

St Mary the Virgin, East Bergholt Annual Report for 2025

**Annual Meeting held
on Sunday, 12th April 2026
immediately after Morning Service**



St Mary the Virgin, East Bergholt

Incumbent:

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Register of Charities with the Registered Charity Number 1190273

Independent Examiner

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Or via A Church near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/2067/>

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/stmaryseastbergholt](https://www.facebook.com/stmaryseastbergholt)

St Mary's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@stmaryseastbergholt2137>

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The information we hold about you in our Church records is only disclosed to those who need to see it for Church purposes. We will send you information related to the Benefice, the Church, the ministry and activities. If you wish to unsubscribe from all or any communications, please let the Benefice Administrator know at michelle@constablebenefice.org

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St Mary the Virgin - East Bergholt PCC 2025-2026

EX-OFFICIO	Rev Chris Willis	Rector
	Fiona Trott	Churchwarden
	Jackie Reeves	Churchwarden
	Sarah Southgate	Deanery Synod Rep
	Chris Jacob	Deanery Synod Rep
	Koshy Jacob	Deanery Synod Rep

ELECTED

TO SEEK RE-ELECTION IN 2026	TO SEEK RE-ELECTION IN 2027	TO SEEK RE-ELECTION IN 2028
Lesley Cherry	Howard Holdsworth	Glen Rowson
Reuben Rushen	Marian Godwin	Geoff Potter
Victoria Rothwell	Vacancy	Ewan Darby
Vacancy	Vacancy	Lisa Darby

PCC Chair	Fiona Trott
PCC Vice Chair	Jackie Reeves
Minutes Secretary	Vacant
PCC Secretary	Michelle Jowers
Hon Treasurer	Lesley Cherry
Deputy Churchwardens	Lesley Cherry
	Chris Jacob
	Sarah Southgate
	Reuben Rushen
	Geoff Potter
	Howard Holdsworth
Electoral Roll Officer	Fiona Trott
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Howard Holdsworth
Standing Committee (Chair)	Rev Chris Willis
Standing Committee (Minute Sec)	Vacant
Standing Committee (Treasurer)	Lesley Cherry
Standing Committee (Wardens)	Fiona Trott
	Jackie Reeves
Standing Committee	Reuben Rushen
Health and Safety	Sarah Southgate
Lettice Dykes	Simon Rothwell
	Reuben Rushen
	Gill Rattray
Preservation Society	Fiona Trott
	Sarah Southgate
Foundation Governor	Simon Rothwell
Magazine Committee	John Gamlin
	Geoff Potter
	Lesley Cherry
Ecumenical Committee	Dorothy Brundell
	Chris Jacob
Captain of Bells	Terry Eagle

Rector's Report

The Scope and purpose of this Rectors report:

To provide an overview of the key areas of developmental activity in the Rector's ministry over the last year and to provide an indication of areas of ministry, which may be the focus of the following year.

This report does not cover occasional offices, services, ongoing pastoral provision or other areas of ministry which are already routinely embedded in the life of the church and responsibilities of the Rector, unless there is a new developmental aspect.

The backdrop of the report keeps the Diocesan missional initiative called '**Growing in God**' in mind. Growing in God has four main objectives – that we as a church should be:

- ❖ Growing in Depth
 - ❖ Growing in influence
 - ❖ Growing in number
 - ❖ Growing younger
-

Introduction:

I write this report as we finally become **Constable Country Benefice**, which came into being on Sunday, 1st March this year, and I feel very privileged to be the first Rector of this new Benefice.

I am mindful, with the likelihood that this will be my first and only incumbency, that being the first Rector of the new Benefice places me in a time of transition and adjustment for all, with a particular responsibility to help prepare us for the future and looking beyond my time as Rector.

Therefore, it is my hope and very much my ongoing prayer that my time serving you will be marked by a sense of our preparedness for the future, with the longing to see each parish thrive in its own right, whilst embracing all the benefits of working together as a Benefice; pooling our resources and giftings as appropriate, and blessing each other with the unique giftings which each parish has to offer to the other three.

This report does not mention by name the many who in all four parishes serve selflessly and with incredible generosity of time, enthusiasm and commitment. They are indeed many, and I am deeply grateful to all who contribute so much in so many varying ways. Indeed, for me the highlights of this last year have been the continued commitment to working in unity between the four parishes, the collegiality of the Wardens and wider Ministry Team, including Lay Elders, Clergy and Readers, and the many others who give so much of their time, some seen, and some who silently serve faithfully behind the scenes.

I have said before and think it worth repeating, that the 'Profile' I read during the previous vacancy which invited applications to become Rector, the post to which I was appointed, was true to itself in every way. This really is a Benefice which is committed to unity and working in partnership, which has been a massive blessing to both Rachel and I as we have grown in relationship with you all, and something I thank God for, praying for its continuation.

So, this report concludes with a look to the future. But I begin with a reflection on our corporate worship.

Worship:

Having reached this two-year milestone (since joining you), I think it may be a timely moment to assure you all of my continued commitment to see each Parish thrive. I believe that aspiration is best realised by having a span of worship styles, varying between the Book of Common Prayer, to liturgical services with sung liturgy, through to more contemporary worship, and the growing imperative to make church accessible to children, youth and families.

I genuinely believe that it is vital that whatever we do, whether it be robed liturgical services, contemporary worship, more traditional organ accompanied chorally led worship, or a music group with guitars and drums; what really matters is that Jesus is the very centre and focus.

I have so appreciated the commitment of so many to meeting together as a Benefice. Firstly, at our monthly Connect Services, and more recently at our fifth Sunday Benefice Communion services. The first being a mix of liturgical and contemporary, and the other traditional. I praise God that we can do both and warmly encourage everyone to join for both forms of worship. What is key, is that we are in unity – and loving each other even when the style may not be our personal preference.

But there have been two primary developments in the last year where I have felt led to focus additional time. Firstly, the ongoing development of the twice monthly **'Gathering'** – a contemporary evening service, which although begun just prior to the previous APCM, has been largely developed in the last year. This service offers the opportunity to worship using a more relaxed musical feel, with modern worship songs and traditional hymns delivered by a music group, vocally led, with solid bible teaching, prayer and fellowship in an informal setting. **The Gathering** has proven to be very popular with many.

At the other end of the worship spectrum, I am delighted that we have begun and continue to slowly develop the 'fifth Sunday' Benefice Communion services, being a more traditional liturgical and robed service. I hope this shall become chorally led, as the new **Benefice Choir**, which I am so pleased we now have, hopefully leads our sung worship. I am also very much looking forward to the introduction of some beautiful sung liturgy from David Thornes' 'The Mass of St. Thomas' in these services.

Pastoral care:

With four parishes and one Rector, it is inevitably a challenge to provide a good level of pastoral care to all without having a clear plan of action in place.

Historically, it is not so long ago that there were four full-time clergy - one for each parish. Just three years ago, Brantham and East Bergholt had one Rector between them. Now with four Parishes, there is a need to adapt and find new ways of doing things, and the provision of pastoral care is very much one of those areas.

I continue to provide pastoral care and visits, including to hospital, but it is honest to acknowledge that with four parishes it is not possible to be 'the one person' who provides all visits - as much as I would love to be able to achieve that. But my ongoing determination is that all in the church family, in whichever parish, will remain loved and cared for in our changing circumstances.

I am immensely grateful therefore to all those who provide care and love and support for the church family in so many ways. Indeed, such love is not, nor should be the exclusive domain of the minister. But I am particularly grateful to others who, being part of the ongoing development of a 'pastoral care team', are offering organised home visits, home communion and care to those who either cannot any longer attend church services, or who may benefit from assistance to do so. This is very much an ongoing and developing team, and I think vital to ensuring all in our church family are loved and supported.

Schools:

I have the wonderful privilege of being able to spend time in every school in the Benefice. Three of our primary schools – Bentley, Tattingstone and East Bergholt – are Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools and I have the joy of leading faith assemblies in each at least once a month, using what I call a 'tell it - show it - sing it' model. Normally this means telling a Bible story, using pictures on a screen as I tell the narrative, or an illustration to help children grasp the key point. Then we sing a song, either using a video or normally me playing the guitar. These are wonderful occasions and the enthusiasm and engagement from the children is such a joy to experience.

We also have a good relationship with Brooklands School, Brantham and I am able to lead an assembly or church service several times a year for the school – both are such a privilege.

And then there is the East Bergholt High School. It was incredible to be invited, for the second year, to take a week of assemblies for the school before Christmas – helping the pupils and staff think about Christmas through the eyes of Mary – the mother of Jesus. Again, I used a 'tell it, show it, sing it' approach. Yes, you read right! I sang with the guitar to each assembly to teenagers! wonderfully aided by Len Smith, who had put together a storyboard of projected images to reflect the lyrics of the song. The response from staff and pupils was highly positive, and again what a massive privilege that was.

Youth:

Continuing in the theme of young people – the small but committed group of half a dozen teenagers – ‘**Connect Youth Group**’ - continue to meet weekly at the Rectory, now led by Rachel and myself, releasing Len & Izzy Smith to focus their attention on the forming of a new group for 10–12-year-olds – called the ‘**Moving up Club**’. At this time, seven young people are in that group, and it is my heart that we shall develop this work further providing continuous age focused youth provision from age 10-18 years – and student support beyond that. This is very much a work in progress and a key element of focus for the future of the Benefice.

Alpha:

Alpha is in my view a brilliantly compiled course, using high quality videos, with real human stories grappling with real human questions of life, death, suffering, faith and whether there is a God, and if so, what is God like?

In the last year we have concluded three Alpha Courses, with 17 people completing the course to date. It is hoped to run another course over the summer.

Month of Prayer:

In January we had a month of Prayer – with opportunities to meet for prayer with others, Monday to Saturday for four weeks – with Wednesday nights taking the form of a prayer workshop – looking at different methods and aspects of prayer, encouraging us to be a prayerful people, believing that without such prayer our mission to reach those whom do not have a Christian faith with the good news of Jesus will be restricted. We hope to repeat this month of prayer – but following review and reflection it is likely to be in May rather than January next year.

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is and shall remain a top priority for us as Benefice. Caring for and protecting each other, especially the young and vulnerable, shall always be a priority, and a direct demonstration of Christlike love for one another.

The devastation that abuse can create in lives, can be so catastrophic for those abused and those close to them, that the response to those previously hurt is to ensure they are loved and can find a place of safety and healing. The prevention of such hurt to others needs to be, and must always remain, central in our culture and church life.

To support this, each Parish has a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), who take the lead at a parish level in ensuring our training is up to date for key people; providing a first point of confidential contact for any safeguarding concerns and the responsibility for ensuring any safeguarding concern is appropriately referred where appropriate. They also act as a watchdog – to ensure all we do at a parish level has safeguarding at the core.

As Rector, ultimately responsible for safeguarding in the Benefice, I have in the last year begun a termly meeting with the PSO's and we have together begun to streamline the processes for managing the administration of safeguarding training needs, allowing the PSO's to be more focused on prevention, rather than administration.

Future:

Recently the Wardens from all four parishes and I met at a ‘half day away’ and prayerfully considered a ‘**Growing in God**’ five-year plan, seeking to identify ‘**three main priorities**’ which we as a Benefice can focus upon.

The next year will be key to begin to develop a detailed plan around each of these broad ‘Priorities’. They were agreed as:

1. **To make our services welcoming and inviting to all – but particularly young families** – recognising the need to grow younger and provide a way into the church for a significant group in our communities.
2. **Develop a quality Benefice Website** – conscious that many will access a website before walking through the church door – and wanting that website to also be a resource for the church family and beyond.
3. **Increase our service leadership** – in order that we are ready for the changing future, and mindful that none of us are getting any younger!

Whilst these are the 'Main Themes', there will be more specific strands of action developed in the coming months, a process which I fully hope every church member, Wardens, PCC's, and all regular worshippers shall have an opportunity to contribute towards.

May I leave you with a prayer which certainly reflects my heart as Rector, and I invite you to make this your prayer too.

Prayer for the future:

'Lord, guide us all to spend our time and energy on the things which are important to you.

Deliver us from our own good ideas and instead show us your plans.

Give us the wisdom to know the difference, and the grace to walk in them'.

Amen

God bless you all

Rev. Chris Willis

Rector, Constable Country Benefice

Electoral Roll

Precise details of numbers on this year's Electoral Roll were shared at the APCM.



Fiona Trott

Electoral Roll Officer

Proceedings of the East Bergholt PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) met six times in 2025. Topics covered during the meetings included service planning and feedback, patterns of worship and sorting the problems with servicing the boiler. The fabric of the church was addressed by organising repairs to the Lady Chapel and north Chancel roof, and of course the Lottery building project dominated a lot of the proceedings. Special workshops were held with the Lottery Interpretation and Activity Planner and two Lottery PCC subgroups were formed – Buildings and Activities. Emma Browne, the Project Coordinator, attended several meetings to update members on progress. Broadband access to the church was upgraded to assure stable internet connection within St Mary's.

There are still vacancies for a Minutes Secretary and three members/trustees on the PCC (two for one year, and one for three). It is important to try and fill all these vacancies so that PCC can operate fully and there are enough members to support the work of the church, the wardens and Rev Chris. Please pray that these spaces can be filled in the coming year and if you feel called to serve, speak to a warden.

Jackie Reeves and Fiona Trott

Take a Break coffee mornings ('knit and knatter')

Take a Break Coffee Mornings (also known as Knit and Knatter) continues to run on the first Wednesday of the month, apart from August, supported by a small team of volunteers.

People attending the communion service prior to the coffee morning tend to come along afterwards for a coffee and chat with a few members of the community also coming, as well as passers by who see the 'coffee morning' signs outside the church.

Next year we hope to increase the footfall and encourage more visitors by regular publicity and offering board games and puzzles. Please help us spread the word amongst your friends and neighbours.

Sue Basted

Treasurer's Report for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Overall Financial Position

The PCC recorded **total incoming resources of £361,913** during the year (2024: £109,862), with **total expenditure of £227,377** (2024: £105,047), resulting in a **net surplus of £134,536** (2024: £4,815).

This significant increase in income reflects major grant funding and donations received in relation to the church's building projects, particularly our roof project works. Expenditure has also increased correspondingly as project activity progressed during the year.

Due to the impact of these increases in income, we are no longer permitted to prepare our accounts on a receipts and payments basis as our income exceeds the £250,000 threshold. This year the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis as required by the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102) and a reconciliation note for the translation of previous year's figures to this basis is included within the notes to the accounts.

At 31 December 2025, the PCC held **total funds of £467,887** (2024: £333,351), comprising of restricted funds £153,360 (2024: £18,500), endowment funds £267,480 (2024: £272,649) and unrestricted funds £47,047 (2024: £42,202). Of these unrestricted funds, £5,022 (2024: 9,716) are held as general funds available for use by the charity for its general purposes.

Income

Total income increased substantially by £252,051 to £361,913, driven primarily by significant grant funding for the both the repairs works needed to the building during the year including being awarded a grant for our Securing the Future of St Marys: Roof Project by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

We were successful in our application for a £199,460 grant to fund the development stage of our roof repair and re-ordering project. This phase will occur throughout 2025 – 2027 and we are grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for supporting us throughout this developmental work. We received the first instalment of £99,730 at the start of the project in early 2025 and the balance is recognised as accrued income in accordance with SORP requirements. We are extremely grateful to Lisa Darby for taking responsibility for recording and the financial reporting of this fund. Whilst the money is still administered by me, Lisa has control of the budget, cashflow and payroll.

St Marys Preservation Society donated funds towards the major repair work to the Lady Chapel and Chancel roof, which was completed in 2025. This support continues to be invaluable to keep out beautiful grade 1 listed church in good repair. The PCC is extremely grateful for this support. This is a separate charity and is not connected to or run by East Bergholt PCC.

East Bergholt Parish Council donated a sum of money towards supporting families in the village suffering hardship in the current economic climate. The new Hardship fund is given out in the form of Co-op vouchers, as that is the local shop, and administered by the Head of the primary school, who can see firsthand who needs support in this way. This also protects the privacy of the families concerned.

The church also received congregational donations during the year to specifically fund repairs to the boiler and to resource the equipment in use in our regular services.

Expenditure

Total expenditure rose by £122,331 to £227,377, reflecting the significant project expenditure of on the Roof Fund Development phase and on the Chancel Roof and boiler repair. The parish share continues to be our largest single regular operational outgoing, which was reduced this year as a result of the timing of the urgent boiler repair costs which impacted last few months of 2025.

Magazine

Within the income and expenditure figures are the operational turnover and costs of the Parish Magazine which is managed through a designated fund with a separate bank account. The magazine has turned a profit once again this year which resulted in a total of £2,000 being transferred to the General Fund. The PCC is extremely grateful for all the hard work undertaken by the Magazine Committee. The year-end balance of just under £2,000 was slightly down on 2024, mainly due to timings on receipts for advertising costs. The number of copies circulated has been increased due to the new housing in the village which has resulted in slightly increased printing costs. The committee is facing issues over finding new people willing to deliver the magazines and are looking to recruit, especially from the new houses, so the expanding village can be accommodated by deliveries of the parish magazine. No monies are transferred to the General Fund without consulting the Magazine Committee.

Fund Movements

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted funds increased from £42,202 to £47,047. However, general (free) reserves reduced to £5,022 (2024: £9,716), reflecting transfers to designated funds and support for project activity.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds increased significantly from £18,500 to £153,360, largely due to:

- The Roof Project grant funding and donations
- Funds held for specific parish purposes such as hardship support, foodbank, and mission activities

These funds are not available for general use and will be applied in accordance with donor restrictions.

Endowment Funds

Endowment funds decreased slightly from £272,649 to £267,480, reflecting market value reductions. These funds remain invested and are held as capital in accordance with donor intentions.

Assets and Liabilities

Net assets increased to £467,887, comprising:

- Investments of £296,886
- Bank balances of £71,271
- Debtors of £99,730 (primarily accrued grant income)

The increase in debtors reflects SORP-compliant recognition of grant income earned but not yet received.

Reserves Policy

The PCC aims to maintain sufficient unrestricted reserves to ensure continuity of ministry and to manage unforeseen expenditure. The PCC reserve policy is to keep £5,000 in the account at all times free from restrictions. This year we ended the year slightly over this figure despite the costs on the Chancel Roof repair and Boiler so close to the year end. After considering all designated and restricted funds, the monies that are free for use in the general fund stand at £5,022 (2024: £5,700).

Going Concern

The PCC has considered its financial position for at least twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

The PCC is satisfied that:

- Adequate funding is in place for ongoing projects
- The charity remains financially viable

Accordingly, the accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Financial Outlook

The financial results for 2025 reflect a year of significant transition, with the PCC managing substantial grant-funded capital projects and urgent repair works, alongside ongoing ministry.

Key considerations for the forthcoming year include:

- Continued management of the Roof Project cashflow and progression to the delivery stage application
- Careful monitoring of unrestricted reserves
- Maintaining sustainable income streams to support core church activities
- Aiming to contribute more to the parish share request in 2026 (£34,330)

Conclusion

Once again, this year as treasurer, has not been without its challenges. I would like to offer my sincere and grateful thanks to Fiona Trott and Jackie Reeves, who have been unfailing in their help and support. Also, to the PCC, who have taken difficult decisions during another problematic year for church finances.

Lesley Cherry

Hon Treasurer

East Bergholt Parochial Church Council

Safeguarding

There have been no instances of Safeguarding issues reported in the last 12 months at St. Mary's. Sadly, a Basic Awareness course scheduled for September at St. Mary's had to be cancelled due to a lack of numbers. This was disappointing. On the positive side a large number of folk have enhanced their standing by taking advanced courses, including 4 people taking the Domestic Abuse course, which, although quite harrowing, has been beneficial. 7 people have become fully compliant by retaking different levels online and an additional 6 people have had their DBS updated. I have to offer my sincere thanks to Fiona here for aiding me by helping folk to complete some of these as I was unavailable.

Although Safeguarding should be at the forefront of our thinking in anything that we do, it was pleasing to have the opportunity to share some thoughts and prayers on the National Safeguarding Sunday in November.

In September 2026, no fewer than 19 folk will have to retake their Foundation course as you only remain compliant for three years. Following the resignation of Rick Peat, one of the pair of Suffolk training leaders in October, no candidates have come forward to replace him. The result of this is that the number of face-to-face courses has been drastically reduced and the Diocese is only able to show plans for a three-month period rather than having a structure in place for the ensuing twelve months. The likelihood of us having the chance to host a Foundation course for invited churches and us is therefore somewhat remote. Although this is not insurmountable, it will cause many headaches later in the year.

I shall close by saying that Rev Chris has asked for the 4 Benefice Safeguarding Officers to assist in collating their information so that we have a single Benefice spreadsheet for easier reference. It is hoped that this will be completed by the end of April.

Howard Holdsworth
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Samford Deanery Synod & Group Council

St Michael's is represented by Julie Fermor and Gill Forsyth.

Jenny Seggar is our Rural Dean and Sally Letman Assistant Rural Dean. Jeanette Appleton is the Deanery's Lay representative on General Synod and provides in person or written reports of relevant General Synod gatherings as appropriate.

13th March 2025, All Saints Church, Holbrook - The speaker at this evening's meeting was Sally Letman, telling us of her recent trip to India to see the work of New Dawn India, a charity established by trustees in Capel St Mary. New Dawn supplies fund for Vidiyal (Tamil for 'a New Dawn') which works with street and slum children and their families. The charity operates a child sponsorship programme which has wider benefits for the sponsored child's family and community. Sally was able to meet her sponsored child and her family. More information about the charity is at www.newdawnindia.org.

The business part of the meeting included an update from Jenny Seggar, Rural Dean, on the need to update the deanery plan. This was important as it would feed into discussions should there be any future archdeaconry reorganisation, to spread the workload more evenly between Hadleigh, Ipswich and Samford deaneries. The annual wedding preparation event was held on Saturday 1st February and, as ever, was well received and appreciated by the couples attending.

18th June 2025 at St Mary's, Capel St Mary - The Speakers at this evening's meeting were Katie de Bourcier, Diocesan Mission Enabler and Revd Natalie West, Suffolk Archdeaconry Mission Enabler.

Natalie sees her role within the deanery as including:

- Assisting in thinking about your Plan for Growth or review your plan for growth

- Helping to plan and lead Vision Days and Away Days
- Putting us in contact with other people who have run similar or different missional activities
- Signposting Diocesan Support/Funding
- Chairing discussions with PCC & Ministry Teams about clergy and volunteer well-being
- How to talk about grief, loss and death well...

Archdeacon's Visitation - This service took place on 23 June at Holbrook Church including Revd Sally Letman's licensing as Assistant Rural Dean.

7th October 2025 at St Michael's, Woolverstone - At this meeting we heard updates from around the Deanery. It was encouraging and informative to hear of the challenges and opportunities within each benefice. Rev Chris gave the update on behalf of Constable Country Benefice.

Gill Forsyth and Julie Fermor - St Michael's Brantham Deanery reps

Churchwardens

Another year full of action, drama and plate spinning! Not many dull moments as regular church activities were juggled with keeping the Lottery project on track.

2025 was the year for celebrating 500 years since building the church tower stopped. Tower 500 was launched in April and involved the school walking the inaugural sponsored walk 500 times around the churchyard after their Easter service. In June, the churchyard was transformed into a Fayre with Tudor visitors and historical dancers; our bellringers embraced the spirit by ringing 500 rounds over two sessions. Inside, the church was richly decorated with floral tributes to our Tudor ancestors. On the Friday evening East Bergholt Dramatic Society entertained us with a Tudor drama. 500-piece jigsaws were available to borrow, and the Primary School pupils had a drawing competition to imagine what the church tower would look like finished. In December we held the inaugural Towering Tree Festival and had a church stall at the village Christmas market. Lots of individuals and organisations imaginatively decorated Christmas trees on display in church and there were plenty of activities for visitors to engage with.

Fellowship is always best served with food – and this year has been no exception. The men's breakfasts every other month have attracted a steady number of people who have been entertained by a variety of great speakers. Soup was served during Lent at weekly lunches with seasonal reflections. Cake has also featured heavily after services, at house groups and at Lottery meetings – we have gained quite a reputation!

In addition to Tower 500 events, St Mary's has also hosted the Orwell Singers and Joanna Eden jazz quartet during the year. Both evenings were well attended and very much enjoyed.

In terms of our own church music, after 10 years as Director of Music, we said goodbye to Martin Huggett in November. Martin led our church choir and played the organ at countless Sunday services; he conducted regular special services at Christmas and Easter and latterly he played Music for Reflection. He also supported the church by giving several fundraising concerts and we were very grateful to him for his musical contribution to the life of the church. Whilst we take time to reflect on what the future of choral musical tradition of St Mary's looks like, we are extremely grateful to those organists who have stepped in to play at our Sunday services and in particular Julian Merson who led the choir at the Carol Service in December.

2025 has also been a significant year in the major roof repair and internal reordering project. Having been successful in obtaining a preliminary Heritage Fund grant, at the end of 2024, we started the year employing specialist consultants as required by the Lottery. Our first appointment was the all-important and vital post of Project Coordinator. Emma Browne has worked diligently all year on our behalf. Her attention to detail and tenacity to get things done has been incredible and we could not have managed to achieve what we have done this year without her. Michael Garber, our church architect, has also been appointed as the project architect and he has assembled a design team of mechanical and structural engineers, quantity surveyors and conservation experts. We have also been blessed with a very enthusiastic activity consultant, Alix Slater, who has been into both village schools, with Emma, and spoken to many residents and local organisations. These

posts have all been funded by the initial Lottery grant. We have had to produce copious documents and budgets for the Lottery and also the Diocese, who must approve our plans too. A public consultation was held in September and in October we met with all the public consultees, like the Churches Building Council, Victorian Society and Historic England. There will be two crucial meetings in February 2026 when we hope to have given the Diocese enough information for them to approve the required Faculty permission for the work to be done, and we also meet with the Lottery investment managers who will hopefully approve our plans and invite us to bid in May for the big delivery phase grant during which time the actual building work will be undertaken. There are no guarantees, so please pray that all the hard work plays off. God has definitely had a hand in this project, guiding the right people to come forward at the appropriate time – we feel very blessed.

Outside of the Lottery scope, during the year, we have also applied for a minor building grant from the National Church to repair the north Chancel roof, and we have been very grateful to St Mary's East Bergholt Preservation Society for providing financial support for repairs to the Lady Chapel. As you are all aware the saga of the boiler has rumbled on, and at the year end, it is still not functioning entirely properly but is a lot healthier than at the start. Hopefully it will be fully fixed before the spring. In the meantime, space heaters, lovingly known as the Dragons, have been used to boost the temperature ahead of services and events.

Whilst legally still not a benefice of four parishes, we have continued to work extremely well with our fellow churchwardens in the other churches. We support one another and collaborate well as a team to support Chris in his ministry. Church life is always about teamwork, and the support from the dedicated deputy churchwardens and plenty of others behind the scenes during the year has made the church run as best as it can and we are truly grateful!

*Jackie Reeves and Fiona Trott
Churchwardens.*

Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union is about supporting marriage and family life and being part of a worldwide fellowship of over 4 million members. In 2025 we welcomed three new MU branch Friends and two new MU branch Members. Our branch has now grown to 30 people. This is a great achievement as the branch had only 18 members just eight years ago.

Through a range of activities and outreach programmes members of our branch have reached out and made a positive difference in the lives of over 902 people, here in our parishes as well as across the diocese. Whether it was by the various craft activities we undertook, including the very successful Christmas card workshop making Christmas cards for prisoners in HMP Highpoint; or the items we donated to the Women's refuge in Ipswich, Hadleigh care home, Ipswich hospital and the Seafarer's mission.

We had ten monthly meetings in 2025 when we enjoyed fellowship, worship and learnt much from those who came to speak to us. We also had fund raising events including our Lent Lunch and Afternoon tea, which enabled us to send funds to support overseas projects such as the Literacy project.

Mothers' Union members are also people of prayer and joined with members across the diocese on Lady Day for a service in St Edmunds cathedral. We join our worldwide members during our daily midday prayers and in the month of July for our Wave of Prayer.

2026 will be the 150th anniversary of the founding of Mothers' Union, a time to celebrate all that has been achieved so far and to look forward to another 150 years of providing Christian care to families.

*Janet Bull, Jenny Chapman, Chris Jacobs, Wendy Withers Grace Wallis
East Bergholt and Brantham Mothers' Union*

Bell Ringers

This report covers 12 months from January to December 2025. It contains the information as specified in the Ringers' handbook.



Named ringers

Ringer	Attendances	Ringer	Attendances
Terry Eagle (Captain)	80	Martin Digby	40
Julia Smith (Vice Captain)	82	George Harris	33
Thomas Bryant	31	Rachel Lewis	73
Neil Culham	68	Steve Feeney	66
Alison Ruffell	10*		

*Noted that this is below the minimum number of rings per year for insurance purposes. Alison has been reminded that she needs to attend at least 12 times per year.

Approved Learners

Ringer	Attendances	Notes
Keith Durrant	14	Left in June 2025
Kate Stannett	59	

Ringing has been consistent through the year with the majority of ringers having a number of years' experience now. The new ringer, Keith Durrant left in June 2025 due to health reasons but Kate Stannett is a new learner and is progressing well. She managed to get to ring with the full set of bells before practice finished and now rings in between the two main rings on a Sunday to keep in practice. Sadly, our youngest but one of the more experienced ringers, Thomas Bryant, has moved away but will still be covered for ringing next year when he comes back to visit.

There were no changes to the handbook in this year.

We have a regular band of eight ringers so have managed to complete the majority of rings this year with all five bells, which we are very pleased about. We also started teaching the newer ringers to do '1 round' and hope to progress to a '2 round' in 2026. We have space for another new learner or two.

During the current year, we have rung for two weddings; two demonstrations for the village Tower 500 event where we did two sets of 250 rounds; the 80th anniversary of VE-Day; a half-muffled ring for Remembrance and the usual rings at Christmas and New Year.

Issues dealt with in 2025

1. Pigeons nested inside the roof again. Nests were removed. This requires ongoing monitoring.
2. Tiles on the roof were replaced as some broken ones have fallen off
3. Door lock sometimes stiff in wet weather – this is ongoing

Issues outstanding

1. Bulb to be replaced in the spotlight above no 3 bell.
2. Gutters to be cleared, especially at the back of the cage bordering the allotments
3. Louvre to be repaired.
4. Lock to be removed, cleaned and repositioned.
5. General clean and tidy of the bell cage.

Terry Eagle

Flower Arrangers

2025 started out with planning for the Tower 500 festival in June which was to be the focus of the year for the flower arrangers. Considerable time and effort were expended in preparation for the Tudor themed flower festival in June. There were a wide variety of displays produced representing various aspects of life in Tudor times including jousting, Tudor costume, food and drink and the textile industry. In spite of extremely hot weather the flowers held up well and were enjoyed by many visitors both during the festival and on subsequent days. The Patronal day followed closely at the beginning of July; arrangements for this were minimal given that the ladies had spent so much time on the Tudor 500 celebrations, but the entire Church was decorated for Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas as is usual. Once again, the ladies made wreaths to take home when we decorated for Advent.

The Tudor 500 festival was a bit early in the year for the allotment to have produced usable flowers, but we were able to source some locally grown blooms from Ardleigh and will continue to use this grower for future festivals. The allotment plot is partly shaded which is not ideal for flower production; we are on the waiting list for a plot with better aspect which will enable us to grow more/wider range of flowers. The shrubs that we planted on our existing plot are maturing well and provide foliage to supplement what the arrangers can gather from their gardens.

We have been interested in the Sustainable Church Flowers movement www.suschurchflowers.com which was boosted, in February 2026, by the General Synod encouraging Churches and Cathedrals to explore ways of arranging flowers that are both beautiful and environmentally responsible. Whilst we have made good progress towards this, we can do more and will continue to encourage the use of traditional mechanics instead of floral foam. Locally produced/garden flowers are encouraged in preference to supermarket flowers (grown not flown) and we continue to make good use of our stock of artificial flowers which can be very effective. Further improvement for 2026 can be achieved by developing the allotment and facilitating the composting of our degradable flower waste

The main focus of 2026 will be the Constable 250 celebrations, and we propose to mark his birthday in June by decorating the church using garden/hedgerow flowers and sustainable mechanics. There will also be 'Constable' artwork produced by a variety of East Bergholt organisations representing the entire village from the youngest to the oldest!

Finally, 2025 was the year that one of our longest standing flower arrangers decided to step down. We miss Jean who was very adept and produced fantastic arrangements – the parish chest will also miss her!

Rachael Lewis

On behalf of the Flower arrangers

Foundation Governors

'I have come that they might have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10

East Bergholt CEVC Primary School continues to live out its Christian vision of enabling every child to flourish and 'live life in all its fullness.' The vision is not simply a statement, but the driving force behind decision-making, relationships and curriculum development across the school.

Our strong partnership with St Mary the Virgin Church remains central to our identity as a Church of England school. Reverend Chris plays an important role in the spiritual life of the school, leading worship in church and in school, and supporting key services including Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. Ruth Bull and Nick Pavitt also contribute regularly to collective worship, strengthening the relationship between church and school.

Ruth brings in a dedicated Open the Book team who lead engaging, interactive assemblies. Through storytelling and drama, pupils encounter Bible narratives in accessible and memorable ways. These sessions support pupils' growing understanding of Christian teachings and help them reflect on how biblical values such as compassion, forgiveness and justice shape daily life. Collective worship continues to provide invitational opportunities for prayer, reflection and spiritual development.

The school's Christian vision underpins its inclusive culture. Leaders are intentional in ensuring that every child is known, valued and treated with dignity. Through values-led learning and programmes such as No Outsiders, pupils are supported to understand difference, challenge injustice and develop respect for all. This reflects the school's commitment to enabling pupils to become thoughtful, courageous and compassionate members of society.

A broad and enriching curriculum further supports pupils' flourishing. Opportunities in sport, music, leadership and community events develop confidence, responsibility and joy in learning. Governors continue to monitor how effectively the vision shapes policy, provision and outcomes, ensuring that Christian distinctiveness remains at the heart of school improvement.

We give thanks for the dedication of staff, the support of families and the partnership with the church community as the school continues to grow as a nurturing and aspirational Church school.

Report compiled by Clare Sampson (Headteacher)

East Bergholt Parish Magazine

The monthly parish magazine continues to provide a wide picture of East Bergholt life for all residents - long-established or new, churchgoers or not. As well as news from St. Mary's and other local churches, and a calendar of benefice services for the month, it includes updates from local sporting, cultural, community and government organisations, and local information listings. During 2025 we welcomed several new contributors, some regular and some one-off; we also increased our use of pictures. We will be looking at further enhancements to the magazine's content during 2026.

Production is funded by advertising; printing is by far the biggest cost. Both costs and revenues remain essentially stable, and we were able to transfer £2,000 to St. Mary's general funds in 2025.

Also during 2025, there were important changes in magazine distribution. Jilly Girdwood joined us as our new distribution manager, taking over from Marion Ralph the vital task of coordinating the many volunteers who deliver the magazine to letterboxes. Our thanks to Marion for her years of service in this demanding role. We also increased the total number of copies distributed each month by about 100 to a new total of around 1,400. This reflects the growth in village households because of the new developments, and the number is likely to increase further.

Barnaby Page – Editor

Open the Book

The Open the Book team took a number of stories into the Primary School in East Bergholt this year where we were welcomed by Clare Sampson and her staff.

The team currently comprises 9 regulars with the current churchwardens standing in the wings if needed, making a total of 11.

We know this is a popular assembly with the children who seem to get a lot of enjoyment from our acting skills and our (amazing) costumes. The children also really enjoy joining in when the story lends itself to them acting in it as well. We start with the Open the Book song which is played through the audio system. Children join in with this as they enter the hall. The story is read directly out of the book and acted with as much vim and vigour as we can manage. At the end of the story there is a scripted reflection and prayer which the pupils are invited to make their own by saying 'Amen' at the end.



During 2025, we told the stories of:

Tabernacle and Spies (story 19) – Joshua and Caleb suss out the land of milk and honey

Arrest and trial (story 76) – Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane

Jonah – (story 38)

Esther (story 45)

Pentecost (story 82)

The Widow's mite (story 73)

David and Goliath – (story 29)

Rebellion – (Story 2) – Adam and Eve eat from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil – pictured here!

If you are good at making props or handy with a sewing machine and would like to be involved with costumes etc – please let us know!



Ruth Bull (Team leader), Dianne Willett, Wendy Withers, Richard Appleton, Chris Jacob, Susan Shepherd, Rev Roy Seden, Rev Chris Willis, Angela Edwards

Toddlers Group

We have enjoyed another successful year with the group being regularly offered on a weekly basis. We have welcomed many new families to the group and some of these families have found the group a great way to make new friends, especially if they have been new to the area. We are very grateful to the East Bergholt Parish Council for their continued financial support, which has been used to help with heating and running costs, and to help with the cost of our 3 annual events, the Easter Egg hunt, the Teddy Bear's picnic, and the Christmas Party.

This year our Teddy Bear's picnic was on location in the Rectory Garden. We had a beautifully sunny day, and it was very well attended. We are grateful to Chris and Rachel for allowing us to use their garden. The children enjoyed a treasure hunt, a picnic and we finished with songs accompanied by Rev Chris and his guitar. The Christmas party was also well attended, and we are grateful to all those who helped with the delicious party food and of course to Mother Christmas (aka Chris Jacob) who handed out small gifts to the children at the end of the party.

This year we welcomed 2 new helpers Angela and John Edwards. Gill, Gina and myself are still regular helpers, and Sarah Southgate has stepped in to help when needed. Rev Chris has regularly attended the group, and the children have enjoyed singing and dancing to the songs Chris has played on his guitar. The music has been a great addition to our group, and we are grateful to Chris for supporting us in this way.

I would like to thank all helpers at the Group. We try to have 3 helpers at each session, but this has sometimes not been possible. Gina has kindly offered her services each week and Gill and I alternate weeks with Angela and John joining a few of our sessions too, initially to learn the ropes. We hope they will be helping at a few more sessions in 2026. We are a great team, and I am very grateful for all the support that has been given and look forward to working with everyone in 2026.

As our village grows, the baby and toddler group will hopefully grow with it and will continue to offer a safe and friendly environment for children to play, and carers to meet. We all feel this is a very important part of our

Church ministry, and hope that anyone who visits the group will leave feeling the love of God, and they are very much a part of our church life.

Liz Digby - Leader

Family@church



The continuing growth and development of this important mission is a great blessing. However it still needs to be prayed about, to ensure that we are offering appropriate ways for families to worship – both in terms of format and time – and to welcome those moving into the village on the new housing developments.

Our numbers have remained fairly constant. We have made more use of the West End meeting room this year, and now meet each month and enjoyed the flexible seating of being able to sit in a round. We have welcomed new families moving into the village but have ‘lost’ some of the families who have regularly been coming for a number of years but whose children are now older. We are pleased that the Moving Up club is starting in the new year and hope that we will become a feeder group for them. We are very grateful for the core families who come regularly – despite the increasing calls on family time at the weekend. We encourage the children to write their own or read a prayer, and there are a core of children who like to do this regularly. There have been the usual blend of singing, activities, stories and prayers, which includes our family@church sorry song. Each service we finish with a scrummy tea.

None of these services would be possible without a lot of support from a wonderful team of helpers. We are very grateful to everyone who has lent a hand this year: Gill, Gina and Karen who have given invaluable help setting up for services, welcoming our families and helping with activities and storytelling. We have continued to give the children booklets at Easter and Christmas, together with the eggs and advent calendars and we are grateful to Rev Chris for playing his guitar and teaching us new songs! Thank you!



Liz Digby and Fiona Trott

In planning the activities the PCC have applied the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Statement of Responsibilities of the Members of the Parochial Church Council

Charity law requires the PCC to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the financial year. In preparing these financial statements, the PCC are required to:

1. select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
2. observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3. make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4. state whether the applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
5. prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by:

Fiona Trott

Fiona Trott (Chair)

Date: 24th March 2026

St Marys East Bergholt 2025 Accounts and Examiners Report

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Report and Accounts

year ended 31st December 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
('the Charity')

I report to the members of the PCC (who are also the charity's trustees) on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2025 on the following pages, which have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out in the notes section.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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

Britt Evans

Mrs B Evans (AAT)
Association of Accounting Technicians
Rookery Cottage
Gaston Street
East Bergholt
Colchester
CO7 6SF

Date: 20th March 2026

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:						
Donations and legacies	3	61,691	255,053	-	316,744	60,129
Charitable activities	4	14,590	7,460	-	22,050	12,350
Other trading activities	5	18,416	-	-	18,416	22,324
Investments	6	4,703	-	-	4,703	15,059
Other income	0	-	-	-	-	-
Total income and endowments		99,400	262,513	-	361,913	109,862
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Charitable activities	7	(89,335)	(132,873)	(5,169)	(227,377)	(105,047)
		-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure		(89,335)	(132,873)	(5,169)	(227,377)	(105,047)
Net income/(expenditure)		10,065	129,640	(5,169)	134,536	4,815
Transfers between funds	12	(5,220)	5,220	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		4,845	134,860	(5,169)	134,536	4,815
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		42,202	18,500	272,649	333,351	328,536
Total funds carried forward	12	47,047	153,360	267,480	467,887	333,351

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing operation

Rounding differences of £1 may appear in these accounts.

The notes on the following pages form part of these accounts.

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
FIXED ASSETS						
Fixed Asset Investments	9	29,406		267,480	296,886	300,093
		<u>29,406</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,480</u>	<u>296,886</u>	<u>300,093</u>
CURRENT ASSETS						
Debtors	10	-	99,730	-	99,730	-
Cash at bank and in hand	11	17,641	53,630	-	71,271	33,258
		17,641	153,360	-	171,001	33,258
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>47,047</u>	<u>153,360</u>	<u>267,480</u>	<u>467,887</u>	<u>333,351</u>
FUND BALANCES						
Unrestricted Funds	12					
General funds		5,022	-	-	5,022	9,716
Designated funds		42,025	-	-	42,025	32,486
		<u>47,047</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>47,047</u>	<u>42,202</u>
Restricted Funds		-	153,360	-	153,360	18,500
Endowment Funds		-	-	267,480	267,480	272,649
		<u>47,047</u>	<u>153,360</u>	<u>267,480</u>	<u>467,887</u>	<u>333,351</u>

Rounding differences of £1 may appear in these accounts.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and were signed on its behalf by:

Fiona Trott

24th March 2026

Fiona Trott (Chair of Trustees)

Date

Charity number: 1190273

The notes on the following pages form part of these accounts.

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

1 Statutory Information

The East Bergholt Parochial Church Council is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England & Wales. The charity's registered number and principal address can be found on the Charity Information page.

2 Accounting Policies

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis, under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all activities for which the PCC is legally responsible; the activities of informal gatherings of church members and groups that owe their main affiliation to another body and are excluded.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with The Church Accounting Regulations 2006, the 'Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)' ('the Charities SORP'), with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland ("FRS 102") and with the Charities Act 2011. The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity as set out in FRS 102.

The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 (the '2008 Regulations') requires charities to prepare their accounts in accordance with 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005' but this accounting standard has since been withdrawn and has been replaced by the Charities SORP mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The charity has prepared these financial statements in accordance with the new Charities SORP; this departure from the 2008 Regulations is believed to be necessary for these financial statements to give a 'true and fair view'.

In the previous year the charity prepared its accounts using the receipts and payments basis; in the current year the charity's income exceeded £250,000 and so it is now obliged to use the accruals basis for the preparation of its accounts. The comparatives presented in these accounts have been re-stated using the accruals basis and a reconciliation with the reserves and results reported in note 14.

The principles adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

a) Going concern

The PCC have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The PCC have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. In particular the PCC have considered the charity's forecasts and projections and the possible implications should projected income and / or expenditure vary unexpectedly. The PCC have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

b) Income

Income (which includes planned giving, grants, collections and other donations) is recognised in the period in which the charity becomes entitled to receipt, the amount receivable can be measured with reasonable certainty, and receipt is probable. For the most part income is generally recognised when it is received by, or on behalf of, the PCC. Income is only deferred when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Income from donations and legacies includes recoverable gift aid, which is recognised when the related donation is received. Gift aid that has not been recovered by the balance sheet date is included as a debtor.

The charity relies on volunteers to carry out many of its activities. However, in accordance with the SORP, the value of these services has not been included in these financial statements as they cannot be reliably measured.

Income from charitable activities represents income receivable from goods, services and facilities supplied in furtherance of the charity's charitable objects.

2 Accounting Policies continued

Income from other trading activities represents income receivable from activities undertaken to generate funds for the charity.

Investment income represents income generated by the charity's assets such as dividends as well as increases in market value. It also includes income from bank interest.

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

2 Accounting Policies continued

The charity has taken the view that it has only one charitable activity, namely the advancement of the Christian faith, and all income from donations, legacies and charitable activities is in respect of this one activity.

c) Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT, is recognised when it is incurred or, if earlier, when a legal or constructive obligation for a payment arises provided that it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Contributions in respect of the diocesan parish share are included in the Statement of Financial Activities for all amounts agreed to being payable for the financial year.

The cost of raising funds is not significant and has not been separately disclosed.

Governance costs, which are included in expenditure on charitable activities but are identified separately in the notes to the accounts, includes costs associated with the independent examination of the financial statements, compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and any other expenditure incurred on the strategic management of the charity.

d) Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the PCC in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the PCC for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects. Endowment funds are donations that are retained as capital in accordance with the donor's wishes. The nature of the restriction determines whether the endowments represent permanent endowments or expendable endowments.

e) Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is not included in these financial statements by virtue of s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011. All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings is written off in the year in which it is incurred.

Movable church furnishings held by the incumbent and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are capitalised in accordance with the policy set out below. These items are regarded as inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. Inalienable property acquired prior to 2023 has not been capitalised as there is insufficient cost information available and estimated current net book value would be immaterial to these accounts.

Items purchased or donated for the charity's own use are capitalised when the cost of the individual purchased items, or the fair value of donated items, is more than £2,000 and the item is expected to benefit the charity over more than one accounting period. Depreciation is charged on a straight line basis so as to write down the value of each asset to its estimated residual value (if any) over its expected useful economic life. To achieve this objective the following rates of depreciation are charged:

Equipment	Over 3 to 7 years
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The carrying values of tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment in periods when events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable.

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

2 Accounting Policies continued

f) Investments

Fixed asset investments are held to generate income and / or for their investment potential. They are valued in these accounts at Market Value at the balance sheet date, with any improvement or reduction in value being recognised as income or expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities.

g) Stocks

Stocks held at the year end of either goods purchased for re-sale on our bookstall or donated items held for distribution to beneficiaries via our Pantry in the Porch project are not considered material to these accounts and have not been included.

h) Pension scheme arrangements

The charity operates defined contribution pension schemes for its employee (NEST). Obligations for contributions to these schemes are recognised as an expense when the liability arises. The assets of these schemes are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds.

i) Taxation

The charity has taken advantage of the various reliefs from taxation available to charities and no tax is payable on the charity's income.

j) Exemption from preparing a cashflow statement

The charity has taken advantage of an exemption conferred by the Charities SORP and has not prepared a cash flow statement.

k) Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The members of the PCC do not consider that there are any material sources of estimation or uncertainty at the balance sheet date that could result in a material adjustment to the carrying values of assets and liabilities in the next reporting period.

3 Donations and legacies

	2025	2024
	£	£
Grants and Donations relating to the New Roof Fund	214,850	1,414
Church Donations and Grants	90,855	49,897
Income tax recoverable	11,039	8,818
	<u>316,744</u>	<u>60,129</u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

4 Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Church Operations and activities	14,591	12,350
Roof Fundraising Activities	7,460	-
	<u>22,050</u>	<u>12,350</u>

5 Income from other trading activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Magazine	16,945	19,349
Bookstall/Calendars	<u>1,471</u>	<u>2,975</u>
	<u>18,416</u>	<u>22,324</u>

6 Investment income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Increase in Market Value of Investments (see note 9)	1,962	12,278
Interest Income	<u>2,741</u>	<u>2,781</u>
	<u>4,703</u>	<u>15,059</u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

7 Charitable expenditure

	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£
a Church Activities		
Parish share	24,150	31,300
Music Expenses (including Organist Fees)	5,540	5,965
Church Utilities	6,699	7,602
Church Repairs and Maintenance (including cleaning)	6,758	9,517
Insurance	4,898	4,788
Fundraising activities	1,867	579
Diocesan Fees	1,689	1,516
Equipment Purchased	8,900	-
Miscellaneous expenses	5,251	5,781
Decrease in Market Value of Investments (see note 9)	5,169	-
Magazine Trading costs	18,032	18,536
Bookstall Trading costs	3,296	1,993
Roof Fund Project Expenditure (including salaries)	87,999	5,768
Chancel Roof repair	34,272	-
	<u>214,521</u>	<u>93,343</u>
b Costs incurred on support & administration		
Governance costs	-	-
Parish office costs (including administrator fee)	12,857	11,703
	<u>12,857</u>	<u>11,703</u>
Total expenditure	<u><u>227,377</u></u>	<u><u>105,047</u></u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

8 Analysis of staff costs

	2025	2024
	£	£
Gross wages and salaries	17,738	-
Social security	-	-
Pension costs	113	-
	<u>17,851</u>	<u>-</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 1 (2024:0). Most of the charity's activities are carried out by volunteers.

No staff received salaries at a rate of more than £60,000 per annum.

No members of the PCC received employment benefits in either the current or preceding year.

9 Fixed Asset Investments

	Endowment Malschinger Investment	Endowment CCLA Investment	Designated BlackRock Investment	2025 £	2024 £
Market Value of Investment Bfwd	249,295	23,354	27,444	300,093	297,815
Disposals during the year				-	(10,000)
Increase in Market Value of Investment (note 6)			1,962	1,962	-
Decrease in Market value of Investment (note 7)	(4,273)	(896)		(5,169)	12,278
Market Value at end of the Year	<u>245,022</u>	<u>22,458</u>	<u>29,406</u>	<u>296,886</u>	<u>300,093</u>

During 2024, £10,000 was transferred from the Malschinger Investment Fund to the new Roof Fund.

10 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Falling due within one year:		
Accrued grant income	99,730	-
	<u>99,730</u>	<u>-</u>

During the year the National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded a Development Stage grant of £199,460 for the Securing the Future of St Marys Project. An initial instalment of £99,730 was made in February 2025 as the project commenced, and the remainder is being claimed during 2026 as the funds are spent on approved purposes in line with the grants terms. The full grant of income of £199,460 is recognised in this years accounts in line with SORP, with the remaining instalments recognised as an accrued income asse which is due within one year.

11 Cash at Bank and in Hand

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash at bank (including deposits with no notice period)	71,271	33,258
	<u>71,271</u>	<u>33,258</u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

12 Funds

During the year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:

	Opening balance 2025 £	Incoming resources 2025 £	Outgoing resources 2025 £	Transfers in the year 2025 £	Closing balance 2025 £
<i>Designated Funds</i>					
Magazine	5,042	16,945	(18,032)	(2,000)	1,954
Boiler Repair Fund	-	-	-	5,332	5,332
Bookstall Fund	-	-	-	1,200	1,200
Unknown Receipt	-	4,133	-	-	4,133
BlackRock Fund	27,444	1,962	-	-	29,406
	<u>32,486</u>	<u>23,040</u>	<u>(18,032)</u>	<u>4,532</u>	<u>42,025</u>
<i>General Unrestricted Funds</i>	<u>9,716</u>	<u>76,361</u>	<u>(71,303)</u>	<u>(9,752)</u>	<u>5,022</u>
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u><u>42,202</u></u>	<u><u>99,401</u></u>	<u><u>(89,335)</u></u>	<u><u>(5,220)</u></u>	<u><u>47,047</u></u>
<i>Restricted Funds</i>					
Flower Fund	1,003	-	-	-	1,003
Roof Fund - New	16,997	222,310	(87,999)	(1,250)	150,058
Chancel Roof Fund		27,802	(34,272)	6,470	0
Restricted Appeals Fund	-	9,441	(9,441)	-	-
Hardship Fund		1500	(550)	-	950
Benefice PA		900	(382)	-	518
Pantry in the Porch		410	(229)	-	181
Sum Up Fund		80	-	-	80
Foodbank fund		70	-	-	70
Mission Hall Fund	500	-	-	-	500
	<u>18,500</u>	<u>262,513</u>	<u>(132,873)</u>	<u>5,220</u>	<u>153,360</u>
<i>Endowment Fund</i>					
Malschinger Fund	249,295	-	(4,273)	-	245,022
Paskell Fund	23,354	-	(896)	-	22,458
Total Endowment Fund	<u>272,649</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(5,169)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,480</u>
Aggregate of funds	<u><u>333,351</u></u>	<u><u>361,914</u></u>	<u><u>(227,378)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>467,887</u></u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

The transfers referred to above were made for the following reasons:

- a) £1,250 of funds received into the Roof Fund in 2024, was later identified as relating specifically to the Chancel Roof. Therefore a separate fund was created in 2025 and the monies transferred to the new fund.
- b) the Chancel Roof fund expenditure was in excess of the funds raised, and therefore a transfer from general funds was made to cover the deficit.
- c) The Magazine Fund made a transfer of £2,000 of its surplus to the General Fund to support the Church. Ministry.
- d) The PCC transfer funds from the general fund to designated funds during the year to set aside monies for set purposes. The transfer were for the following: future boiler repairs (£5,332) and the Bookstall stock replenishment plan (£1,200)

12 Funds continued

Purposes of the various funds:

Designated funds

- a) The **Magazine Fund** represents the operations of the Magazine Team for both income and expenditure during the year.
- b) The **Boiler Repair Fund** is a designated fund set up to set aside funds for this purpose in 2026.
- c) The **Bookstall Funds** represents funds set aside for a deposit to be paid in 2026 for new stock for the bookstall.
- d) The **Unknown Receipt Fund** holds an amount of monies that was received into the bank account during 2025 which the church does not know the origins of. As a precaution, we have set this money aside for future repayment if the donor/payee can be identified.
- e) The **BlackRock Fund** represents funds held in a BlackRock Investment portfolio, which is not restricted monies however is kept separately from General Funds as an investment.

Restricted Funds

- a) The **Flower Fund** hold funds specifically donated to the church for the purchase of flowers, plants and relevant equipment for displays within the church and its grounds.
- b) The **New Roof Fund** was created by a PCC in 2024 for the purposes of managing the Roof Project which is in collaboration with the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Development Grant Awarded was £199,460, which is paid in tranches throughout 2025 - 2026. The first tranche was paid in February 2025 of £99,730. The remaining award is treated as an accrued income asset in these accounts. The project is currently in the Development Stage and will be proceeding to an application for Delivery Stage in 2026.
- c) The **Chancel Roof Fund** was created to hold donations and grants specifically for the Chancel Roof repair project which took place during 2025. Expenses related to the project were charged to this fund, and the resulting deficit was covered by a transfer from the General Fund.
- d) The **Restricted Appeals Fund** hold monies raised within the church for particular ad hoc projects or equipment needs. The funds are all spent on the specific expenditure within the year.
- e) The **Hardship Fund** relates to a donation received from the Parish Council for use to relieve financial hardship through the provision of shopping vouchers for families in need.
- f) The **Benefice PA Fund** was created from donations received to support the improvement of the sounds systems, music equipment and microphones within the benefice.
- g) The **Pantry in the Porch Fund** represents income received specifically to support this food pantry project operated in the porch of St Marys East Bergholt.
- h) The **Sum Up Fund** represents income received specifically for the Sum Up machine costs.
- i) The **Foodbank Fund** represents income received specifically to support local Foodbank projects.
- j) The **Mission Hall Fund** represents income received specifically to support Youth and Children's work in East Bergholt.

Endowment Funds

- a) The **Malschinger Trust Fund** holds legacy funds bequeathed to the church for investment. The original legacy was a permanent capital endowment of £92,742 and remaining balance of the fund is the increase in market value since it was received.
- b) The **Paskell Fund** was gifted to the church for investment.

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

12 Funds continued

Analysis of net assets by fund

The assets and liabilities of the various funds were as follows:

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>				
	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	2025
	funds	funds	funds	funds	
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Asset Investment	-	29,406	-	267,480	296,886
Debtors	-	-	99,730	-	99,730
Cash at bank and in hand	5,022	12,619	53,630	-	71,271
Creditors falling due within one year	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>5,022</u>	<u>42,025</u>	<u>153,360</u>	<u>267,480</u>	<u>467,887</u>

In the previous year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Closing
	balance	resources	resources	in the year	balance
	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated Funds					
Altar Fund	10,000	-	-	(10,000)	-
Magazine	6,229	19,349	(18,536)	(2,000)	5,042
BlackRock Fund	26,698	746	-	-	27,444
	<u>42,927</u>	<u>20,095</u>	<u>(18,536)</u>	<u>(12,000)</u>	<u>32,486</u>
General Unrestricted Funds	6,496	72,027	(70,807)	2,000	9,716
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>49,423</u>	<u>92,122</u>	<u>(89,343)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>42,202</u>
Restricted Funds					
Flower Fund	1,163	-	(160)	-	1,003
Roof Fund - Old	6,803	2,587	(8,039)	(1,351)	-
Roof Fund - New	-	1,414	(5,768)	21,351	16,997
Restricted Appeals Fund	-	1,707	(1,707)	-	-
Mission Hall Fund	-	500	-	-	500
Toddlers Fund	30	-	(30)	-	-
	<u>7,996</u>	<u>6,208</u>	<u>(15,704)</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>18,500</u>
Endowment Fund					
Malschinger Fund	248,286	11,009	-	(10,000)	249,295
Paskell Fund	22,831	523	-	-	23,354
Total Endowment Fund	<u>271,117</u>	<u>11,532</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>272,649</u>
Aggregate of funds	<u>328,536</u>	<u>109,862</u>	<u>(105,047)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>333,351</u>

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

12 Funds continued

Analysis of net assets by fund

In the previous year, the assets and liabilities of the various funds were as follows:

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted	Endowment	2024
	General	Designated			
	funds	funds	funds	funds	£
	£	£	£	£	
Fixed Asset Investments	-	27,444	-	272,649	300,093
Cash at bank and in hand	9,716	5,042	18,500	-	33,258
Creditors falling due within one year	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>9,716</u>	<u>32,486</u>	<u>18,500</u>	<u>272,649</u>	<u>333,351</u>

13 Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity:

- a) received donations (excluding Gift aid) totalling £26,130 (2024: £14,599) from related parties which includes members of the PCC and anyone closely connected to them.

Except for the reimbursement of expenses incurred when acting as agent for the charity, or incurred when serving as clergy or as employees, no expenses with a profit element were paid to (or for) the members of the PCC.

The East Bergholt Mission Hall Trust is a separately registered charity (Reg No: 254538) of which the East Bergholt Parochial Church Council is the sole trustee. The assets of the trust are held by the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Board of Finance as Custodian Trustee and total £2,079 at the year end (2024: £2,166). During the previous year, a donation was received from the Trust for £500 towards children's work which was recorded as Mission Hall Trust Restricted income in that year. No donations have been received during 2025.

14 Reconciliation with previously reported funds

In the previous year the charity prepared its accounts using the receipts and payments basis; in the current year the charity's income exceeded £250,000 and so it is now obliged to use the accruals basis for the preparation of its accounts. The comparatives presented in these accounts have been re-stated using the accruals basis and a reconciliation with the reserves and results reported previously follows:

Reconciliation of reserves

	2024	2023
	£	£
Previously reported reserves, at 31 December	141,527	138,991
Adjustments arising from use of accruals basis:		
Inclusion of Investments at Market Value	191,824	189,545
Inclusion of previously excluded fixed assets	-	-
Inclusion of previously excluded debtors	-	-
Inclusion of previously excluded creditors	-	-
Re-stated reserves, at 31 December	<u>333,351</u>	<u>328,536</u>

The accounts have been adjusted for any material debtors or creditors in existence at the year end. (2024: NIL/2023: NIL)

EAST BERGHOLT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2025

	Note	<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					<u>Unrestricted funds</u>				
		General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total
		2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:											
Donations and legacies	3	57,558	4,133	255,053	-	316,744	53,921	-	6,208	-	60,129
Charitable activities	4	14,590		7,460	-	22,050	12,350	-	-	-	12,350
Other trading activities	5	1,471	16,945	-	-	18,416	2,975	19,349	-	-	22,324
Income from Investments	6	2,741	1,962	-	-	4,703	2,781	746	-	11,532	15,059
Total income and endowments		<u>76,360</u>	<u>23,040</u>	<u>262,513</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>361,913</u>	<u>72,027</u>	<u>20,095</u>	<u>6,208</u>	<u>11,532</u>	<u>109,862</u>
EXPENDITURE ON:											
Charitable Activities	7	(71,303)	(18,032)	(132,873)	(5,169)	(227,377)	(70,807)	(18,536)	(15,704)	-	(105,047)
Total Expenditure		<u>(71,303)</u>	<u>(18,032)</u>	<u>(132,873)</u>	<u>(5,169)</u>	<u>(227,377)</u>	<u>(70,807)</u>	<u>(18,536)</u>	<u>(15,704)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(105,047)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>5,057</u>	<u>5,008</u>	<u>129,640</u>	<u>(5,169)</u>	<u>134,536</u>	<u>1,220</u>	<u>1,559</u>	<u>(9,496)</u>	<u>11,532</u>	<u>4,815</u>
Transfers between funds	12	(9,752)	4,532	5,220	-	-	2,000	(12,000)	20,000	(10,000)	-
Net movement in funds		<u>(4,695)</u>	<u>9,540</u>	<u>134,860</u>	<u>(5,169)</u>	<u>134,536</u>	<u>3,220</u>	<u>(10,441)</u>	<u>10,504</u>	<u>1,532</u>	<u>4,815</u>
Reconciliation of funds:											
Total funds brought forward		9,716	32,486	18,500	272,649	333,351	6,496	42,927	7,996	271,117	328,536
Total funds carried forward	12	<u>5,021</u>	<u>42,026</u>	<u>153,360</u>	<u>267,480</u>	<u>467,887</u>	<u>9,716</u>	<u>32,486</u>	<u>18,500</u>	<u>272,649</u>	<u>333,351</u>

Rounding differences of £1 may occur