



GROWING IN LOVE for God & each other



*(Alpha - Small Group Discussion, Sept 2025)*

## **Annual Parochial Church Reports 2025**

Charity Number 1155185



**Annual Vestry & Parochial Church Meeting to be held in Church on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2026 from 11.30am**

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Questions arising from the Reports

Appointment of Treasurer & Secretary

Appointment of Safeguarding Officer

Election of PCC members

(at Copthorne, for the sake of continuity, if not otherwise elected, the PCC Secretary & Treasurer are co-opted positions)

Appointment of Sidespersons

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Any Other Business

**Copy of the record of the Minutes of  
The Annual Vestry Meeting  
held in the Church at 11.25am  
Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

The meeting was conducted by Wim Mauritz (Vicar) in the presence of 81 parishioners.

The Minutes of the Vestry Meeting of Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were unanimously approved. Proposer: Mike Livesey, Seconder: Kerry Scott.

Mr David Hornsby (proposed by Jean Ditchburn and seconded by Paul Simmons) and Mr Eddie Redfern (proposed by Nigel Cramp and seconded by Sue Williams) were unanimously elected as there were no other nominations and duly appointed Churchwardens for the coming year.

As David had already served six consecutive years, a resolution was passed under section 3 (3) of the Churchwardens Measure 2002 to waive the six-year term limit. This permitted his re-election beyond the usual term.

Wim thanked Gillian Hodsdon who stood down as Churchwarden for all her hard work over the years. Wim also thanked David for his service and support over the past year.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.40am.

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
Held on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
At 11.40am in the Church**

**Attendance:**

The meeting was conducted by Wim Mauritz (Vicar) and attended by 81 parishioners.

**Apologies:**

Received from: Elizabeth Comber, Andy Harpham, Gillian Hodsdon, and Maggie Prior

**MINUTES:**

**Formal business:**

Apologies as noted were accepted.

Sandra mentioned that at last year's APCM the congregation raised the issue of the parish magazine costs and is disappointed that there was no feedback at all on this during the year. Wim apologized and assured Sandra that it was discussed. Kerry explained that a number of options were considered including discontinuing the magazine, which was deemed unacceptable. Paper quality – and thus cost – was reduced during the year. Costs for this year will be less than last year. Sandra thanked Kerry for the information and stressed that the issue is about poor communication. People are less likely to donate money when asked if they are not aware of all the work going on behind the scenes. Sandra also mentioned that people are not made aware of the things that are discussed at PCC meetings and that the minutes should be made available. David agreed and promised to look at putting feedback from PCC meetings in the weekly newsletter. Wim

mentioned that the PCC minutes can be accessed for transparency on request to the church office. Maralyn mentioned that the church office had put together projected income and expenditure for the year with a view to ensuring that magazine costs are at least covered this year. Sandra further mentioned the Have Your Say Survey commenting that no feedback was given to respondents. Maralyn stated that this was led by Andrew Taylor and after he sadly died this project was not continued.

**Proposal:** That the Minutes of the APCM 2024 be accepted.

**Proposed:** Nigel Cramp

**Seconded:** Mike Livesey

Unanimously agreed.

#### **Matters Arising from the 2024 minutes.**

Wim stated that he had taken on the feedback about last year's Good Friday service being described as a "fun service". Wim assured everyone that it was not a fun time – but a service appropriate for children. Most churches don't provide that, and the attendance was almost double. However, this year we will also have a more sober service with hymns in the morning. Wim noted that the request to have the APCM on a Sunday after church has been actioned.

**Electoral Roll** – It was unanimously agreed that the Roll of 121 members be accepted.

**Proposed:** Sandra Cramp

**Seconded:** John Wells

#### **Questions arising from the Reports**

Monica asked why the Building Report refers to the solar panels as temporary. John explained that solar panels are classed as temporary structures in terms of planning permission as they are erected on the roof – not part of the roof – and have a lifespan of 25-30 years and then need to be replaced.

Mike asked if the church had taken over the Lychgate Fund, if it is designated as separate and how it is managed. Kerry confirmed the Church took in just over £3,000 and it is a restricted fund, so the money can only be used for the lychgate repairs. Some fundraising last year raised around £1,300 and since then some smaller amounts have come in. Monica is the lead person, and Gwyn Cheesemur has generously given help to the PCC. David stated that the boards have been removed for renovation and work should be completed in May/June. Monica advised that further work cannot begin until all the funding is available, but we have an offer of matched funding up to £3,000. Maralyn added that the Copthorne Locals Facebook group has adopted the lychgate as their charity for this quarter.

Richard asked for clarification of the tangible fixed assets in the accounts. Kerry stated that we applied for a grant of about £12,000 for air conditioning in The Hub. There was also a grant of about £25,000 for work on the car park. Both the air conditioning and the car park are reported in the accounts as tangible assets. The expenditure has increased the value of The Hub. The Statement of Financial Activities shows a significant surplus, this is larger than in reality because it doesn't include the capital expenditure on The Hub. A closer examination of the Balance Sheet shows we had a significant deficit on our cash flow during the year and our cash reserves, or current assets, were lower at the end of 2024 than 2023. The Church is asset rich but cash poor and was losing money every month. We need to generate about £10,000 more income than we did last year to sustain all our activities and projects in the future. Kerry encouraged everyone to see if they could spare a few pounds extra every month: it probably works out at about £10 per month for everyone. Kerry paid tribute to Mike for all his hard work; without The Hub income our financial position would be in jeopardy. The increase in expenditure was kept very low – 3-4%. This was mostly achieved through Nigel retiring - although he continues to be very much in evidence in the office.

#### **Annual Report 2024**

It was unanimously agreed that all reports – Trustees Annual Report; Financial Report and Accounts; Vicar; Pastoral; Church Wardens; Parish Office; Safeguarding; Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship; Coffee Bar, St John's Café & Games and Abstract Art Group; Choir; Ladies Ministry; Youth; Children; Toddler Time; cots2tots; The Parish Hub; Building Team; Social Events; Mission Partners(home and overseas); Deanery Synod; and Legal Documentation – as previously circulated, be accepted.

**Proposed:** John Wells  
**Seconded:** Nigel Cramp

### **Election of PCC Members**

Lesley Dawson (proposed by Ann Black and seconded by Carol Watson); Elizabeth Venter (proposed by Ian Hornsby and seconded by Paul Simmons); Zoe McCann; Jean Ditchburn (proposed by Jennifer Wharton and seconded by Maralyn Smith); Sue Williams (proposed by David Hornsby and seconded by Andy Harpham); and Jennifer Wharton (proposed by Ian Hornsby and seconded by Margaret Jones) were unanimously elected to the PCC.

### **Election to Deanery Synod (mid-triennium)**

John Wells (proposed by Ian Hornsby and seconded by Chris Wheatley) was unanimously elected as Deanery Synod Representative and sits on the PCC ex officio

### **Appointment of Treasurer, PCC Secretary and Safeguarding Officer**

It was unanimously agreed that Kerry Scott continue as **Treasurer**

It was unanimously agreed that Maralyn Smith continue as **PCC Secretary**

It was unanimously agreed that Eric Trevett continue as **Safeguarding Officer**

**Proposed:** Jennifer Wharton

**Seconded:** Mary Smith

### **Appointment of Sidespersons**

It was noted that sidespersons are not formally appointed.

### **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

It was agreed by majority to appoint Verdant Accountants as **Independent Examiner**

**Proposed:** Nigel Cramp

**Seconded:** Mike Livesey

### **Any Other Business**

Wim gave a big thank you to: the congregation for their vast work behind the scenes; the office staff, in particular Maralyn Smith who works over her contracted hours; Jennifer Wharton who is in Church every day and whose help is invaluable; Jan Leftley for her work on the PCC for the last 15 years and he presented her with a bunch of flowers; the PCC for their support over the last 7-8 years; Aelwen for her work with refugees; Kirsty for art work for the parish magazine; the clergy team who meet once a month to pray and look after one another and who all work unpaid; the musicians; choir; volunteers on the AV rota; volunteers on the coffee rota; and everybody who volunteers for any of the other rotas.

Sandra thanked Wim for everything that he does for the Church and congregation.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the saying of the Grace at 12.00pm.

## CHURCH MINISTRY REPORTS

### FROM THE VICAR:

*“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13 v 2, NIV-UK)*

2025 has been another year of remarkable growth and deepening fellowship at St John's. Building on our vision of 'Growing in love for God and each other,' we have seen that love take shape in beautiful, tangible ways. Our identity as a multicultural, welcoming community remains one of our greatest testimonies; the "love, acceptance, and kindness" that strangers and newcomers have felt years ago continues to be the heartbeat of our life together. This spirit of hospitality has flourished through our many activities.

We were blessed to run another two Alpha courses, a Prayer Course and the usual Marriage Preparation, Baptism and Confirmation classes, seeing lives transformed by the grace of God. Our weekly rhythms of church services, the small group sessions, Toddler Time, coffee mornings and community lunches, have become important spaces of connection. We again celebrated together at Jazz on the Green, shared in the joy of the Carnival Teas, and got involved with our Quiz nights and our Harvest Festival. Our English Language Classes have continued to serve many people and our dedicated working parties have continued to tend our churchyard, nurturing the physical beauty of our parish alongside its spiritual fruit that is produced by the Holy Spirit, our life-giver.

In these past years, God has been growing something beautiful among us. As a church family, we have seen growth in numbers, in diversity, and in the ways we worship, serve, and care for one another. With this growth has come a gentle but clear invitation, to make room. This is about hospitality, not just welcoming people at the door, but shaping a space where everyone can truly belong. A church where we can celebrate, move with dignity, pray deeply, worship freely and encounter God. We know that change touches memory. These pews have held prayers and tears, witnessed baptisms and funerals, celebrations and ordinary Sundays. Those stories matter. They are not being erased. We trust that the same God who met us here before will continue to meet us here again.

None of this, neither the daily ministry nor the vision for this new project would be possible without your joyful and faithful commitment. To the staff and volunteers who manage our admin, cleaning, music, AV, and welcome and coffee rotas: you are the hands and feet of this house of hospitality. I am incredibly grateful to each of you at St John's for your dedication. Thank you for your support as we take this next step together, physically and spiritually 'Making Room' for God, by His mercy to move even more powerfully among us.

*Wim Mauritz*

### FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS:

As we approach another APCM it is a privilege to be part of such a vibrant and diverse community of God here in Copthorne. There are so many things currently happening and plans in the pipeline as we look to deliver on our 2025-2030 mission plans. It is clear we are truly blessed as a worshipping community in so many ways.

#### **Church Services**

All our Church services continue to be well attended and supported. Attendance numbers week on week, service by service, are variable but we continue to exceed 100 people across our Sunday services on most weeks. All of them have their own distinct feel but all provide space to explore, learn, grow, and worship God in faith. Our Wednesday communion services are smaller in nature but continue to be well attended with a strong core regular group.

Our congregations come together for special services, such as Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Remembrance and these are a wonderful opportunity for our Church to come together as one in worship. The content of

these tries to balance the familiarity of both main services and it is a good opportunity for people of all ages and traditions to share fellowship together.

Our Christmas services are always a highlight of the year, and this year saw numbers increase across most of these services. This year we saw a significant increase in numbers attending our Nine Lessons and Carols service and the crib service continues to be extremely popular. These services always see a substantial number of visitors who do not routinely attend our Church. They are a fantastic opportunity to share the Good News at such a special time of year.

### **Other weekly activities**

As well as our formal services the vibrant life of our Church is always enhanced by the many other activities that are hosted in our Church. From bible studies and courses to art groups and Toddler Time, there is always a wide variety. These are a great outreach to our community and beyond and the sign of a truly alive church. There is rarely any day of the week when there is not a form of ministry happening in our Church. I would encourage everyone, if not already doing so, to try and go along to one or more of these activities and to try something new. You will always receive a warm welcome!

As we move forward into 2026, we look forward, with hopeful prayers for the success of our Making Room project to refresh and renew our church building. This, once completed, will give us greater opportunity to flexibly use our space both in worship and in community service whilst retaining the special feeling of our wonderful building. We suspect many (including us) will be looking forward to improved heating in the church.

### **Social events**

From quizzes to lunches, the annual village Carnival to our own Flower and Produce Show/Harvest Fair weekend, throughout the year there is a wide range of social activities within our Church. Every one of these is an opportunity to join in fellowship (whether that be sitting eating lunch or putting up tents and tables or washing up for Carnival). It also offers an outreach to our community and especially to those who “don’t do Church.” Thanks, must be given to all who get involved in organising these events and especially to the social team who co-ordinate and plan both the programme and the execution of these events so well.

### **Churchyard, Working parties and coffee mornings**

Our monthly working party and coffee morning continues to help keep our Churchyard and Church in good order. We want to say a massive thank you to all those who faithfully support our working parties and to those who have additionally attended and helped at working parties at St Leonard’s. Turners Hill. As always, we welcome new members to the team and there are usually tasks inside and outside which can be skilled/unskilled and involve varying levels of physical exertion.

Our churchyard continues to be an incredibly special place of great tranquillity and demonstrates the beauty of God’s creation. A special thanks must be noted to Tom, Angie, and others who support them (including many of our friends residing in the Copthorne Hotel). Between them they spend numerous hours tending to the managed lawns and flower beds. We intentionally leave areas within the churchyard to a wilder state to encourage nature and wildlife to flourish.

### **Church Fabric and Property**

Our Church remains in relatively good condition for the age of the building, a full electrical inspection was completed during 2025, and remedial works have now been completed – including the provision of RCD protection to all Church plug sockets.

We have checked the inventory of valuable items and confirm all are accounted for and remain in good condition. There are a couple of items which need minor repairs, but all remain usable currently.

### **Thank you!**

Firstly, a big thank you to all who contribute in any way to the life of our Church, whether it be financially or through volunteering or just simply by being at one of our services or events. We particularly want to thank Maralyn in the office and anyone who is on one of our rotas, be that flowers, cleaning, serving, prayer ministry, coffee, AV support, children’s/ youth work or welcoming. All these roles are vital to support our ministry here at St Johns. If you feel you could join one (or another one) of our rotas at any point do talk to us or the office, as help is always needed and appreciated. Furthermore, we would like to thank the choir, musicians, worship leaders, and readers who bring variety and life to our worship and services.

We would like to especially thank Wim and the clergy team, our organists and many others who have stepped up during 2025 and taken on extra workload in supporting St Leonards alongside their roles at St Johns.

Finally, as Eddie comes to the end of his term as Churchwarden, I would like to personally thank him for all the support, advice, good humour, and huge dedication he has shown in an often-demanding role.

*David Hornsby and Eddie Redfern, Churchwardens*

## **DEANERY SYNOD:**

The Parish of St John's Copthorne forms part of the East Grinstead Deanery, which covers a wide area from Cowden in the east to Bewbush in the west, and from Copthorne in the north to Ashurst Wood in the south, incorporating Crawley. The Deanery sits within the Diocese of Chichester. Our parish is represented by three elected Lay Deanery Synod Representatives, serving a three-year term. During 2025/26, three meetings were held, chaired either by the Rural Dean, Revd Richard Poole, or the Lay Chair, Mr Rob Pudney. The Synod's purpose is to act as a communication channel between the General Synod, Diocese, Deanery, and parishes, enabling shared learning, discussion, and coordination as we work to proclaim the Gospel in our communities.

### **First Synod Meeting – 5 April 2025 (St Swithun's, East Grinstead)**

The meeting opened with reports from General Synod and the Deanery Finance Committee. A Deanery Celebration video and presentation were delivered by Revd Luke Whiteman and Revd Jamie Gater, highlighting ongoing ministry across the Deanery. Attendees then formed mixed laity and clergy groups to review parish activities, identify current challenges, and explore future opportunities for mission and ministry. This session encouraged collaborative reflection on strengths, needs, and areas where parishes could support one another.

### **Second Synod Meeting – 11 June 2025 (St Andrew's, Furnace Green)**

Revd Richard Poole introduced the meeting by reminding us of the fundamental purpose of the Church rooted in the Great Commandment – to love the Lord your God (Matthew 22:37–39) and the Great Commission – Go make disciples (Matthew 28:19–20). He emphasized that parish revitalisation is best considered collaboratively at Synod, where clergy and laity can reflect together.

The meeting focused on six themes:

1. Mission (The Great Commission) – Parishes shared how they proclaim the Gospel through community presence, example, links with schools, study groups, Alpha, and pastoral offices such as baptisms and funerals.
2. Worship (The Great Commandment) – Discussion covered how parishes express love for God and neighbour through service, pastoral care, Sunday worship, discipleship, and community action (e.g., foodbanks). Sacrament and Scripture were noted as essential for sustaining spiritual depth.
3. Faith – Delegates reflected on modelling Christian faith through kindness, prayer, openness to God's leading, and prioritising spiritual growth over numerical measures.
4. Next Generation – Parishes considered how they invest in children and young people through toddler groups, youth clubs, children's worship, school engagement, and community activities that build relationships and form pathways to faith.
5. People (Succession Planning) – Discussions highlighted challenges in developing lay leadership, the need for intentional encouragement, and the importance of clear role descriptions. Obstacles included limited diocesan support for specific training pathways.
6. Leadership – Parishes shared the difficulty clergy face in shaping and sustaining vision, noting the need for delegation, shared ownership, and trusting God's leading. Even where vision is challenging, aligning congregations behind a shared direction was seen as vital.

The session reinforced the shared belief that mission, worship, faith, investing in younger generations, developing leaders, and good succession planning remain essential elements of parish growth.

### **Third Synod Meeting – 16 October 2025 (All Saints, Crawley Down)**

Archdeacon Angela introduced two speakers: John Preston (Diocesan Secretary) and Stephen Hoyles (Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance) who both made presentations.

#### **John Preston – Diocesan Strategy and Finance**

John outlined the 10-year Diocesan Growth Strategy, focusing on expanding what is already known to work. Three strategic priorities were identified:

- Inspiring Prayer and Worship
- Engaging Children and Young People
- Excellent Leadership

He outlined four streams of work (circulated separately) and explained the availability of grants for parishes, particularly for Youth Workers and other paid roles that could strengthen mission capacity. Parishes will be invited to apply for support. Regarding national funding, he noted progress from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB), with additional submissions due in late 2025. Outcomes were expected in early 2026, which would influence future funding opportunities for parishes.

John also addressed changes in national church finance, explaining that the former apportionment system had been abolished, with central funding now sourced from the Church Commissioners. This helps sustain the training of ordinands and supports increased clergy stipends—Chichester has applied a 7% rise to align with national increases.

Local financial adjustments included revised housing cost allocations for curates and a simplified method to account for vacancies. Although the Diocese continues to run a deficit, reductions from previous years show improved financial stability. Safeguarding audits highlighted the need for increased staffing, prompting investment in additional posts.

#### **Stephen Hoyles – Parish Share and Financial Context**

Stephen spoke about the tension between abundant mission opportunities and limited financial resources. He emphasized the role of clergy in energising congregations and shaping vision and the significance of PCCs in discerning parish priorities.

He acknowledged economic pressures on congregations but stressed that the Parish Share is a spiritual commitment rather than a transactional “invoice.” It is based on Parish Ministry Costs (PMC), which reflect the cost of clergy ministry across the Diocese. Parishes pledge contributions through the Deanery Treasurer, and recent improvements have helped reduce the overall diocesan deficit.

Stephen thanked parishes for faithful giving and reaffirmed the importance of generosity in sustaining ministry. He also drew attention to diocesan comparisons with neighbouring dioceses such as Guildford, London, and Southwark, noting that Chichester maintains a higher clergy-to-population ratio, reinforcing the need for continued financial commitment.

#### **Conclusion**

Across the year, Deanery Synod meetings have helped parishes share insights, discuss common challenges, and support one another in mission. Key themes have included revitalising parish life, strengthening leadership, investing in young people, and sustaining ministry through prayer, worship, and generosity. We remain grateful for the dedication of clergy, laity, and diocesan staff as together we continue the work of proclaiming the Gospel in our local communities.

*Andy Harpham, Ian Hornsby and John Wells*

## **Sharing the GOOD NEWS**

### **CHURCH SERVICES AND SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Our mission priority of sharing the Good News is not just a stand-alone focus; it underpins and connects with all our other mission priorities. At its core, it's about proclaiming the Gospel and reaching out to others by sharing God's message of love. It forms the foundation for everything we do and is key to growing and strengthening our worshipping community. The most obvious and frequent way we share the Good News is through our weekly and seasonal church services. We have become much more multicultural as a church since we welcomed and supported many refugees and asylum seekers who have arrived in our village since 2021.

Our church continues to be appreciated by many as a location where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. Our public worship activities have been of benefit to the wider community. We continue to do our key seasonal services such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas which were very well attended. Our 'All Souls' Service was a particularly poignant, and very much appreciated,

occasion where those who have lost loved ones joined for worship and the sharing of memories – this was held in Church but also available online for those unable to be in Church.

Our Remembrance Sunday Service was supported by the local uniformed organisations who participated through readings and prayers to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice in conflict. In 2025 we saw again many people of the wider village attending. At this service as well as at our Harvest Festival we were able to partner again with the Copthorne Silver Band. These, together with our other seasonal activities at Easter and Christmas, were opportunities to bring the village people to well organised church events with opportunities to engage with those who may otherwise not have had any opportunity for religious encounter over the Christmas period.

Our church building is generally open during daylight hours on most days either for services or for anyone to use for moments of quiet reflection and a place of peace. Throughout the week, the church hosts a variety of outreach activities, including community groups, toddler sessions, Alpha courses, language classes, social events, and quiet reflection times. Over the past three years, we've realised that our current worship space can no longer accommodate all these groups and activities. In the past few years, we've been considering how to reorder our main church building to better serve our mission and towards the end of 2025 we launched the MAKING ROOM project to accommodate this vision

*Wim Mauritz*

### **HOTEL CHAPLAINCY:**

In 2025 I undertook a placement at Copthorne Hotel which houses asylum seekers, as part of my Curacy training. I spent time there on alternate Monday mornings from January to April, to offer a pastoral presence to the residents and staff.

Most of the hotel residents had been waiting for their asylum claim to be processed for many months. There is very little for the asylum seekers to do locally from day to day, although the hotel holds English language classes, which St John's also runs, alongside other weekly activities which some attend.

I set up a small space in the quiet conservatory in which to be available to speak with residents if they wanted to talk to me with some degree of privacy. I also moved around the lobby area greeting people and speaking to the staff periodically. I had some conversations in which I was asked for items such as mobile phone and clothes. I was able to listen to people's stories and ask them if they needed any support.

I spoke to many people using translation on my mobile phone, but some also had excellent English language skills. Many of the asylum seekers I spoke to had arrived in the UK alone, and felt lonely. Some families had small children. I could clearly sense the mental and emotional pain that people were suffering due to no longer having close relationships with family and friends. This was felt particularly acutely by people who have left elderly relatives behind.

I was pleased to have had this limited opportunity to be available for the hotel residents, even though I felt quite powerless to address most of their concerns and needs. On reflection, I think that a more consistent, regular pastoral presence would be of great value to the staff and residents at the hotel.

*"For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. <sup>18</sup>He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing." Deuteronomy 10:17,18*

*Fi Coldicott*

### **COFFEE BAR:**

One imagines a Coffee Bar to be a nice, cosy indoor venue.... Not so ours. The teas and coffees, along with biscuits are served all year around with no breaks for holidays. We serve in all kinds of weather conditions!

There are many dog walkers who really enjoy each other's company and have bonded as good friends. I have to say, we have so much fun and laughter too. There are many other "customers", including children on their

way to school and toddlers who stop and have a biscuit. They have become more confident and will enter the church excitedly.

Just recently some of the men came into church, complete with coffee cup for a small service. And I was told by one dog owner who sometimes pops his head round the door in a Sunday service, "I could be converted..."

There is regular giving, monetary, biscuits, helping me put out tables and heaters for the Art Group and they look out too, for each other in the community, as well as showing concern if one needs anything medical. Sometimes political discussions are talked about, but the Coffee Bar is apolitical. Sometimes the conversation can be deep or emotional too....

The Group love Wim and look forward to seeing him and discussing theology as well as trying some of his baking!

The Coffee Bar is a wonderful way of taking Jesus out in the world!

*Jennifer Wharton*

### **ART GROUP:**

The Abstract Art Group continues to flourish and is held on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Having been started mainly with people from the hotel, there are now people from the community also attending.

The Art Group now includes all styles and activities of art for the members, no longer just 'abstract', and so has changed its name to **St John's Art Group**.

Amongst the group are true artists, one girl had had her own Art Gallery. There were also two art teachers, one of whom took two commissions, producing beautiful paintings of the Virgin Mary. Another person in the group did a charcoal drawing of Jesus, which took her months and then presented it to me as a gift. One person said that she had only come to watch her husband as she couldn't paint and I gave her a simple taped canvas. The following week a magnificent waterfall was painted. This person has found her gift and regularly produces beautiful fantasy drawings, along with a wide range of work encompassing all styles.

During local events such as the Copthorne Carnival and St John's Harvest Fair, we put out the canvases in the church for the public to see and for a donation, make a purchase. We have raised approximately £600 in donations for the church.

Art is therapy. It's a wonderful way of focusing one's mind. It also surprises people what they can do. Every new person is given a canvas or watercolour paper, but before that, they are given a warm welcome and a cuppa.

*Jennifer Wharton*

## **Teaching to NURTURE**

### **ALPHA, PRAYER, BAPTISM AND OTHER COURSES:**

In 2025 we ran two Alpha courses. Alpha is for anyone who is curious about the Christian faith. The talks are designed to encourage conversation and to explore the basics of Christianity in a friendly, open, and informal environment. No question is out of bounds, and people are free to discuss as much or as little as they wish. Alpha runs in our church building. Each session begins with a short video followed by discussion in a small group where participants can share their thoughts.

We also ran the Prayer Course. The Prayer Course is an eight-week video series designed to help people and communities deepen their relationship with God through prayer. It is produced by 24-7 Prayer, an international and interdenominational movement of non-stop prayer. The course follows the structure of the Lord's Prayer and is based on Pete Greig's book *How to Pray: A Simple Guide for Normal People*. It focuses on the basics of talking and listening to God. It has been a great joy to see several people come to faith in Jesus Christ through these courses. This continues to be a great encouragement to our church community.

During the year we also held four Baptism and Confirmation preparation classes. Many candidates were baptised and confirmed in services held in May in Crawley, led by the Bishop of Horsham, and here in Copthorne, led by the Bishop of Chichester. In 2025 we also organised another Marriage Preparation Course for three couples who were married in the months that followed.

We continued to strengthen our links with local schools. We held regular assemblies at Copthorne Junior School and welcomed St John's Sunshine Pre-School, Fairway Infant School, and Copthorne Junior School into the church building for special services for the children. We also hosted several events for the young people and adults of our local uniformed organisations, where they learned about the Christian faith or took part in church services. All of this has been a great encouragement. We have seen lives touched and transformed by the Good News of Jesus Christ, and nurtured by the generosity and kindness of our church community.

*Wim Mauritz*

### **CARE HOMES AND PASTORAL HOME VISITS:**

A brief Holy Communion Service is held fortnightly at the Heatherley Cheshire Care Home. Fi runs the service with Tom and Jeanette Cheeseborough as communion assistants. Gillian Hodsdon and Sue Williams have also supported her. Carol Watson has recently joined the team to play the piano. The service is appreciated by the residents, and numbers attending have been good, with usually 15-20 residents and staff. Sadly, due to illness at the Home, the planned Christmas Carol Service last year was cancelled. We are running a special Easter Service instead. It is a delight and privilege to serve some of the most vulnerable members of our Parish in this way, and to see God at work in their lives is wonderful.

Clergy and lay team members make regular visits to those who can no longer attend church services due to ill health. Holy communion is offered to those who would like to receive it, with two more people recently requesting visits. Mary Smith and Monica Polley usually accompany clergy to offer communion. These visits are very much appreciated. Pastoral visits are also made where a need has been indicated. The prayer circle led by Monica Polley continues to provide prayer support for those who have requested it.

"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18

*Fi Coldicott*

### **PASTORAL WORK:**

Pastoral work is led by the clergy with the support of members of the church. We have continued to visit those who are unable to attend church for whatever reason, either on request or as a regular check in. Home communion is provided on a monthly basis to as many of these as would like to have it. This service is much appreciated by all those who take part as it provides a welcome opportunity for catching up on Church news as well as fellowship in communion. We are grateful to the team who take turns to come with us on these visits.

Hospital visits are also undertaken to either East Surrey Hospital or Crawley Hospital. We have good links with the Chaplains who will also visit to offer communion or prayer support.

We also offer opportunities for prayer and anointing with oil/laying on of hands.

A dedicated pastoral ministry is offered to those from the Copthorne hotel attending St John's Church, led by the incumbent and supported by other members of the team.

A chaplaincy service was trialled at Copthorne Hotel to provide additional support and opportunities for private discussion and prayer.

### **Care Home**

With the rebuilding of Francis Court Care Home still in progress, we only have one care home to support at present.

**Prayer**

Our prayer circle continues to meet on a bi monthly basis, co-ordinated by Monica Polley. We have a dedicated email address for prayer requests and these are forwarded to those on the circle who undertake to pray regularly and in confidence.

Our prayer ministry team continues to offer individual prayer during Holy Communion each Sunday at 9.30am and monthly at the 11.00am communion service.

The clergy offer support for those at the end of their life and their families, as requested.

The clergy team continue to meet on a monthly basis to pray and support each other.

**Bereavement Support**

We have been running a bereavement support group for several years. Recently numbers have been fairly small. Due to clergy time restraints and the move of a team member, the decision was taken to pause the group for three months. A few people have expressed interest in following the 'Bereavement Journey'. Others have found this very helpful in the past. This course will be run again once we have enough participants.

The 'All Souls' service continues to provide an important place for remembering those we have lost and is very much appreciated, with some attending through contact with our funeral and bereavement support.

**Connect and Bible Study Groups**

There are several connect groups which support each other during the year. Additionally some small groups meet either regularly during the year, or for special courses. They are offered both during the day and evening to enable most people to attend. Two Advent preparation studies were run in December 2025.

*Revd Alexandra Wheeler  
Associate Vicar.*

**YOUTH:**

The youth team continue to meet with our young people (school year 6+) during the 11am service on a Sunday morning to chat, study scripture and pray together. The young people are engaged and kind. We've seen a real development in the way many of them are expressing their faith during the discussion and prayer times.

Last summer we attended May Camp and joined Satellites (an impressive Christian youth event), for a week of worship and fellowship.

We would like to grow these types of opportunity as part of our 'encounter' priority and hope to take more young people in 2026.

We have been sad to say goodbye to 3 valuable members of our youth team. We are delighted to have recruited a new team member and we continue to pray for another 2 helpers to support the existing leaders to enable more social, encounter and discipleship activities in the year ahead.

*Kirsty Mauritz*

**CHILDREN:**

I took on the oversight of this group in January 2025. A huge debt of thanks is owed to curate Fiona Coldicott who led the ministry from summer 2024 and remains a committed leader in the team.

We remain a committed and supportive team of five leaders and four helpers who work with children of primary school age. The children meet in the Hub for around twenty minutes during the 11am service, three weeks out of four in term time, with the first Sunday being an all-age baptism service.

From January 2025, we have been working through Sally Lloyd-Jones' video series Jesus Story Book Bible, concentrating on the Old Testament. As well as watching an Old Testament Bible story, the children do age-appropriate activities, worksheets, craft and games based on the story. Each leader brings their own style.

In 2025, Fiona and her teams, organised two highly successful children's events. The first was Messy Church on Good Friday, which engaged primary aged children with the Easter story through craft activities. Feedback from children and their parents was overwhelmingly positive and this team are gearing up to organise a similar event in 2026. Christmas 2025 saw a Christmas craft event which was also well attended (15 children and their parents). Again the feedback was very positive and those participating hoped we would repeat it in 2026. Thank you to all those who contributed and volunteered to make these events possible.

In January 2026, we began using materials from the United Reform Church resources: Faith Adventures for Children Together.

Unfortunately since the end of 2025, attendance of primary aged children on Sundays has dropped to critically low numbers. Since January 2026 we have had three Sundays with no children at the 11am service and two Sundays with one child. More children have attended on the first Sunday all-age services. Reasons for low attendance could be due to: children moving into the youth age group without new children replacing them; illness, and conflicting schedules of children's sports activities.

Children are an integral part of any church family and so I suggest the team continues discussions on how to reach and engage children both within families of church members and the wider community. In the wider context of church life, a larger number of village children regularly attend the Monday toddler group but these families are not engaging with Sunday worship despite feeling positively towards St John's church. The extra craft events did attract these families.

Team changes: the team stayed the same during 2025 but in February 2026, we said goodbye to long-term leader Victoria. Huge thanks goes to her for her long commitment to this team. In 2026 the team will lose an integral member as Fiona ends her curacy at St John's. Keeping our team at sustainable numbers must be a priority this year.

With that said, a final tribute goes to the current team of children's ministry volunteers, leaders and helpers, who are so supportive of the children and each other and creative and dynamic in their Bible teaching.

*Lizzie Venter*

### **TODDLER TIME:**

The Stay and Play Group, Toddler Time, continues to meet on a Monday morning between 10.30 and 12.00 in term time, as a time of fun and learning for the toddlers, with friendship and support being offered to parents or grandparents and child minders. We raised our entry fee from £1.00 to £1.50 in order to cover our costs.

We continue to offer a gentle introduction to the Christian faith, with Bible stories, and lots of singing which is very popular. It is such a delight to see young children join in with enthusiasm and also to observe the same families returning week by week, with friendships formed between infants and parents alike. Numbers may have dipped slightly during this Spring Term due to children moving on to nursery and playgroups and also due to the usual seasonal ailments. On average though, approximately 10-12 families attend. One of the best challenges is keeping pace with children's needs as they grow to the next level of learning and development.

Last year, we were glad to welcome a liaison with the West Sussex Early Help Service, which offers early intervention at times of need, and serves as a hub to other services, as well as offering health and well being support. Their team has two visits planned to our group in the latter half of the year.

Fi and I would like to express our appreciation of our wonderful team of volunteers, who continue to contribute their gifts and time to making each session interesting and fun. Sadly, we have had to say goodbye to Beenish and Lizzie. A huge thank you for everything you've brought to the group. We have been so pleased to welcome 2 enthusiastic new volunteers to the team, but are always seeking to add to our numbers. If you are interested, please speak to Fi or myself about visiting us.

One of our mothers to the team:

"You all create such a wonderful, friendly, accepting atmosphere. It has been a real sanctuary for me to come to on a Monday morning."

Our newest volunteer commented that:

"this is a time of real joy and fun seeing the children learn and grow, develop friendships and play together".

*'He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.'* Isaiah 40:11

Liz Logan

### **CHOIR:**

The choir have been involved in leading the sung worship at the usual 9.30 am services, along with some of the more major events in the church year. These include the Agape service on Maundy Thursday, Easter Day and our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols service which was well attended and followed by some festive mulled wine and mince pies. My special thanks to Gill Taylor who stepped in for me to conduct the Nine Lessons and Carols service.

The choir have also been requested to sing at a number of weddings, wedding blessings and funerals throughout the year.

Our thanks go to our wonderful team of organists Ann, Carol and David who have ably supported us throughout the year, but who have also sung as part of the choir.

Unfortunately the choir has reduced in number slightly, but we would love to hear from anyone who would be interested in coming to join us and help lead the singing at our Sunday worship.

Thanks also go to the Copthorne Silver Band who have played for us in leading the music for the Remembrance Service, and for entertaining us at our Harvest Fair.

My personal thanks go to all of those who have dutifully attended monthly practices, turning out in all weathers (and temperatures!) and we look forward to bringing you much more music in 2026.

Lesley Dawson

## **Practising GENEROSITY**

### **STAFF, VOLUNTEERING AND OFFICE SUPPORT:**

The office has become increasingly busier over the last year with the additional responsibility of St Leonard's Church in Turners Hill, their churchyard and magazine.

Sadly Laura resigned from her position as Church Administrator at the end of October 25 and for a number of reasons, we decided not to immediately replace this position.

Hollie Freeman took on the role of Communications Officer for December and we have benefited from some beautiful social media reels and posts. Hollie is now commuting between Ireland and Copthorne and therefore is no longer in post.

Gill Taylor has taken over the invoicing for both the Copthorne and Turners Hill magazines which is a huge relief and is ably assisted currently by Nigel.

### **Rotas**

We have over 36 rotas which support our services at St John's with many of our church family volunteering for more than one role, for which we are so grateful. As always, more volunteers are needed for some of the roles and if you think this is something, whilst reading this, that you may be interested in, then please do speak to me. It is important to note the enormous help we receive from our church members who are asylum seekers. Without their support, be it serving coffee, cleaning and working in the churchyard, we would be

lost. They are a delight to work with, willing and enthusiastic in their support of us and ever thankful of the welcome from St John's and most importantly the love of God.

As 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 10 quotes :

*"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."*

....and at St John's Church, we see this every day!

*Maralyn Smith  
Church Manager*

### **SOCIAL EVENTS:**

Many thanks to all who came and supported our events during 2025.

Our outdoor events were blessed with good weather - Jazz on the Green - always popular and attracts many villagers who came prepared with picnics, as well as those who just happened to be passing the Green and stayed to enjoy the music. Also we served 'cream teas' on Carnival day and supported Harvest Fair and Flower & Produce Show with tea and cake in the Hub.

The highlight of the summer was our special afternoon tea to celebrate the 10th Birthday of the Hub. Several special guests were invited, including Rev Simon Hill, who was the main driving force to get the Hub project completed. Pictures were shown of the construction of the Hub and Opening Dinner bringing back many happy memories. Focal point was a detailed model of the Hub expertly crafted by Jan Leftley.

We held our popular Quizzes and ended the year with a Christmas Lunch.

Big thanks to all who helped with events, especially setting up and clearing up, we couldn't do it without you.

Do watch out for our events during 2026 and come and join us.

*The Social Team*

### **THE PARISH HUB:**

While the Parish Hub continues to be a popular venue for both casual lettings and regular hires, the uncertain economic situation during the year was reflected in a reduction in party and event lettings of almost 25% versus 2024. Nevertheless, the Hub Team would like to thank all those villagers who held their parties and celebration events in the Hub, supporting this community asset for the benefit of all.

Our regular lettings hours were 3% lower than in 2024, reflecting one fewer class per week, again, per our hirer, due to the economic situation meaning the take up for that class was below what was financially viable. Thank you to our long-term regular hirers (Springfit, Fire Fitness, Apple Tree Yoga and Sadowski Latin Dance) for their continued support, as well as the more recent regulars Move It or Lose It, Susana Crespo Yoga and Clubbercise. We hope that our residents will continue to support all our regular hirers.

There was a significant increase in church organised community events including quizzes, Christmas crafting sessions, themed Tea Parties and the provision of teas at the Copthorne Carnival and the Harvest Festival. Thank you to all who supported these events helping to raise funds for the Rehema project in Tanzania, Tear Fund and St Johns.

Although energy costs are still at the high levels we saw imposed two years ago, we did not increase our hire rates in 2025 so they remain very competitive and the Hub is the only hall in the village equipped with A/V systems and fully air-conditioned both in the hall and five-star rated kitchen.

During the year we were able to agree a further three year lease of the first floor hall (the South Room) to Worth Parish Council who also lease the first floor offices and we thank them for their continuing partnership. There are a few weekday slots available for clubs or organisations looking for an ideal location for their weekday sessions, both in the main hall and the first floor South Room (also air-conditioned and A/V system equipped). Local voluntary and not-for-profit organisations have also found the Hub ideal for seminars and training days.

Although there is limited parking at the Hub, an agreement with the Copthorne Sports Association, who run the Copthorne Jubilee Pavilion, means we can offer parking at that location for larger events, opening the Hub to a wider clientele.

Lettings of the main hall in 2025 generated £35,000 of income with operating expenses for the period of £23,500. The income from the lease of the first floor South Room to Worth Parish Council generated £7,850 in the year. The recharges to Worth Parish Council for shared service charges and utilities provided a further £4,200 of income in the year.

Thanks go to our Hub Co-ordinator, Tracey Price, who deals so competently with all our bookings; to Richard Polley, in his role as hardware facilities manager, for dealing most efficiently with a variety of plumbing and electrical glitches and other “mechanical” upsets; to Ian Woodcock in his role as caretaker; to Maralyn Smith, church manager, for her “back office” support and, last but not least, to our wonderful cleaner, Veronica Frederick who, sadly, retired at the end of the year, having kept this facility in tip-top condition over the past eight years as a superb asset for the village.

*Mike Livesey*

### **Legal Documentation Relating to the Parish Hub (updated December 2025)**

The documentation is filed in a box file in the Parish Office. In summary:

Worth Parish Council have been granted a 25 year lease on the use of the North Rooms under the following arrangement

- The Lease runs for 25 years, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2040.
- For the first 15 years the rent payable is £1 pa.
- On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2030 (15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lease) a premium rent of £10,000 is payable and the annual rent (payable quarterly) increases to 50 percent of the then market rent.
- On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2035 a full market rent becomes payable.
- Worth Parish Council are responsible for 23 percent of all Shared Service Costs as defined in Clause 8.2. (This is based on the respective floor areas.) St John’s PCC’s obligations in providing services are detailed in Clause 8.3.
- St John’s PCC are obliged to provide Quarterly Accounts to Worth Parish Council.

A Section 119 Report was submitted in fulfilment of the Charities Act 2011 in support of the above arrangements.

Worth Parish Council have an annual renewable lease on the South Room. The annual rent (currently £8,000) is reviewable every three years from 2015. The 2024 review resulted in an annual rent as above, effective from May 2025, with an agreement that it increases by 2.5% each year until the next review, which will be in September 2027 to be effective from May 2028. In addition, Worth Parish Council pays a Proportionate Share (13%) of the Shared Service Costs as defined in the North Room Lease dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015. (Note that this is in addition to Worth Parish Council’s share of the Shared Service Costs provided for under the North Room Lease Agreement.) Worth Parish Council has the option of converting the lease into a longer lease.

St John’s PCC has granted a lease to the Trustees of the Copthorne Village Millennium Group (CVMG) for use of the Archive Room on the First Floor and access to storage in the loft for 15 years from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 at £1pa. The Millennium Group undertakes to pay 10 percent of annual income excluding restricted funds towards the upkeep of the Parish Hub and to offset cost of publication of the work in the Copthorne Magazine. The Incumbent of St John’s is a member of the CVMG Committee if s/he so wishes.

Service Agreements have been entered into for:

Lift LOLER inspection (directly between Worth Parish Council and the provider);  
Lift Annual Service (directly between Worth Parish Council and the provider);  
Boiler annual service;  
Security annual checks;  
Water annual checks;  
Wiring and fire alarm annual checks;

Portable Appliance Testing;  
Fire extinguishers;  
Air-conditioning (for the main hall. Directly between Worth Parish Council and the provider for the South Room and first floor offices).

### **Other Legal Agreements and Matters**

The Incumbent of St John the Evangelist is a Trustee of the Delmar-Morgan Hall and of St John's Sunshine Pre-School.

The Incumbent is also a Foundation Governor of Copthorne CE Junior School.

### **MISSION PARTNERS: Mission Partners (home and overseas)**

#### **Crawley Open House & Easter Team**

We are a food and clothing collection point for the Crawley Open house and the Crawley Easter Team, to help local people in crisis as well as homeless people to feel accepted, cared for and valued by providing food and support.

#### **Christian Aid**

Last year we joined in again with Christian Aid Week. This is an annual door-to-door fundraising drive by the charity Christian Aid. The drive is held each year in Britain during the second week of May, when volunteers post red collection envelopes to households around Copthorne village, joining with thousands of others doing the same around the country. Christian Aid works with 700 local organisations across 50 developing countries.

#### **Tearfund**

In October 2025 we organised another Tearfund Quiz, a fundraising event where the proceeds of the evening are donated to Tearfund. Tearfund is an international Christian relief and development agency based in Teddington, UK. It currently works in around 50 countries, with a primary focus on supporting those in poverty and providing disaster relief for disadvantaged communities.

#### **Royal British Legion**

Our annual Remembrance Sunday is our busiest church service of the year. In the past 4 years we have held this service outdoors since we are not able to fit all attendees inside our church building. This year, as is custom with previous years we raised funds for the Royal British Legion, a charity providing financial, social and emotional support to members and veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants.

#### **Compassion**

Compassion is an international children's charity that through sponsorship provides children and young people the opportunity to thrive and reach their God-given potential both now and into the future. As church we sponsor Ivan in Uganda by paying for his school fees. Ivan writes with his thanks for his education, his letters inspire us with his expressions of his faith in Jesus.

#### **CMS**

The amazing work of Heather Johnstone, St John's Mission Partner at the Rehema Centre in Mara, Tanzania, continues to alleviate the hardship and struggles of many families, and to empower women. The aim is to meet their everyday needs of food, clothing, shelter and education, alongside training in how to become self-sufficient and to care for their families. Income from the Centre comes from a food outlet, cafe with delicious food, and craft shop, with items skilfully made. Heather visited us again last year this time it was during one of our afternoon Tea Party Fundraising events. She enlightened us on her work, and on her achievements, which were helped by the kindness and generosity of our congregation, and community. Heather keeps us updated with regular newsletters, detailing Praise/Prayer points, and with emails, all with information and pictures, highlighting examples of hardship and vulnerability, but with so much news of happy fun times, Church involvement and special Services. This gives us a window into the world of a life in poverty but also

shows how the empowerment and training helps provide a voice for these local women, in Mara. The Craft Team are truly thankful for the kindness, good wishes, and huge support received from our Church family, Congregation and Village.

*Wim Mauritz*

## Speaking up for JUSTICE

### THE JUSTICE TEAM:

This vision priority has focussed mostly, this year, on the journey of the many asylum seekers who have come to our church. The Gospel of Matthew says *"I was a stranger and you invited me in."* and we truly believe that is exactly what we have done this year.

As Christians we are called to share God's love with those seeking safety and hope. The Bible reminds us again and again to welcome the stranger and love the foreigner. When we open our hearts and our communities to those seeking refuge, we reflect the compassion of Christ and become signs of God's kingdom.

Our work with the Home Office and Local MP's has been largely led by Wim, from face to face meetings, advocacy and letter writing to support those who have fled the most unimaginable circumstances and chosen to commit to Christ. Liz and Jean have led our contact with the local GP services and also Citizen's Advice via Judith Wells. We now have established links with both West Sussex and Mid Sussex councils and regular contact in respect of schooling and transport for those who live at the Copthorne Hotel.

A focus for our group was sharing our knowledge and experience with other Churches and on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 we hosted an event 'From Welcome to Wisdom'. Over 40 different churches attended. Wim interviewed several asylum seekers who have since received refugee status and moved to different parts of the country; their testimony was very powerful and all of them spoke of the welcome they received at St John's and described it as 'our church' despite now living in different areas. Welcome Churches and Empathy Action described their work and Barbara Herring spoke eloquently about her journey as a refugee. The event was a huge success.

#### **Micah 6:8**

*"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

We will continue our work with all those who seek justice offering them a warm welcome and advocating for them wherever possible.

*Maralyn, Jean, Liz and Wim*

## Care for CREATION

### SAFEGUARDING TEAM:

During 2025 the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard was launched within the diocese and was adopted by this parish in May. This is a new tool designed to make safeguarding compliance simpler and more manageable and has now become the mandatory method to assure safeguarding compliance in the parish. At the time of adoption, we were assigned to level 2 and due to good progress were promoted to level 3 in October.

There have been no cases of concern, or otherwise requiring action from the Safeguarding Officer, since the last report.

All risk assessments with a safeguarding focus have been approved by the PCC.

DBS renewals are all up to date and together with training records, are held on the One Drive. Training requirements have been monitored and reminders issued to those with current or upcoming training needs.

*Eric Trevett and Monica Polley*

## **BUILDING TEAM:**

### **This has been an exciting and challenging year**

Our Buildings team has met on an ad hoc basis to develop a PHASE ONE project, based on the winner of our architectural competition, Jonathan Cerowski.

#### **This year we have:**

- Appointed Jonathan Cerowski as the lead architect in our proposed reordering scheme.
- Had a Diocesan Advisory Committee (the DAC) visitation to look at our reordering plans
- Undertaken a complete investigation of the nave subfloor prior to replacing the floor completely with a well-insulated structure.
- Had an energy survey which has changed our approach in respect of heating.
- Decided upon replacement infrared “magic lamp” low glare heating to replace our existing infrared heating system, with an installed capacity 40% less than that in our current system, and very much more controllable.
- Abandoned our previous heating approach, which involved wet underfloor heating driven by an air source heat pump, in turn supplied by energy from our proposed roof mounted solar PV array.
- Appealed to the Planning Inspectorate to get two planning application refusals overturned. We were successful.
- Had smart metering installed and are currently recording and monitoring our time-phased energy consumption in both church and the Copthorne HUB building
- Very recently we have agreed to make an informal application to the DAC as the initial step in making a formal Faculty Application for our PHASE ONE reordering project, which has been launched to our congregations as “Making Room” with the subtext: **NEW DOOR - NEW FLOOR - NEW SEATING - NEW HEATING.**

### **Our significant heating proposal change – a rationale**

We were recommended by the Diocesan advisor to book an Energy Survey. This was undertaken and reported in April. As a result, the team were strongly advised not to further pursue our original objective of underfloor heating: apart from the capital cost involved it was likely to be difficult to run economically, as the church building is in intermittent rather than continual daily use. We were recommended to explore “Chandelier infrared heating”, which had been piloted at St Matthew’s church in Bristol. We fully evaluated the suggestion, but whilst have an installation for less than a fifth the projected cost of chandelier heating, and that it would reduce our maximum installed energy consumption by 40%, whilst providing zone-configurable instant heating highly effective in heating people rather than church fabric, it proved very expensive to install. One of our team members, Ian Hornsby, had found a supplier of ultra-low visual glare infrared heating. We found that we could for the congregation.

This immediately caused us a significant change of direction with our PHASE ONE reordering project, which had been based on underfloor heating with power supplied from an air source heat pump driven partly in turn by our proposed solar PV array.

### **Our planning application to mount a 56 element solar voltaic panel array on the south facing roof.**

In 2023-24 we had realised that a south facing roof provided the ideal location for a solar array, which would allow us to utilise the power to drive our proposed heating system and to sell surplus power back to our Distribution Network Operator at 15p/kWh.

We had first applied to MSDC for Prior Approval, but our application was rejected by the Conservation Officer. After taking formal advice from MSDC we applied for full planning consent. This was again refused on the grounds that the church is a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. As we had unanimous support from both church members and the local population we appealed to the Planning Inspectorate. Our appeal succeeded in July 2025. We now have three years in which to use the consent. Once we have completed our time-phased energy consumption analysis we will be in a position to decide whether to implement the consent.

*John Wells*

**Eco Church Team:****A Rocha and ECO Church**

In 2019, pre-pandemic, we had registered with the A Rocha Christian charity and following their survey process we were duly awarded BRONZE status in the five identified categories. There are 365 parishes in the Diocese. In November, 59 parishes had achieved BRONZE, and only 5% (18) had been awarded SILVER. We had not formally attempted to “Go for SILVER” until early in 2025. Our ECO Church team of six worked separately, online and as a team and submitted a claim in November 2025. As a result we were awarded SILVER status and are now working towards achieving GOLD status – a much more challenging process – there are currently only two GOLD parishes in the Diocese. Our BRONZE and SILVER awards are on display in the church.

We have set ourselves the target of achieving GOLD status by the end on 2028.

**Working to look after God’s Creation**

Each of the five categories in ECO church has a significant impact on caring for Creation. We are blessed with a wonderfully diverse ecological tapestry in our churchyard. We are working together with the churchyard maintenance team to ensure that we improve the opportunities for all Creation to work together as part of the web of life, from the smallest bugs or nematodes through natural wildflower habitat planting, birds, butterflies and moths and small mammals.

**East Grinstead’s ECO Church group**

St John’s has joined together with representatives from St Swithun’s and St Mary’s churches; Trinity Methodist church, and the catholic Our lady and St Peter’s church. We meet regularly to exchange ECO views and opportunities and to provide mutual support in our endeavours.

*John Wells*

# Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of

## St. John the Evangelist, Copthorne

St. John's Church, Church Road, Copthorne, West Sussex RH10 3RD

Registered Charity no: 1155185

For the year ended 31 December 2025

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Website: [www.copthornechurch.org](http://www.copthornechurch.org)

*Incumbent:* The Reverend Willem Mauritz,

The Vicarage, Church Road, Copthorne, RH10 3RU

*Associate Vicar:* Reverend Alexandra Wheeler

*Assistant Curate:* Reverend Fiona Coldicott

*Independent Examiner:* To be appointed

*Bankers:* The Co-operative Bank plc PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT,

# Trustees Annual Report for 2025

For

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St. John the Evangelist, Copthorne

## Our Aims and Purposes as a Charity

St John the Evangelist is part of the Diocese of Chichester and the Church of England. As the parish church in Copthorne, we believe that our core purpose is to be a Christian presence in our local community and to proactively play our part in God's mission, reaching out in sharing God's love to all. The PCC of St John's is responsible for the upkeep of the charity's assets such as the main church building, the Parish Hub, offices, vestry and churchyard for the benefit of all parishioners. The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of St John's church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community. Our mission statement "GROWING IN LOVE for God & each other" is rooted in the Christian calling to love God and your neighbour as yourself.

## What we planned to do to achieve our charitable objectives

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Our charitable objectives are to drive our key priorities for the coming years. As a local church in Copthorne, we are passionate about sharing the Gospel with everyone and nurturing one another as followers of Jesus Christ. We are committed to demonstrating generosity to those in need, raising awareness of injustice, and taking action to care for God's creation both locally and globally. In all that we do, we pray for God's kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Our mission to grow in love for God and each other is expressed through five key priorities:

1. *Sharing the GOOD NEWS*
2. *Teaching and NURTURE*
3. *Practising GENEROSITY*
4. *Speaking up for JUSTICE*
5. *Care for CREATION*

## What we achieved and how we affected beneficiaries' lives

### *Sharing the GOOD NEWS*

Our mission priority of sharing the Good News is not just a stand-alone focus; it underpins and connects with all our other mission priorities. At its core, it's about proclaiming the Gospel and reaching out to others by sharing God's message of love. It forms the foundation for everything we do and is key to growing and strengthening our worshipping community. The most obvious and frequent way we share the Good News is through our weekly and seasonal church services. We have become much more multicultural as a church since we welcomed and supported many refugees and asylum seekers who have arrived in our village since 2021. The current number of people who are on the electoral roll is 122 and on average, our weekly services attract between 100-130 people, with seasonal and special services drawing even larger crowds – sometimes doubling that number. For larger services we've expanded to use our churchyard to accommodate everyone.





We are also committed to nurturing future generations through our children's and youth programs, led by dedicated volunteers. On Sundays, these groups meet during the 11am service to explore the Bible, discuss life, and pray together. Our leadership teams carefully plan each session, sharing God's love with the young people. Through our partnerships with local schools, we can also share the Good News with pupils, inviting them to seasonal services and bringing Bible stories into school assemblies. Additionally, we regularly engage with local uniformed groups, introducing them to the Christian faith.

Our church continues to be appreciated by many as a location where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. Our public worship activities have been of benefit to the wider community. We continue to do our key seasonal services such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas which were very well attended. Our 'All Souls' Service was a particularly poignant, and very much appreciated, occasion where those who have lost loved ones joined for worship and the sharing of memories – this was held in Church but also available online for those unable to be in Church.



Our Remembrance Sunday Service was supported by the local uniformed organisations who participated through readings and prayers to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice in conflict. In 2025 we saw again many people of the wider village attending. At this



service there was a re-dedication of the Lych Gate. On Remembrance Sunday, as well as at our Harvest Festival we were able to partner again with the Copthorne Silver Band. These together with our other seasonal activities at Easter and Christmas were opportunities to bring the village people to well organised church events with opportunities to engage with those who may otherwise not have had any opportunity for religious encounter over the Christmas period.

Our church building is generally open during daylight hours on most days either for services or for anyone to use for moments of quiet reflection and a place of peace. Throughout the week, the church hosts a variety of outreach activities, including community groups, toddler sessions, Alpha courses, language classes, social events, and quiet reflection times. Over the past three years, we've realised that our current worship space can no longer accommodate all these groups and activities. In the past few years, we've been considering how to reorder our main church building to better serve our mission and towards the end of 2025 we launched the MAKING ROOM project to accommodate this vision.

### **Teaching and NURTURE**



Our mission to teach and nurture followers of Christ is rooted in Jesus' Great Commission: *"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* (Matthew 28:19, NIV-UK). We believe our calling is to reach out to others with Jesus' message of hope. The process of making disciples naturally happens when newer believers are nurtured by more experienced disciples. Our focus on teaching and nurturing seeks to help new Christians experience God's love and receive the power of the Holy Spirit to become more like Christ.

In 2025, we've again seen a growing number of people come to faith, be baptised, and engage in our prayer gatherings, children's, youth, music, and Bible study groups. Throughout the year, we ran two Alpha courses and one Prayer Course (a course per term), four baptism preparation classes (once a quarter), and two confirmation classes (in spring and autumn). We also organised a Marriage Preparation course for couples getting married at our church.

We have held another bereavement course and continued to sustain the existing support and prayer groups. All these smaller groups have proven to be a primary space for pastoral care, Christian discipleship, friendship, and the building of meaningful relationships. Our aim remains for them to be large enough to encourage missional activities and small enough to ensure that everyone is cared for.

Our children and youth groups meet on a Sunday. Children and youth meet during the 11am service. The Y6-Y9 group continue to explore the bible, talk about life and pray together. The group is settled and engages enthusiastically in the activities. The leadership team is committed and generous, planning each session and sharing God's love with the young people.



We have a Pastoral Ministry Team that actively maintains contact with, and visits, those who are sick or lonely in our parish. This team also provides pastoral care before, during, and after regular church services. Additionally, we provide care in several local community homes within the parish, where residents and caregivers can attend services or receive home visits when possible.

Our church website and social media platforms help keep both our church members and the wider community informed about events, courses, and opportunities to get involved. To ensure accessibility, we also produce and distribute the Copthorne Magazine, which is delivered by volunteers to all village residents, keeping them informed about all our activities. Our WhatsApp prayer group has become a valued part of our church life, offering a space for people to connect and pray together, including those who are housebound. We also publish a weekly online newsletter to keep everyone up to date with life at St. John's, and for those who are unable to access digital content, we print and deliver it.

### ***Practising GENEROSITY***

Generosity is at the heart of our vision for growing in love. We believe that God calls us to be generous with what He has given us. Generosity is a sign of trust in God's provision, knowing that there will be enough for everyone to share. We are mindful that giving should come willingly and joyfully, not out of pressure or obligation. As St. Paul writes in his second letter to the Corinthians: *"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."* (2 Corinthians 9:7, NRSVA).

To encourage generous financial giving, we've continued to promote the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) for our regular givers. The PGS is a simple and secure way for people to contribute and helps the church receive income more efficiently, reducing the administrative burden on our treasurer, staff, and volunteers. Alongside PGS, we offer several other ways to give, such as cash, card payments, and QR code donations. We also aim to emphasize the importance of generosity and stewardship through sermons and teachings.



Generosity isn't just about money. We also focus on how we can support the work of the church in practical ways, such as volunteering our time. All church members are encouraged to use their gifts of ministry at services – leading, welcoming, serving, reading lessons and leading prayers. We are very grateful to the musicians and singers and AV technicians who freely give of their expertise at church services. We were again very grateful for our social teams that organised many of our different social events.

In 2025, we continued our international engagement with refugees giving opportunity for integration, for some the learning of English during our language classes and for others the opportunity of joining our work parties or other courses that incorporates Christian learning. We also continued to provide asylum seekers with chaplaincy sessions at the Copthorne Hotel and offering them additional resources (such as bibles) in several other languages.

This year we again donated children's bibles to all the year 3's at Copthorne Junior School and Youth Bibles to the Year 6's at their leavers' service.

Social events are a key point of our ministry to the village, enabling church members to invite others to join us. We were delighted to be able to continue these events during 2025. Our Social team work hard planning events throughout the year which are well attended by both church members and the village and wider community. Highlights of 2025 included:

- Weekly coffee mornings outside at the coffee bars and at the I-Café
- Monthly coffee mornings in church during the working parties
- Fundraising tea party events for our Mission Partners
- Various quiz nights - including a Tearfund quiz raising both the profile and funds for the work of Tearfund
- Jazz on the Green
- Teas and refreshments at the annual Copthorne Carnival.
- The Flower and Produce Show / Harvest Fair

In addition to these local efforts, we remain committed to generous giving to charities and mission organisations beyond our village. We support both local and global causes, including Crawley Open House, The Children's Society, The Royal British Legion, the Church Mission Society (Heather Johnstone's Rehema Project in Tanzania), Tearfund, and Compassion. We also participate in Christian Aid Week, where we distribute envelopes and organise central collection points throughout the village.



Most of our events are advertised around the village and in our local Copthorne Magazine. The printing and delivery of the bi-monthly Copthorne Magazine is co-ordinated by the church and supported by local advertising. It contains news, events and reports on church and local activities with approx. 3000 copies being delivered free to every home in Copthorne by a team of village and church volunteers.

### ***Speaking up for JUSTICE***

This priority helps us to engage with global justice issues. The Bible teaches that all people are created in God's image and are equally valuable. Christians believe that God is a God of justice, and as His image-bearers, we are called to pursue justice, particularly for the poor, oppressed, and vulnerable in society. Our mission to speak up for justice is inspired by the last chapter of Proverbs. King Lemuel's mother offers this wisdom: *"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy"* (Proverbs 31:8-9, NIV-UK).

Advocating for justice is not easy, but it is an essential part of our Christian calling. As a church, we continue to support organizations such as Christian Aid, Tearfund and Welcome Churches addressing both global and local injustices. These agencies work to speak out against injustice and build safe communities, protecting people from violence and modern-day slavery.



As Christians, we are called to love and welcome the stranger, regardless of their cultural background. Since 2021, we have gained a lot of experience of caring for refugees and asylum seekers. In 2025, we have been able to speak on behalf of local refugees and asylum seekers in our village community. We regularly collaborate with local authorities and the Home Office, helping refugees understand their legal rights and access to education and housing, while also advocating for them with our local MP.

### ***Care for CREATION***

As Christians, we have a scriptural mandate to care for all of God's creation. This responsibility is a core part of our mission and influences how we treat our land, buildings, investments, and other assets.

As a church, we want to play our part in protecting and enhancing the diversity and abundance of life in our local area, especially our churchyard, while also working with others to restore and sustain the health of our

wider planet. We believe that when we adopt a proper relationship with creation, others may be drawn into a deeper, life-giving relationship with our Creator God. We worship a God who loves the Earth He created and calls us to care for it. Caring for creation is an essential part of our worship and witness, as we respond to a creation that is groaning (Romans 8:22).

Our church has always been a place where we celebrate significant life events with joy and gratitude. We take great care in maintaining our churchyard, which is much appreciated by the village. Most of the routine maintenance of the church and churchyard is done by volunteers from the church and the wider village community. In 2025, we received our Silver Eco Church Award. Eco Church, launched by the charity A Rocha in 2016, has grown into a community of churches working together to care for God's Earth. At the heart of the Eco Church initiative is an online survey that helps churches assess how they are caring for the environment in various areas of church life.



The Parish Hub, opened in 2015, is proving of great benefit to church and community alike. It hosts an array of clubs and activities such as art groups, social clubs, various sporting activities and exercise classes for all ages. The presence of the Parish Hub has increased the footfall through the churchyard with many villagers enjoying the attractive space. In 2025 we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Parish Hub with local dignitaries and those involved with original construction of it. The Parish Hub has a management team which ensures the smooth running of bookings, financial security and a high standard of upkeep. In addition to our volunteers, the church employs a caretaker and assistant and a Hub co-ordinator – who manages marketing, bookings and some of the day-to-day issues that arise.



In recent years, we have made several steps toward sustainability, including switching to environmentally responsible utility providers. A few years ago we created a "wildflower meadow" and in 2024 we added a small "community orchard" in our churchyard to help nature thrive. Each year, especially during our Harvest Festival, we focus on themes that highlight our commitment to caring for creation. However, we believe there's more we can do in the future. We recognize, along with A Rocha and many other churches, businesses, and organizations, that we are in the midst of a climate emergency. In response, we are committed to a process of continuous improvement to meet the highest possible Eco Church standards.

## Trustees Financial Report for 2025

### Parish Ministry Costs

We continued to fulfil our contribution to our Parish Ministry costs for 2025 making a payment of £84,416 to Chichester Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). We thank all donors to St John's church who have enabled us to do this again for another year. For 2026 we have committed to pay a similar amount with a promise to increase this later in the year subject to successful additional fundraising for our Making Room project and general Church running costs.

The PCC expresses a heartfelt thank you to all who give up their time in running different ministries, providing hospitality, care and outreach and to those looking after our premises. The hard work of each and every one is much appreciated.

### Financial Review

The total receipts on general unrestricted funds were £158,955 (2024 £193,711) and are detailed in the Financial Report. Expenditure was kept under careful management control and reduced 5% from 2024 levels to £173,356. Overall, there was a deficit on Unrestricted Funds of £14,401.

The value of our Tangible Fixed Assets at the end of 2025, £634,199 can be seen in Note 11.

Each year the Church's invested Endowment Funds are revalued and at 31<sup>st</sup> December they totalled £96,263; £5,000 lower than the previous year. See Note 10.

Total Funds of the Church at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 were £783,573 (compared with £800,278 at the end of 2024).

### **Other highlights of the financial year:**

The Hub contributed over £23,000 towards Church Funds despite significant cost inflation and an unfavourable economic climate. The Hub team are to be congratulated on achieving such vital income for the Church.

The Church took over responsibility for restoring the Lychgate and it is now recorded as an Asset in our Accounts. The restoration of the Lychgate has been warmly welcomed by the Village.

During the year our Outreach extended to Turners Hill as the Diocese asked St Johns to extend its Ministry to embrace St Leonards Church. This has placed extra pressure (and costs) on our management and ministry teams.

St Johns remains a beacon of hope in the community with many new Baptisms and Confirmations. The Alpha courses are all very well subscribed and we also support our community from cradle to grave with the Toddler Group and Bereavement Courses.

### **Outlook**

The Church continues to incur annual cash flow deficits that will need to be addressed. The commitment to the Diocese to pay our full Parish Share is very important but for 2026, this payment has been held at 2025 levels until we are sure that we can sustain and increase. We are embarking on a fundraising initiative for a major renovation of the Church interior and this will be the focus of our attention for the next few years. During this period we will also need to find additional sources of regular income that provide for financial stability in the longer term.

### **Reserves Policy**

It is the PCC's policy: to maintain a Net asset balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) which equates to approximately three months' worth of unrestricted payments as contingency against unforeseen situations. The closing balance of £62,593 achieves this Policy.

To invest legacies restricted as to their objects with the churches, charities and local authorities financial provider, CCLA, until such time that suitable beneficiaries are identified by the PCC.

## Structure, Governance and Management.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission as required by the Charities Act 2011. Its governing document is the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio members:		
Incumbent:	The Rev'd Willem Mauritz	
Associate Vicar:	The Rev'd Alexandra Wheeler	
Assistant Curate:	The Rev'd Deacon Fiona Coldicott	
Wardens:	Mr David Hornsby	
	Mr Edward Redfern	Appointed 2025
Elected Members:	Mr Jonathan Brueton	Until 2027
	Mr Nigel Cramp	Until 2027
	Mrs Lesley Dawson	Until 2028
	Mrs Jean Ditchburn	Until 2028
	Mrs Anita Findon	Until 2028
	Mrs Margaret Jones	Until December 2025
	The Rev'd Elizabeth Logan	Until 2026
	Mr Michael Livesey	Until 2026
	Mrs Zoe McCann	Until 2028
	Ms Elizabeth Venter	Until 2028
	Mrs Jennifer Wharton	Until 2028
	Mrs Susan Williams	Until 2028
Appointed Members:	Mr Kerry Scott	Treasurer
	Mrs Maralyn Smith	Secretary
	Ms Laura Li	Resigned November 2025
Deanery Synod:	Mr Andrew Harpham	Until 2026
	Mr Ian Hornsby	Until 2026
	Mr John Wells	Until 2028

Eric Trevett is the church's Safeguarding Officer, who ensures he is up-to-date with Diocesan Safeguarding Policies and that the PCC is advised of any changes. In addition, Monica Polley maintains the DBS register of those working with children and vulnerable adults or in leadership roles at St. John's. We have recruited more youth workers, leaders and adult carers this year. We are enrolled on the Simple Quality Protects system with the diocese to maintain best practice.

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (the incumbent, curate, readers licensed to officiate in the church, the Churchwardens), members of the Deanery, Diocesan or General synods and 11 members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). Church members are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

This Trustee's Annual Report was approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by Rev'd W Mauritz.



Date: 17 March 2026

## Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	93,505	2,614	-	96,119	95,024	
Other trading activities	45,086	-	-	45,086	48,229	
Investments	8,719	3,777	-	12,496	12,816	
Income from charitable activities	11,645	-	-	11,645	14,517	
Other income	-	1,750	-	1,750	32,499	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>158,955</b>	<b>8,141</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>167,096</b>	<b>203,085</b>	<b>2</b>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	1,828	-	-	1,828	250	
Exp. on charitable activities	138,376	4,906	-	143,282	145,425	
Other expenditure	1,893	540	-	2,433	7,861	
Trading activities	31,259	-	-	31,259	32,371	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>173,356</b>	<b>5,446</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>178,802</b>	<b>185,908</b>	<b>3</b>
Net income / (expenditure)	(14,401)	2,695	-	(11,706)	17,177	
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / losses</b>						
Gains/losses on investment assets	0	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	3,240	10
Net movement in funds	(14,401)	2,695	(5,000)	(16,706)	20,416	
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward	526,295	172,721	101,263	800,278	779,862	
Total funds carried forward	511,894	175,416	96,263	783,573	800,278	

## Balance Sheet      As at 31 December 2025

	<b>Total Funds 2025</b>	<b>Total Funds 2024</b>	<b>Note</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
<b>Tangible assets</b>	634,199	629,562	11
<b>Endowed investments</b>	96,263	101,263	10
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	730,462	730,825	
<b>Debtors</b>	7,788	7,039	13
<b>Cash at bank and in hand</b>	52,702	70,195	
<b>Total current assets</b>	60,490	77,234	
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	7,380	(7,781)	14
<b>Net current assets or (liabilities)</b>	53,110	69,453	
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	783,573	800,278	
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	-		
<b>Provisions for liabilities</b>	-		
<b>Total net assets or (liabilities)</b>	783,573	800,278	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Endowment funds</b>	96,263	101,263	
<b>Restricted income funds</b>	175,416	172,749	
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	511,894	526,266	
<b>Revaluation reserve</b>	-		
<b>Total charity funds</b>	783,573	800,278	12,16

The notes on pages 31 to 42 form part of these accounts.

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2025, including the notes following, was approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by The Revd. Willem Mauritz.



Date 17 March 2026

## **1 Accounting policies**

### **Basis of preparation**

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments 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 which are informal gatherings of church members.

### **Funds accounting**

Funds held by the PCC are:

*Unrestricted funds* - general funds which can be used for ordinary purposes.

*Designated funds* - monies set aside out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or projects.

*Restricted funds* - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

*Endowment funds* - funds for which the capital must be maintained; only income arising from the investment of the endowment may be used, either as restricted or unrestricted funds, depending on the purpose set out in the terms of the original endowment.

### **Income and endowments**

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

### **Donations and legacies**

*Collections* are recognised when received.

*Planned giving receivable* is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate.

*Gift aid recovered* is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised.

*Grants and legacies* are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received.

### **Charitable activities**

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs. Rental fees are recognised in accordance with the rental agreement, when receipt is probable.

### **Other trading activities**

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised when received.

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable.

### **Investment income**

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue.

### **All other income**

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy.

### **Gains and losses on investments**

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold. Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

### **Grants**

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

### **Church activities**

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis.

### **Fixed assets**

#### *Tangible fixed assets*

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements. For other property acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore the cost of such assets is not stated in the financial statements.

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £2000 are written off in the year they were incurred.

#### *Depreciation*

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Land and buildings	Nil
Fixtures and fittings	25%
Audio visual equipment	25%
Office Equipment	33%
Air Conditioning in the Hub	10%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the PCC's policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value.

### **Investments**

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date.

### **Current Assets**

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove non-collectable.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank.

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 2. Analysis of income and endowments

£	General	Designated	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
	Fund	Fund/s	Funds	Funds	2025	2024
Planned giving	58,311	2,945	61,256	-	61,256	62,648
Loose cash collections	3,706	-	3,706	-	3,706	4,579
Other special appeals	10,188	48	10,236	2,360	12,596	7,437
Gift Aid recoverable	16,079	-	16,079	253	16,332	15,579
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	2,000
Other Funds Generated	2,055	174	2,229	-	2,229	2,781
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	<b>90,339</b>	<b>3,167</b>	<b>93,505</b>	<b>2,613</b>	<b>96,119</b>	<b>95,024</b>
Weddings & funeral fees	5,935	-	5,935	-	5,935	7,854
Fund raising	5,710	-	5,710	-	5,710	6,663
<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>11,645</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,645</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,645</b>	<b>14,517</b>
Parish hub hiring fees	-	36,417	36,417		36,417	37,295
Magazine advertising fees	8,669	-	8,669		8,669	10,934
<b>Other trading activities</b>	<b>8,669</b>	<b>36,417</b>	<b>45,086</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45,086</b>	<b>48,229</b>
Interest Income	869	-	869	3,777	4,646	5,316
Rent for South Room	-	7,850	7,850		7,850	7,500
<b>Investments</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>7,850</b>	<b>8,719</b>	<b>3,777</b>	<b>12,496</b>	<b>12,816</b>
Other Income - Grants	-	-	-	1,750	1,750	32,499
<b>Total income</b>	<b>111,521</b>	<b>47,434</b>	<b>158,955</b>	<b>8,141</b>	<b>167,096</b>	<b>203,085</b>

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 3. Analysis of expenditure

£	General	Designated	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total Funds
	Fund	Funds	Total Funds	Funds	2025	2024
Fundraising costs	1,828	-	1,828	-	1,828	4,216
<b>Cost of raising funds</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>4,216</b>
Grants and Donations	2,276	-	2,276	-	2,276	1,786
Mission & evangelism costs	2,682	-	2,682	-	2,682	1,489
Diocesan parish share	84,416	-	84,416	-	84,416	81,169
Clergy expenses	3,071	-	3,071	-	3,071	4,690
Salaries and honoraria incl NI	21,776	-	21,776	-	21,776	19,681
Upkeep of services	6,925	-	6,925	-	6,925	5,840
Church running costs	11,503	-	11,503	-	11,503	10,523
Church maintenance and repair	-	-	-	2,220	2,220	724
Upkeep of churchyard	-	-	-	2,636	2,636	3,260
Wedding & funeral fees & costs	1,104	-	1,104	50	1,154	2,232
Parsonage costs	3,893	-	3,893	-	3,893	3,109
Governance	730	-	730	-	730	925
<b>Cost of charitable activities</b>	<b>138,376</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>138,376</b>	<b>4,906</b>	<b>143,282</b>	<b>135,429</b>
Depreciation	-	1,796	1,796	-	1,796	7,861
Parish hub running costs	-	21,075	21,075	-	21,075	21,127
Parish magazine costs	10,184	-	10,184	-	10,184	11,245
Loan interest	-	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Cost of other trading activities</b>	<b>10,184</b>	<b>21,075</b>	<b>31,259</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31,259</b>	<b>32,371</b>
Church Building Costs	97	-	97	540	637	4,500
<b>Total expended on all funds</b>	<b>150,485</b>	<b>22,871</b>	<b>173,356</b>	<b>5,446</b>	<b>178,802</b>	<b>185,908</b>

### 4. Missionary and charitable giving

	Total	Total Funds
	Funds	
	2025 £	2024 £
Church Mission Society - Rehema	1,892	1,191
Donations of Bibles	1,785	1,775
Compassion UK	384	384
Bereavement Support	401	435
Art Group	288	
Other charities	209	1,022
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,958</b>	<b>4,807</b>

### 5. Staff costs

£	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
	Funds	Funds	2025	2024
<b>Remuneration</b>				
<i>Wages, salaries, tax, NI and pension costs</i>	<b>35,261</b>	<b>2,196</b>	<b>37,817</b>	<b>35,075</b>

No person received remuneration in excess of £60,000.

## 6. Payments to PCC members

Salary payments totalling £14,565 were made to three members of staff listed below who are also members of the PCC.

Mrs M Smith, the Church Manager

Mrs L Dawson, a Verger at Weddings and Funerals

Other payments were made to PCC members in the year for reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the PCC:

Clergy support costs: Council tax £3,692 water rates £201, travel and other miscellaneous expenses £3,071.

## 7. Transactions with related charities

There were no transactions with related charities in 2025.

## 8. Governance

	<b>Total 2025 £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>
Independent Examination	(estimated)730	925

**The Independent Examiner will submit her Invoice when the Accounts are finally examined and approved.**

## 9. Transfers between funds

Transfers totalling £30,000 were made from the Designated Hub Fund to the General Fund to ensure that the General Fund retained a positive balance at year end.

## 10. Fixed assets – Investments

<b>£</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Endowed Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds 2025</b>
Market value 1 January 2025			<b>101,263</b>	<b>101,263</b>
Disposals at carrying value			-	-
Purchases at cost			-	-
Net losses on revaluation			<b>5,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>
<b>Market value 31 December 2025</b>			<b>96,263</b>	<b>96,263</b>

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 11. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Audio visual equipment	Hub Air Conditioning	Total fixed assets
£	£	£		£
<b>Original cost or valuation</b>				
At 1 January 2025	588,777	24,261	11,576	624,614
Additions	31,055		6,383	37,438
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2025	619,832	24,261	17,959	662,052
<b>Charge for impairment</b>				
At 1 January 2025	-	24,261	1,796	26,067
Charge for Impairment	-	-	1,796	1,796
Disposals	-	-		-
Revaluation	-	-		-
At 31 December 2025	-	24,261	3,592	27,853
<b>Net book amounts</b>				
<b>At 31 December 2025</b>	619,832	-	14,376	634,199
At 31 December 2024	613,399	-	16,163	629,562

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Parish Hub building and the Lychgate. The historical cost of this property was £595,210. In the opinion of the PCC its current market value is estimated to be in excess of the historical cost.

### 12. Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowed	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets for church use	449,301	184,898		634,199	629,562
Investment fixed assets	-	-	96,263	96,263	101,263
Current assets (except cash)	22,321	(14,633)	-	7,688	7,040
Cash, at bank and on deposit	48,459	4,243	-	52,702	70,194
Current liabilities	8,188	(907)	-	7,281	(7,781)
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>528,269</b>	<b>173,601</b>	<b>96,263</b>	<b>783,573</b>	<b>800,278</b>

### 13. Debtors

Debtors	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Giftaid Due	2,180	-	2,180	2,870
Hub recharges due	1,065	-	1,065	1,302
Hub Rental Fees Due	1,164	-	1,164	168
Interest Income	3	367	370	545
Christmas Period Income	1,432	-	1,432	1,543
Amounts owing by St Leonards Church	1,041	-	1,041	-
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	536	-	536	611
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,421</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>7,788</b>	<b>7,039</b>

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Creditors	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£	£	£
Prepayments for Weddings and Funerals	100		100	100
Hub Deposits held	2,050		2,050	2,400
Clergy Expenses Due	892		892	443
Copthorne Village		32	32	32
HMRC PAYE due	1,005	79	1,084	887
Diocesan Fees Due	301		301	971
Church Heating and Lighting	1,781		1,781	
Hub Electric and Gas	440		440	
Sundry Creditors	700		700	2,947
	<b>7,269</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>7,380</b>	<b>7,781</b>

### 15. 2024 Comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowed	Total Funds
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	91,858	3,166	0	95,024
Charitable activities	48,229	0	0	48,229
Other trading activities	7,798	5,018	0	12,816
Investments	14,327	190	0	14,517
Other receipts	31,499	1,000	0	32,499
<b>Total income</b>	<b>193,711</b>	<b>9,373</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>203,085</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	3,654	562	0	250
Charitable activities	137,735	3,725	0	145,425
Other trading activities	7,861	0	0	7,861
Other expenditure	32,371	0	0	32,371
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>181,621</b>	<b>4,287</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>185,908</b>
Net gains (or losses) on investments			3,240	3,240
<b>Net income or (net expenditure)</b>	<b>12,090</b>	<b>5,086</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>20,416</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>48,935</b>	<b>(48,935)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>61,025</b>	<b>(43,849)</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>20,416</b>
Total funds brought forward	465,241	216,598	98,023	779,862
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>526,266</b>	<b>172,749</b>	<b>101,263</b>	<b>800,278</b>

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 16. Statement of funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balances
	1st January 2025			Or Revaluations	31st December 2025
	£				
Faith Arnold trust	55,755			(3,189)	52,566
Payne grave fund	300			-	300
Churchyard trust	45,208			(1,811)	43,398
<b>Total of all endowed funds</b>	<b>101,263</b>			<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>96,263</b>
Fabric fund	10,192	1,645	2,760	-	9,077
Making Room Fund	-		-	-	-
Building fund	157,885			-	157,885
Lychgate Fund	4,644	3,363	-		8,007
Churchyard fund	-	3,132	2,686	-	446
<b>Total of all restricted funds</b>	<b>172,721</b>	8,141	5,446	-	<b>175,416</b>
General fund	19,073	111,521	150,485	30,000	10,109
Hub Fund	42,027	44,489	22,871	(30,000.00)	33,645
Designated building fund	460,321	2,945	-	-	463,266
Legacy fund	4,874	-	-	-	4,874
<b>Total of all unrestricted funds</b>	<b>526,295</b>	158,955	173,356	-	<b>511,894</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>800,278</b>	167,096	178,802	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>783,573</b>

### Explanation of funds

**Endowed funds** are required by the donors to be invested and the income spent on specific objectives

The Faith Arnold trust is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares, which requires the income to be spent on the maintenance and improvement of the church building.

The Payne grave fund is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares, which requires the income to be spent on the maintenance of the churchyard.

The Churchyard trust is a permanent endowment, invested in CBF Investment Fund shares, which requires the income to be spent on the churchyard and outdoor areas.

**Restricted funds** are not invested permanently but are to be spent within reasonable timescales.

The Annex fund is restricted to the *Link* project to extend the church building, increase the space available for worship and provide a more flexible and functional space. This Fund was extinguished in 2024 after the donors agreed that its funds could be used for any building or fabric development for the Church.

The Building fund is restricted and was used to fund the development of the church office.

The Fabric Fund is restricted to the maintenance and improvement of the church building.

The Churchyard Fund is restricted to the maintenance of the churchyard and outdoor areas.

The Lychgate Fund was established in 2024 following the transfer of responsibility to the Church for maintaining and restoring the Lychgate.

The Annex Fund which was suspended with a zero balance in 2024 has been renamed the Making Room Fund and will provide for the Re-ordering project being carried out in the interior of the Church.

**Unrestricted funds** are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the PCC decides.

The unrestricted fund includes amounts designated for the building of the Parish Hub, and also an unrestricted legacy which has been set aside for specific uses to be determined by the PCC.