range. He is very grateful for the ministry of the readers and retired clergy and it has enabled new things to be developed using their gifts and skills. The wedding and funeral ministry is starting up again. Contact with people is being made through Toddler Time which provides stepping stones to faith.
- Gill Worthington asked whether David hoped to build on the occasional services like the Crib service and Christingle Service which have been successful. He agreed it was good to try new things and find out what works and what doesn't.
- Rob Davies thought the presence of the Church at the Christmas Shopping Festival was a very good thing and hopes it will be repeated. It also brought people into the Church to see the Christmas tree festival which was a great success. David wanted to thank Abbie Shurmer and all those who helped with those two events and hopes more people will get involved this year.
- iii) **Churchwardens' Report:**
- The Churchwardens' Report had also been circulated and Simon Andrews summarised. Additionally he thanked the Ministry team for taking some of the additional services that have started up since David's arrival. He also made a request for more members for the Bells Team and the Church Stewards and thanked them for their work.
- He mentioned the partnership with WAM and allowing them to use St Peter's Centre for their work.
- Thanks were given to Jo Rees for her work on the Book Fair and he welcomed Kate Robinson who has taken over that role. Again thanks to Abbie, Judith and others for the Christmas Tree Festival. Thanks to Deborah Penny for taking on the Social Media role and promoting what goes on at the Churches in Winchcombe Parish. The Eco group helped us achieve the A Rocha Silver Award and we are now working toward the Gold Award. Thanks to Gill Worthington and her team (excluding Anne Hand who was mistakenly included in the report) undertaking Toddler Time. The Pastoral Team needs a new lead and new members. Thanks to those who have volunteered to be part of the Integrated Project team as we explore the options to make the best use of St Peter's building and space.
- Simon also wanted to give a special thanks to Judith for all she had undertaken during her time as churchwarden. He said that they made a good partnership with complimentary skills and while he

concentrated on bricks and mortar she was able to focus on the pastoral side of things. She oversaw the sale of Teacher's House and during the vacancy was key to the creation of an effective Parish Profile and leadership. She additionally established the Holy Dusters, the Hear our Silence group, led the Pastoral Team and many other things. The meeting applauded in agreement. Simon also thanked the deputy churchwardens for all their work throughout the year.

Simon mentioned that the transfer of St Mary's Sudeley to the Castle had been finalised but there would still be six monthly services between April and September starting at 4pm. The first was on 28 April.

There were no questions but a comment was made that it was good to see the Readers having a more active role.

**iv) Safeguarding Report:-**

Lynne Banks, the Safeguarding Office reminded everyone that Safeguarding was everyone's business and with more activities and people involved there were more people who needed to do required training. She thanked Gill Worthington for carrying out the DBS checks. Lynne was thanked for all she does.

- 5. Questions and discussion on other reports as tabled:** The other reports were noted and thanks given to each of the Teams involved and there were no questions.

**6 Elections:**

- a. Election of Deanery Synod Representatives:** Geof Adlington, Susan Crownshaw and Charlie Bagnall agreed to stand for re-election. The meeting agreed to this. There was still one vacancy but there were no further volunteers.
- b. Election of PCC Representatives:** Several of the current PCC members were up for re-election, having completed 3 years. They are Abbie Shurmer, Cathryn Wilcock, Susan Fleck and Elizabeth Atkinson. In addition there were two further applicants, Morag Adlington and Gaye Kimber. All were unanimously elected as PCC members.

**7 Electoral Roll:**

In the absence of Jennifer Soltau, Elizabeth Atkinson explained that at the 2023 APCM there were 219 on the electoral roll but with six new names and nine deletions, there are now 216 people on the roll as at the 2024 APCM.

**8 Forthcoming Events:**

- 5 April - Pudding Evening – St Peter's
- 19 April - Glos. Police Male Voice Choir – St Peter's
- 3 – 29 June Book Fair - – St Peter's
- 21 June - Choir Concert - – St Peter's
- 21 – 30 June - Midsummer Festival
- 29 June - Summer Fete – St Peter's
- 19 Oct – Choir Concert – St Peter's
- Dates tbc Dec: - Christmas Tree Festival: – St Peter's

**9 AOB:**

- No further business

**10 Closing Prayer**

The meeting closed at 13.00 with all saying the Grace.

Elizabeth Atkinson  
PCC Secretary  
March 2024

*Approved:*

*Date:*

## b) Matters arising from the Minutes

## c) Review of Progress and Achievements

This will be covered by the reports as tabled including the priest-in-charge's report.

## d) Annual Report of the PCC as tabled:

### i) Treasurers Financial Report on the accounts and matters arising, including Independent Examiner of Finances Report

As trailed in last year's Finance report, the PCC accounts are now run on a new specialist accounting system called **Expense Plus**. With a new system comes a set of new reports. In fact, the system has a special feature called *Year End Reports* which produces a full set of accounts suitable for filing with the Charity Commission – which I intend to do. However, that version is too long for inclusion in this report. I am happy to share it with anyone who would like to peruse it. Please email [treasurer@winchcombeparish.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@winchcombeparish.org.uk) for a copy. Thank you to Jennifer Soltau who has signed off our accounts as usual, and who also took the time to review the new system and give it the thumbs up. Meanwhile, in the following pages you will find the same information that is usually provided, but in a new layout.

- 1 – Statement of Assets and Liabilities – headed Balance Sheet
- 2 – Summary of Receipts and Payments – General Account
- 3 – Fund Movement Summary – analysis of Restricted and Designated Funds

### Summary

While a Finance report usually focuses on a dry set of numbers, it is important to remember that behind the figures is a mass of things happening as the people of this parish strive together to make 'Thy Kingdom Come' Accordingly, in the full accounts, on page 5 you will find a section headed '*Summary of the charity's main activities and achievements*'. Here you will find paragraphs on the Parish Strategy, Community Engagement, Youth Work and Young People, and Building Use Review. The review of numbers that follows may make serious reading, but a review of the activity underneath those numbers reminds us that this parish is very much alive and kicking.

#### 1. Assets and Liabilities

**2023** was a 'good news' year, showing an improvement in our total net assets of around £53,000. However as I noted at the time, a number of factors belied the underlying trend namely – there was a post Covid recovery of our investments, we had raised some £18000 in grant income against expenditure on Stanley Pontlarge roof to be spent in 2024, and we had a £15,000 legacy. By contrast, in **2024**, we spent the money on the roof (we raised some more but still needed to contribute some £13000 from the general account), we only had one small legacy (£500 to Christ Church), and there were only modest gains on the investments. Grant income for Stanley Pontlarge was ringfenced to that restricted fund in the accounts, but we still had to sell some investments to pay the big bills (totalling just over £50,000) when they came in. So, with a net negative movement on the Stanley Pontlarge fund of c. £22,000 and on the general account (our day-to-day income and expenditure) of c.£20,000, our total net assets have reduced by some £40,000.

#### 2. Income and Expenditure

*Note: For the sake of clarity, this report only includes the General account. For activity on the other funds see the next section.*

We fell short of our budget numbers on both income and expenditure in some cases by significant amounts. This was due in large measure to your treasurer setting a breakeven basis budget on the basis of *hope over experience*. Next year we are being more realistic and so will put more rigorous checks in place to try and keep things on track. However, even an ill-judged budget will help highlight our good and bad points.

- **Income**

If you take out the budget number for legacies and overlook the drop in Parish Fees income due to fewer church weddings generally, then we would have exceeded our income budget. The biggest two factors in this were the stability of the stewardship giving, and the big increase in adhoc donations. That figure of £17,000 against a budget of £7,600 is the standout number here. There is still clearly a lot of love for our three churches!

- **Expenditure**

We overspent on three core activities – administration, provision of services, music. The first two were down to over hopeful budgets. Music was up because we used a lot of freelance organists while we were between Music Directors. We also overspent by a significant margin on Minor Repairs – again that was an optimistic budget but also some bad luck in a spate of unexpected maintenance work. We underspent on salaries while recruiting new people to the Parish Administrator and DoM roles.

### **3. Fund Movement – including Restricted Funds**

Here you can see the movement on the **General** Fund, as well as all the others, of which the standout is **St Michael's** Stanley Pontlarge on account of the new roof. Other active funds to note are:

- a. The Eco Fund** – The team is not only raising funds but also spending it as we work towards the Gold standard. Silver is already a standout achievement but Gold is within our grasp.
- b. The Bells** – Again, our conscientious team of ringers is working hard to raise funds for their charges and is spending those funds as needed to ensure the ring is in good order.
- c. Children's Ministry** – This is an exciting new fund as we build on the great work by Steve Carter, Wendy Ruffle and their '**Awesome**' team. Using their achievements to date, Steve and the team were able to win a grant of £3000 to enable us to grow this area of work.

### **Looking Ahead**

It might be reasonable to suppose that after a year in which we incurred overall losses in excess of £40000 we would 'pull our horns in'. Given that our income is doing as well as can be expected, the only way we could return to a breakeven budget would be a drastic reduction in costs. However, there are no easy options. To make a significant impact on costs would mean removing salary costs, stopping all engagement with children and young people and turning off the heating. Then where would we be? Last one out, turn off the lights. No.

We are working and hoping for an upturn in the finances, but if we can't see a change over the next 18-24 months, then we will have to take steps to ensure we can continue to operate with a sensible level of reserves.

In the meantime, we press on with our Parish Strategy, our administrator, our new music director, our youth work and our 'Integrated Project' reviewing building use and heating. And when we create a budget on that basis, a realistic one, we find we have another deficit, this time of £50,000. The PCC has reviewed the budget in full knowledge of its implications and approved it, because we believe we must not hide our *talents*, (see Matthew Chap 25), but use them in the continuing service of God's kingdom.

*Charlie Bagnall, Treasurer  
February 2025*



- 1 – Statement of Assets and Liabilities – headed Balance Sheet

#### Parish of Winchcombe Assets and Liabilities 2024

	Total	2023
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash	68,314	64,908
Accounts Receivable	0	0
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Fixed Assets	57,000	57,000
Investments	323,079	363,648
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	2,539	0
<b>Total Net Assets (Assets Minus Liabilities)</b>	<b>£445,855</b>	<b>£485,555</b>
<b>Represented By</b>		
General (Unrestricted)	368,817	389,508
Chime Machine (1002) (Restricted)	5,696	5,696
St Peters Bells Fund (1003,2003) (Restricted)	846	984
St Peters Organ Fund (1001, 2001) (Restricted)	14,718	14,718
Christ Church Gretton (R) (1010, 2010) (Restricted)	2,356	2,073
Vicar and Church Wardens (1014) (Restricted)	3,051	3,126
St Peter's Church Flower Fund (2300) (Unrestricted)	669	907
St Michael's Stanley Pontlarge (2020) (Restricted)	822	23,221
Pioneer Minister (YCW) Reserve (2250) (Designated)	43,299	43,299
IT and Video Fund (1013) (Restricted)	932	932
Christ Church Gretton General Fund (GRE) (Unrestricted)	126	0
St Michael's Stanley Pontlarge General Fund (SP) (Unrestricted)	0	0
St Peter's Eco-Church Fund (2350) (Unrestricted)	616	368
Coffee Fund (Unrestricted)	168	0
Christmas Hampers (Restricted)	0	0
Minor Appeals (no GA) (Restricted)	15	0
Fresh Expressions (Restricted)	723	723
Children's Ministry (Restricted)	3,000	0
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£445,855</b>	<b>£485,555</b>

- 2 – Summary of Receipts and Payments – General Account

**Parish of Winchcombe Income & Expenditure 2024 - General Account**

Category	Actual Income	Total Budget	Budget Received %
01 - Tax Efficient Planned Giving	55,650	62,000	90%
02 - Other Planned Giving	4,304	-	n/a
03 - One Off Gifts, Collections	6,821	6,000	114%
04 - Other Giving and Donations - Recurring	-	-	n/a
05 - One off gifts, Other	17,585	7,650	230%
06 - Special Appeals	1,750	-	n/a
08 - Legacies Received	-	15,000	0%
07 - All Tax Recovered through Gift Aid	15,036	15,000	100%
09 - Recurring Grants	-	-	n/a
10 - Non Recurring Grants	-	3,750	0%
11 - Fundraising Events	6,245	6,000	104%
12 - Dividends and Interest	12,789	10,000	128%
13 - Income from Properties	117	3,000	4%
14 - Total Parochial Fees Income	17,943	24,000	75%
15 - Bookstall, Magazine	4,905	5,600	88%
16 - Room Lettings	546	-	n/a
17 - Income from other Church Activities	38	50	76%
18 - Insurance Claims	-	-	n/a
19 - Reimbursement of Costs by Other Parishes	5	-	n/a
20 - Sale of Fixed Assets	-	-	n/a
21 - Service Fee Re-Imbursement by GDBF	-	1,500	0%
22 - Other Income	9,238	12,500	74%
	<b>162,971</b>	<b>172,060</b>	<b>89%</b>

Category	Actual Expenditure	Total Budget	Budget Spent %
39 - Insurance	11,911	13,000	92%
42 - Administration Costs	5,600	2,500	224%
43 - Other church expenses / provision of services	3,042	1,750	174%
46 - Music Costs	5,012	2,650	189%
55 - Service Fee remittance to Visiting Minister	-	1,800	0%
56 - Payment of Costs to Other Parishes	-	-	n/a
57 - Deanery Costs	-	100	0%
58 - Sundry Expenses	33	250	13%
36 - Clergy Housing Costs	-	-	n/a
40 - Cleaning Costs	491	600	82%
41 - Minor Repairs / Routine Maintenance	11,764	2,500	471%
44 - Churchyard Maintenance	2,253	1,600	141%
45 - Flowers	-	200	0%
47 - Heating and Lighting	11,697	12,000	97%
48 - Water Rates	541	-	n/a
59 - Major repairs/redecoration to Church Building	5,650	2,000	283%
60 - Major repairs/redecoration to other properties	-	600	0%
61 - Alterations/Extensions to Church Building	-	-	n/a
30 - Fundraising Costs	783	400	196%
49 - Costs of trading Inc magazine	5,430	4,750	114%
31 - Donations / Grants to Charities	2,674	2,400	111%
32 - Parish Share	87,768	87,768	100%
51 Parochial Fees Remittance to DBF	2,947	2,750	107%
52 - Parochial Fees Remittance to Visiting Minister	-	-	n/a
53 - Parochial Fees Remittance to other Third Party	7,128	9,250	77%
54 - Parochial Fees Remittance to other PCC	-	-	n/a
33 - Salaries and Wages	8,619	15,000	57%
34 - Clergy Expenses	3,823	3,000	127%
35 - Other Expenses	30	-	n/a
37 - Local Mission and Evangelism Costs	50	300	17%
38 - Children and Youth Work Costs	837	400	209%
50 - Governance Costs	-	0	n/a
	<b>178,083</b>	<b>167,568</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Net Surplus / (Loss)</b>	<b>- (26,112)</b>	<b>£4,482.00</b>	

- 3 – Fund Movement Summary – analysis of Restricted and Designated Funds

### Parish of Winchcombe - Fund Movement Summary 2024

Fund Name	Type	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Investment Gains / Losses	Net Movement	Closing Balance
Pioneer Minister (YCW) Reserve	D	43,299	-	-	-	-	0	43,299
Children's Ministry	R	-	3,000	-	-	-	3000	3,000
Chime Machine	R	5,696	-	-	-	-	0	5,696
Christ Church Gretton	R	2,073	500	217	-	-	283	2,356
Christmas Hampers	R	-	190	201	11	-	0	-
Fresh Expressions	R	723	-	-	-	-	0	723
IT and Video Fund	R	932	-	-	-	-	0	932
Minor Appeals (no GA)	R	-	2,445	2,430	-	-	15	15
St Michael's Stanley Pontlarge	R	23,221	28,077	50,476	-	-	-22399	822
St Peters Bells Fund	R	984	2,539	2,677	-	-	-138	846
St Peters Organ Fund	R	14,718	-	-	-	-	0	14,718
Vicar and Church Wardens	R	3,126	-	75	-	-	-75	3,051
Christ Church Gretton General Fund	U	-	126	-	-	-	126	126
Coffee Fund	U	-	240	72	-	-	168	168
General	U	389,508	152,971	178,083	11	4,432	-20691	368,817
St Michael's Stanley Pontlarge General Fund	U	-	-	-	-	-	0	-
St Peter's Church Flower Fund	U	907	-	238	-	-	-238	669
St Peter's Eco-Church Fund	U	368	685	437	-	-	248	616
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£485,555</b>	<b>£190,774</b>	<b>£234,906</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£4,432</b>	<b>-£39,701</b>	<b>£445,855</b>

## Independent Examiners Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF WINCHCOMBE WITH GRETTON, SUDELEY MANOR AND STANLEY PONTLARGE ('the charity') for the year ended 31/12/2024.

### Responsibilities and Basis of Report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the charity'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 2011 Act.

### Independent Examiners Qualification

I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ACCA, which is one of the listed bodies.

### 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 accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. 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.

### Independent Examiner's Details

Name: Jennifer Soltau  
Address: Cotswold House  
Gloucester Street  
Winchcombe  
GL54 5LX

Name JENNIFER SOLTAU

Signature

JSoltau

Date

14/2/25

## ii) APCM COVERING 2024: PRIEST-IN-CHARGE'S REPORT

### Report of 2024 by Revd Capt. David Penny

2024 proved to be a year of challenge and opportunity, and by God's grace we have navigated our way through with faith, that, as Julian of Norwich famously said: "all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well". I believe this to be the case as, towards the end of the year, we have seen signs of growth and development in many areas of church life.

Amongst the challenges of 2024 were the appointments needed to cover resignations of members of staff from 2 key areas of church life. At the beginning of the year Mark Mulley changed focus in his life, which meant we needed to find a new Parish Administrator. This proved more of a challenge than we expected, and after a couple rounds of advertisements and a false start, we eventually appointed Gareth in late autumn. We are very grateful to Elizabeth, Edward, Simon, and Sue for the additional work they did throughout the vacancy period, as without them the smooth running of the parish would have been impossible. We also found ourselves with vacancies in the music department following the resignations of Andrew, and then Shelley. Thankfully the wonderful John Ursell stepped in to keep the choir going and underpin the worship at St. Peter's, playing most Sunday mornings and evenings. Recruitment to the post of Director of Music took longer than we hoped, but by December we were able to appoint the very talented James Willshire. Two of the challenges during the music department vacancies were Easter and Christmas, and I just want to say a huge thank you to: Chris Sands for stepping in to lead the choir through Holy week and Easter, and Andrew Horton for enabling us to have a fantastic celebration of Christmas. I should also add a word of thanks to Rosie Aylward for stepping back into role to conduct the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus on Easter Morning.

The opportunities of 2024 have been many and brought much blessing to us. In April Awesome was launched as a Fresh Expression of church. I am in awe of the dedication and hard work of the whole team under the leadership of Steve Carter. We have, through this ministry, begun to reach out into all parts of the parish with the Good News of Christ in new and relevant ways. This ministry will develop further as our schools work takes on a new lease of life now that James is in post and as we start ministry with young people under the leadership of the recently appointed Bryoni Newell. Experience Easter provided an opportunity for 100s of people, many of them young people, to reflect on Easter, their faith and the love of God. The success of this was, again, down to a team of people who got everything organised, set up the displays and helped guide groups through the various stations. Thank you, all of you.

Another key appointment made in 2024 was a leader of the Pastoral Team. I am very grateful to Morag Adlington for stepping into this role, and in short time Morag has enabled a greater impetus to this core ministry of the church. Again, this is a ministry that is shared, and I am extremely grateful to the whole team for the way in which we live out the principles of the Gospel, caring for one another and building one another up in Christ.

At the end of the year Gill Worthington stood down from leading Toddler Time, and Christine Mason stood down as a helper. Whilst we recognise that there is a time and season for everything under the sun, it was with heartfelt thanks and sadness that we marked the end of their involvement in this ministry. Toddler Time continues, now under the leadership of Karen Almond, and both Gill and Christine serve the church in other ministries.

The parish strategy is still firmly on the agenda of the PCC, and is steering the day to day ministry of the church. Looking at the RAG rating I can see that we are make good progress, implementing many different strands and making progress as we put in place new ideas. My biggest concern is that we spend more time in 2025 exploring how we can develop ministry in Gretton; HR distractions has meant this area of the strategy is not quite where I wanted it to be. But we continue to build good relationships with the GVA, and it was wonderful to see the church overflowing (once again) at Christmas.

I am hugely grateful to everyone for the part you play in the life of our churches and parish; but I would like to record here my hearty thanks to our Church Wardens Simon Andrews and Sue Proctor. The dedication and time that they put into their roles is fantastic, and we are very blessed to have them. Also I thank our Fab Four: Fliss, Steve, Cliff and Chris who bring so much to us through their ministry as Readers; and our other Fab Four: Revd's Wendy, Mike, Michael and Rob, without whom the pattern of services would look very different; and one on his own, but equally fabulous John for his words of wisdom. We are extremely blessed by each of them, and through

their ministry; and I know, just as you do too, that without them our ministry as a church would be greatly diminished.

After such a heavy year I trust that you are by now beginning to feel a lightness within the life of the church, with joy and excitement for the future. I was reminded the other day, as we heard the passage of scripture in Luke's Gospel of Jesus calling the first disciples, that ministry is always something that is shared. We are in this boat together (quite literally as we gather in the Nave of the church Sunday by Sunday), each with our part to play as we journey forward as the people of God in this place. Many people but one in Christ; 4 places of worship with 7 congregations, but one parish; many ministries, but united as one under God. May God continue to be with us through all the challenges and opportunities of 2025.

*Revd Capt David Penny*

### iii) APCM COVERING 2024: CHURCHWARDENS REPORT

2024 has seen continued development of the strands of Parish work as articulated in the Parish strategy though chronic human resource (HR) issues has impacted upon the expected speed of their development.

The number and geographical spread of services with associated musical support within the Parish has been maintained with the active support of our retired clergy, Readers and volunteers. Revd David with Churchwardens and Chris Sands, and, in the latter half of the year, our new Parish Administrator Gareth Moseley actively sought musical support owing to the hiatus created through the sad resignations of our Directors of Music. Our thanks to them all and we remain very lucky to be so relatively well endowed with such pro-active people. We achieved full and well attended Easter, Advent and Christmas services in the Parish, with the strong support of our rump of choristers, as well as a number of welcomers and supervisors who made themselves available to manage the anticipated numbers of attendees at the major services. Our bells are still ringing and the team has new blood though they are not complacent regarding seeking new recruits.

Service attendance at St Peter's dipped in the first half of the year and this was directly attributed to the HR issues mentioned earlier though there was an increasing pick-up in the latter half of the year. St Michael's remains healthy and stable whilst Christ Church is still an area requiring some attention. Whilst St Mary's ownership transferred from the Parish to Sudeley Castle in February, it continues to have a loyal cohort for its Summer Evensong services with the added benefit of reinforcement from the transitory visitors to Sudeley Castle, and supported by some fine a cappella musicians.

The Parish remained engaged with the wider community through its involvement in town events – particularly noting the election hustings we hosted in St Peter's, though Churches Together in Winchcombe lost some focus again owing to the challenges on availability for other worshipping community leaders. However, through the medium of St Peter's Centre, we continued to offer a "Warm Space" for the town's youngsters in conjunction with WAM whilst also being the venue for the WAM organised Youth Council.

The Parish was actively involved in the provision of volunteers to support other groups and in the ramping up of food bank support. Pastoral care has been re-focussed through the efforts of Morag Adlington, who took on the role in the latter part of the year, and a small but growing dedicated team.

The work to recruit a families' and children's lead was attempted to be progressed and interviews arranged; sadly, potential candidates withdrew at relatively short notice. However, whilst it is expected to see fulfilment in 2025, the last part of the year saw initial development of recruitment of an ex-WAM employee to take on the lead role of Young People's Ministry. In contrast, the Awesome programme of youth engagement is going well under the guidance of Steve Carter and Revd Wendy Ruffle.

Socially, we have been as active as ever with a number of fundraising activities; some tried and tested, but some new ideas. In particular, we would highlight the ever-popular book fair overseen by Kate Robinson, a hugely enjoyable fête put together by Stewart Aylward, and the town Christmas Fair stall by Lisa Martin and Revd Wendy in conjunction with a second highly successful run of Christmas Tree Festival organised by Abbie Shurmer. However, our Social Committee needs new blood for which readers are asked to consider their availability.

The weekly Parish “Signpost” bulletins have, we trust, continued to keep Parishioners up to date with wider goings on. We understand that effective information flow plays an important part in maintaining the cohesion of our community and Revd David expects to look at this area in more detail in 2025. Regarding social media, our thanks to Deborah Penny taking the social media bull by the horns to upgrade our profile in the town, and to Abbie Shurmer who stepped up for Deborah in the latter’s short stand down.

Other major achievements or events include:

- The ongoing work by EcoChurch members towards the attainment of the A Rocha gold award. We continue to enjoy the fruits of their work whether it be Christ Church’s and St Peter’s insect hotels and wildflower areas, swift nests in Christ Church and St Peter’s or the general willingness to maintain our churches by the groups who support our churches’ maintenance days.
- Toddler Time, which continues to be well supported and our thanks to Gill Worthington who stood down her leadership position at the end of the year. We thank Karen Almond for her agreement to take up the leadership in 2025.
- The initiation in February of the St Peter’s integrated project team seeking a holistic recommendation for heating, lighting, seating and audio-visual support, together with the creation of an independent multi-functional area within the church space.

Much practical work has been achieved and below is a summary of some of the bigger projects that have been taken forward in addition to the continual round of safety checks and small fixes undertaken. Our thanks to those individuals or organisations shown in brackets, and Deputy Churchwardens for their involvement in work in addressing many of these issues, and the Friends of St Peter’s (FoSP) and St Michael’s (FoSM) for their respective financial support.

- St Peter’s, Winchcombe:
  - Re-pinning of three merlons on South Nave roof (FoSP).
  - Bells refurbishment (FoSP and Bell Captain’s sought grants).
  - South side clerestory windows re-sealed (Geof Adlington).
  - Boiler Room sump pump and housing fixed and refurbished (Simon Lainé).
- Christ Church, Gretton:
  - Disabled access ramp purchased.
- St Michael’s, Stanley Pontlarge:
  - North Nave re-roofed (FoSM).
  - Five yearly electrical deep inspection and fixes.
  - Heating re-wiring (FoSM).
- St Peter’s Centre:
  - Refurbishment of meeting room (WAM).

We have said goodbye and hello to a number of personalities with lead roles within the Parish. Some we have already mentioned, but additionally we saw the departure of our two Directors of Music, Andrew Horton then Shelley Everall Hoban, our Parish Administrator Mark Mulley, our Safeguarding focus Lynne Banks and our weddings focus Jane Wain. They have all served us loyally for a number of years for which we thank them and wish them good fortune in their respective future endeavours. In turn, we welcomed Gareth Moseley as our new Parish Administrator in September, and James Willshire as our new Director of Music starting 1 January 2025.

Finally, whilst we inevitably will not have thanked everyone who deserves it, the continued voluntary contributions by the PCC, choir, bellringers, stewards, welcomers, sacristans, vergers, holy dusters, coffee makers, etc, etc are not taken for granted. Thank you to all our volunteers but we remain ready to accept new names to fill more gaps.

*Simon Andrews*

*Sue Proctor*

Churchwardens, Winchcombe Parish



## **St Mary's**

This will be the last separate report on St Mary's as ownership transferred to Sudeley Castle in February. As part of the transfer agreement, all the planned six Evensong services were held - though starting at 4pm - with attendance ranging from 3 to 20.

*Simon Andrews*

## **Christ Church**

Services at Christ Church continue to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, alternating between Holy Communion and Morning Worship. Following services, we go down to the Village Hall, where the Gretton Hub is held every two weeks, to join in for refreshments and social time with other residents of the village. Morning Prayer is held as a short informal service on Thursday mornings at 9:00 am.

Our Mini Team continues to meet every two months.

We are fortunate to have Stewart Aylward to play the organ for us on second Sundays. Judith Roles is now playing for us on fourth Sundays – many thanks go to her.

Our Spring Cleanup, inside and outside the church, took place on May 4, with nine members of the congregation and three villagers taking part – thanks to all!

On November 24 we held our Patronal Festival at our morning service, with the theme of Songs of Praise.

On December 19 Gretton School held their Carol Service. On Christmas Eve we held a combined Crib and Carol Service at 4pm – so well attended that there was almost no more room for standees! The church looked beautiful as always at Christmas – thanks as ever go to our faithful Flower Fairies.

*Susan Fleck*

*Deputy Churchwarden*

## **St Michael's, Stanley Pontlarge**

During the year, we continued to hold Holy Communion services at 9.15am on the first and third Sundays of the month.

In March we had an additional service for Easter Day. We all stayed to enjoy our traditional hot cross buns after the service.

Our Harvest Festival took place in October. We decorated the church with flowers and produce from our gardens and vegetable patches, and held a collection for food and other items for the local foodbank. We had drinks and nibbles in the churchyard following the service.

In December we held our Carols by Candlelight. We decorated the church with foraged greenery and candles. As well as the traditional biblical readings, people chose poems and Christmas themed readings to read and Evie, Annie and Grace told the story of the Christmas Truce and football games during World War 1. Music was provided by Duncan on the organ and also Ash playing the flute. The church was full and it was a wonderful evening. After the service we had mulled wine and refreshments in the churchyard, keeping warm around the brazier.

We are very pleased to have an organist again, Duncan Westerman, playing our special organ at our services. Thanks also go to Elliott Nixon who has played guitar to accompany our singing, when we have not had an organist.

The North Nave roof was re-roofed during March. Thanks go to Simon Andrews for all his fundraising efforts. In October some electrical re-wiring work took place, funded by Friends of St Michael's.

*Gill Badger*



#### **iv) APCM COVERING 2024: REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING**

The PCC has complied with the duty to have “due regard” to the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. The PCC also has a Parish Safeguarding Policy, which is reviewed annually.

Our Commitments:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse or other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those who may pose a present risk

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church.

##### **1. DBS**

Gill Worthington, in her role as DBS Administrator, continues to do an excellent job ensuring that those who work with children or adults at risk and any others in roles eligible for DBS clearances apply for and have their DBS clearances approved and renewed as required. This includes all members of the PCC as Trustees of a charity that provides services for children or adults at risk. DBS clearances must now be renewed or updated every three years.

##### **2. Safer Recruitment**

All those working for the church in activities involving children or vulnerable adults, whether the role is paid or voluntary, must be recruited using the Safer Recruitment process. If you are recruiting in these areas, please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer for further information.

##### **3. Parish Dashboard**

We continue to use the Parish Dashboard, which is an online Safeguarding Tool provided by the Church of England. The Dashboard acts as an audit of safeguarding for the Parish and produces an action plan which can be presented to the PCC.

##### **4. Safeguarding Training**

Safeguarding Training is a requirement for all paid employees and any officers of the church. Safeguarding training courses are available online via the C of E training portal. The Parish Safeguarding Officer, in conjunction with the Priest in Charge and the PCC, will contact those whose roles require training to explain what is needed. Training should be renewed every three years.

##### **5. Parish Safeguarding Officer**

Lynne Banks has now stepped down from this role after 10 years and a new Parish Safeguarding Officer will be appointed.

***Lynne Banks***

#### **v) APCM COVERING 2024: DIOCESAN AND DEANERY REPORTS FOR APCM**

**Diocesan Synod report.**

The Diocesan discussions at the beginning of the year focussed on Safeguarding policy rising out of General Synod, the progress on Environment Objectives of the Diocese, and an introduction to the Parish Share 2026 model. At the next meeting the annual accounts were presented, discussed, and approved. This led to further disclosures about the thinking around the 2026 Parish Share model.

In the second half of the year our attention turned to the work of the Diocesan Board of Education. Specifically to highlight the importance of this mission field of young people. It raised the concern around the difficulty of getting

foundation governors in place in our church schools and getting access into secondary schools to minister there. Our parish is not alone in having these problems.

The year concluded with an update of the Mission and Ministry objectives as expressed in the Living in Love and Faith initiative of the Diocese and a major update on Safeguarding resources, activities, and support available for the diocese team.

### **Deanery Synod report**

There was a slow start to the year as the new incumbents got settled into their new roles and whilst the Area Dean was otherwise preoccupied. However in the course of the year a lot of good work was accomplished. 3 Mission Area groups were formed. The Deanery Strategic Plan was adopted by the new incumbents/ Mission Area group leaders. Work began on translating words on paper to an action plan and this was coordinated with the Diocesan Leadership Team who are overseeing the development of DSP in all 9 Deaneries.

The Deanery was also involved in the work to inform the Parishes/Benefices of what the 2026 Parish Share model would mean in practice in terms of future PS contributions needed to support ministry in our Deanery. This is very much an on-going hot topic as we move forward into our parishes next year.

### **vi) APCM COVERING 2024: LICENSED LAY MINISTERS/READERS REPORT TO THE APCM**

2024 has been a year of continued growth, engagement and activity for the Readers of the Parish.

Although we are not ordained, we are licenced and authorised by the bishop to lead worship and, under the direction of the priest-in-charge, to carry out a range of responsibilities, enabling people to recognise Christ's presence in our community. Readers are often described as 'theologically educated and culturally engaged'; a description we are all working hard to live up to in order to fulfil the role we're lucky enough to hold.

Readers have served throughout the parish in 2024 as ministers, deacons and preachers - it is now very rare indeed for a Sunday morning to go by without several of us being involved in leading worship in these ways somewhere in the parish. We also lead worship at other times and in other styles: Awesome (of which more later); evening worship in a variety of formats on Sundays at St Peter's; Tuesday evening prayer and services during Lent and Advent being notable examples. We also support Julia and John in the parishes North of Winchcombe and have conducted services in Great Washbourne, Snowhill and Wormington – especially at Easter, Christmas and Remembrance Sunday.

In other areas of ministry, Cliff Cocks and Fliss Hall led well-attended Lent groups in 2024. Fliss also heads up a team that has developed and is delivering marriage preparation courses for couples getting married in the wider group of parishes. Chris Haslam links the parish with the Winchcombe Poets and is a stalwart of the Magazine Committee. Steve Carter is one of the driving forces behind the new 'Awesome' outreach afternoons in the primary school. These are bringing in new children and families and all are encouraged to attend and enjoy the huge fun to be had. Steve also led and co-ordinated Experience Easter in St. Peter's, leading a team over thirty members of the congregation and engaging over three hundred pre-school and primary school children in the project. Readers are also part of a small team who also visit the primary schools in Winchcombe and Gretton to lead Collective Worship on a regular basis. We all, in various informal ways, try to be involved in pastoral care whenever and wherever we're needed.

Our fortnightly meetings with the wider ministry team involve the inevitable mundane activity (keeping up with the rotas) but are greatly enhanced by interesting discussions and spiritual development.

*Fliss Hall*

### **vii) APCM COVERING 2024: PASTORAL TEAM REPORT**

In 2024, the much reduced Pastoral Team has worked determinedly to care for the most vulnerable members of the church. The three Home Communion team members took out Holy Communion to at least 6 people each month during 2024.

The Home Visiting team [comprising just 2 people for most of the year] have done a brilliant job supporting their 12 [approx.] elderly or housebound members of the church congregation every month.

Morag was appointed on December 1<sup>st</sup> as Pastoral Team Leader and received a very useful handover from Margaret Batterbury.

In the later part of the year we had very needy people come into church unexpectedly who were helped effectively by the strong caring ethos in St Peter's and are now enjoying the life of the church.

Our services of All Saints and Blue Christmas were very well attended and were of great comfort to those who attended.

If you'd like to know more about Pastoral Work in all its various guises, please contact Morag Adlington - number in the directory or email to [pastoralcare@winchcombeparish.co.uk](mailto:pastoralcare@winchcombeparish.co.uk)

*Morag Adlington*

*Pastoral team Leader*

#### **viii) MUSIC REPORT TO THE APCM – included in Churchwarden's Report**

#### **ix) APCM COVERING 2024: ST PETERS FLOWER ARRANGERS**

The group have continued to provide an arrangement next to the altar each week, except in Advent and Lent. Extended decorations for Christmas, Easter and Harvest have been appreciated by the congregation and the Group is grateful for all the compliments received. We plan to continue this pattern for the coming year.

We have continued to work without using floral foam (Oasis). Large pedestal arrangements remain problematic, but we are getting to grips with new methods of arranging using chicken wire and other props. We now have a small collection of deeper containers and vases, more suitable for this type of arrangement. That said, we are always on the lookout for more plain pottery and stoneware containers, as these seem to be more in keeping with the church interior. It is possible that an ecofriendly flower foam will become available in the future, there is demand as more and more organisations ban or stop using the original foam.

We continue to investigate the possibility of sourcing our flowers locally or, at least, from this country and using potted plants and more informal arrangements of local foliage, berries, and fruits. We are also investigating the occasional use of artificial flowers when appropriate.

We remain unable to provide additional flowers for weddings. Couples are welcome to put additional arrangements in church or bring in a florist. Couples and outside florists are requested not use floral foam (but this is rarely adhered to), and to liaise with us about timings and placement of arrangements. We also request that they do not move or remove the altar arrangement.

We have lost one longstanding member this year but gained a new member who is an experienced arranger. We remain a small group, and more members would be most welcome. You do not have to be an expert (some of us are certainly not) just enthusiastic and willing to have a go. Advice and encouragement are always on hand and the commitment is not too onerous. Talk to either of us if you are interested.

*Margaret Bearne and Margaret Holloway*

#### **x) REPORT TO THE APCM FROM THE BELLRINGERS**

We have had a good year, in that we now have quite a few more ringers than this time last year.

We now have 4 more Sunday morning ringers, with another one who will soon be able to ring on Sundays.

Although this has boosted our numbers, we could still do with more ringers to ensure our future. Although we have tried to have special "open days", this has not produced any new ringers. We have found that the best way to recruit is by "word of mouth", so please publicise this.

We continue to ring for Sunday morning services, and for practice night on Wednesdays. Unfortunately, for the first time in 50 years, we were unable to ring the New Year in for 2025, a too many of us were ill!

We rang for 6 weddings in St. Peter's last year. Unfortunately there seem to be only 2 so far for this year. We do, however, plan to ring on 8th May 2025 at 6:30pm, to celebrate, along with all the other churches in the land, the 80th Anniversary of V E Day.

2024 saw us having some fairly substantial works done in the tower, to the bells & their fittings 25 years after the bells were augmented to 8, to keep the bells safe & ringing. We were able to obtain Grants from several sources, to help with the cost, most of which came out of our funds. The bells now "go" a lot easier. Edward Kain, as Steeplekeeper, oversaw all the works.

The plan this year is to paint the bell frame, last done about 40 years ago. We are lucky in that a ringer from Cheltenham is able to do this & only charge us for the materials. We are also applying for a Grant to help with this.

We will continue to be a sound presence in the Church, as long as we are able

*Clare Pritchard*

*Captain of Bellringers*

#### **xi) APCM COVERING 2024: ECO CHURCH GROUP**

Having received a grant from the Diocese for wildlife planting, our efforts in 2024 have been concentrated on improvements in the churchyard, particularly making our wildlife garden in the NE corner (Kenelm's Corner). In May we installed a gabion seat: the gabion was provided at cost by Wirefence, we used stone lying around in the churchyard and an oak top from a local tree was given by the local saw mill. The area around has been rejuvenated and planted.

Two crab apples and a hawthorn were also planted on the opposite side of the churchyard.

Throughout the year we have had regularly changing noticeboard displays to encourage the community and have helped with an Awesome Service and an assembly at Winchcombe Abbey Primary. We try to collaborate with other like-minded groups, publicising events for Winchcombe Green Town and Winchcombe Community Allotments.

On Sunday 1st September a service was held based on concern for the environment, with John Sutcliffe's sermon on climate change and a cake sale in aid of A Rocha. We also participated in the Fete with plants for sale, both raising funds and the profile in the group.

We are continuing to work towards gaining a Gold Award in all that we do.

*Natalie Stone & Jennie Davies*

#### **xii) APCM COVERING 2024: STEWARD'S REPORT**

**Stewards' Team:** We have 19 regular weekday stewards and 5 who do monthly Saturday duties.

Unfortunately there remain gaps in the weekday timetable where new stewards are needed, but it has been brilliant to welcome Paul Astbury, Simon Laine Sarah Talbot and Charlie Bagnall to our team.

**Visitors' book:** we continued to receive many comments in the visitors' book over 2024. As with 2024, the most used adjective for visitors' reactions to St Peter's was 'BEAUTIFUL' and we have also had many comments on the interesting history and displays, the high quality of maintenance of the building, the East Window and the stained glass, the lovely calm and prayerful atmosphere, and above all very many extremely appreciative comments on the friendly guides, stewards and members of the congregation who demonstrate our welcoming vibrant church community

**Comments:** Some of the standout from 2024:

- *I think Prior Aldwyn would be pleased*
- *Loved the pews*
- *We enjoyed the wood carved imp*

- *Excellent display for children to hear the Easter story*
- *I am the author of the first Guide to the Cotswold Way 1973 and presenter of [Countryside.co.uk](http://Countryside.co.uk) podcast.*
- *Love the Eco Church information. Well done on awards and action!*
- *Love the benches' covers to keep warm when sitting*
- *Fabulous books for sale*
- *Your Day of Prayer stations are inspiring*
- *Our son liked imagining he was giving a sermon in the pulpit*
- *Coffin was cool, and very cool boat*
- *My 4 x great grandfather was baptised here in 1798*
- *Lovely to visit the parish church of my ancestors who were baptised and buried here*
- *We were married here 46 years ago*
- *My parents were married here in 1953*
- *My great grandfather, Meurig Davies was vicar for 20 years*
- *My uncle, Peter Morton, preached here in 1970's*

**Maps and pins:** Looking at the pins in the maps for 2024, people have continued to visit from all across the world with a grand total of 789 pins from 84 different countries. Of these, 329 were from different regions across the UK. Then in descending order, we had 149 North American visitors (covering America, Canada, Bermuda and the West Indies), 142 Europeans from 24 different countries. Next came Australasia with 58 visitors from Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea and the Pacific Islands, then 48 visitors from 14 countries across Asia. South America was represented by 31 pins from 8 different countries, then 26 African visitors from 13 countries, and finally 6 Middle Eastern visitors from 6 Middle Eastern countries.

Thank you so much to all stewards for all the hard work and support in this important ministry to our church community and beyond.

*Katy Bagnall*

*Steward Co-ordinator*

### **xiii) APCM COVERING 2024: TODDLER TIME AT ST PETER'S**

Toddler Time, which meets at St. Peter's on Thursdays at 10.00 a.m. until 11.30 a.m. throughout the year, including the school holidays, is a lifeline for carers, continues to flourish, with a delightful group of children with their parents, grandparents, and carers.

With a dedicated team of helpers, a variety of activities is on offer, including play, stories, craft, music and of course healthy snacks. In addition to the weekly sessions, a Teddy Bears Picnic was held in August, and the children made cards and other crafts for important events, such as Mothering Sunday, Easter and Christmas. The group was delighted to take part once again in the Christmas Tree Festival in December, with the young children enjoying making decorations for the Christmas Tree.

Just before Christmas, a celebratory morning was held, with the retirement of two members of the team. Christine Mason has supported Toddler Time loyally for a number of years, and we thank her for her unfailing support, kindness and friendship to both children and adults.

Gill Worthington has been involved with Toddler Time in various guises since 2007, in recent times leading the group. Gill has been privileged to enjoy the company of children, parents and grandparents, together with a wonderfully supportive team of helpers. Thank you enormously to everyone. It has been a great time.

Time must move on and we are extremely grateful to Karen Almond, a member of the Toddler Time Team, who so graciously and willingly offered to take the lead role for Toddler Time from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025. As a former Nursery Nurse (NNEB), Karen comes with a wealth of experience in work with the very youngest children. Our enormous thanks to Karen, and we wish her well for the continuing success of the group.

Our thanks also to Rev. David and members of the clergy team, who have been so supportive and come to read Bible stories to the children on a monthly basis.

Very young children, including babies and their carers continue to be made very welcome at St. Peter's. Do come and join us!

*Gill Worthington, Lead for Toddler Time in 2024.*

**e) Questions and discussion on reports**

**f) General questions and discussion**

**5) READERS TO BE EX-OFFICIO FROM 2026**

**6) ELECTIONS**

a) Deanery Synod Members

b) PCC Members

**7) THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

**8) ELECTORAL ROLL**

**9) CLOSING PRAYER**