



The Athelney Benefice

Annual Reports from the Parish of St Peter and St Paul, North Curry

May 25th 2025

1. Churchwardens' Report

We have had a very busy and successful year and are truly grateful for all the hard work and support we get from our congregation.

Congregations have increased this year largely through the tremendous enthusiasm shown by Simon, Martin and Ralph. A Huge thank you to them. Services such as Mothering Sunday, with of course the beautiful posies made by a dedicated team of ladies, Easter celebrations with the Church beautifully decorated by our wonderful team of flower ladies, not forgetting a truly moving Easter morn Service at Burrow Mump accompanied by Simon with his guitar and many other early risers and their dogs.

We have had seven weddings, thirteen funerals and five Baptisms in Church during 2024.

Our Village School holds regular services in the Church and indeed great participation at the Christingle Service. Christmas as usual was magnificent with a packed Church at Crib Service and very good attendance at Midnight and Christmas Day.

We joined as usual with the Methodist Church for the annual Covenant Service and also support of Christian Aid.

In June last year we held a most enjoyable Prayer Walk through the Village in June stopping at places like the Shop and Health Centre. This helped remind us of how we are a parish church, in the village and for the village. This grew from our monthly ecumenical prayer meetings in church and also our monthly Time for Meditation group, led so well by Judith and Claire.

Clean up days have proved successful as indeed a bulb planting exercise. School children also did some bulb planting. Thank you Lorraine for arranging the school. More to come this year!

Sincere thanks to Anne Willaims running the extremely successful Market and indeed to Jenny Satchwell for the regular Quiz nights. Once again, the May Fair proved to be very profitable.

The appeal for Bells has now ended, of course, but we look forward to raising funds for the organ. Thank you to all who are involved in this. This is progressing very well. All maintenance carried out you will have read in the Fin/Fab report.

Our deepest gratitude to all who so willingly give their support and time to the welfare of the Church. There are too many to mention individually but we do so appreciate your kindness

Mary Piers and Tome Jeanes, Churchwardens

2. Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2024

The deficit of £13411 is largely attributable to continued spend of the bells fund. When we adjust this figure to only show other church financial transactions the deficit is reduced to £1382.

General income.

Planned giving, collections and donations, **£31048**, were slightly lower from **£32321** however planned giving showed a small increase.

Donations included specific sums from funerals and christenings **£187**, NC coffee shop **£470**, Music fund **£1143** and a legacy of **£1000** in memory of Dr G Satchwell.

Fetes/events income £15246, included Music Fest 2024 and income from Produce market **£2237**, Coffee mornings **£346**, 200 Club **£3442**, May Fair **£543** and Church Concerts **£3542**. Receipts from Parochial fees **£6653**.

Other income was **£11363** mainly from services and monuments **£8372**, sale of calendars **£770** and hire of church building **£400**. The solar panels gave an income of **£826**

Expenditure

Repairs to church building **£15152**

The church running expense **£13858**, hardly changed from 2023.

Other expenditure **£3082** included the costs of monuments and plaques, and miscellaneous expense such as calendar printing costs **£570**.

The bells renewal accounted for **£12029** expenditure with no further income.

Notes to the Report

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the church accounting regulations using the receipts and payments basis.
2. The fund for the bells is separately designated as is the fund for Music festival which is controlled by the PCC but ring fenced and administered by the Music Festival management team.
3. VAT recovery has been made on our expenditure on specific building work associated with bells and other repair work

Richard Sykes, Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Certificate for the PCC Accounts

Report to the trustees of:

ST PETER AND ST PAUL, NORTH CURRY

Parochial Church Council

On accounts for the year ended:

31 DECEMBER 2024

Charity Number (if applicable):

Set out on pages

Respective
responsibilities of trustees and
examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent
examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's
statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect,

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

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

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

Signed:

DF Johnson

Date:

17 APRIL 2025

Name:

DAVID FRANK JOHNSON

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

I.C.A.E.W.

Address:

c/o COOPER ASSOCIATES ACCOUNTANTS, 40 ST JAMES BUILDINGS
ST JAMES STREET TAUNTON, SOMERSET, TA1 1JR

North Curry Receipts and Payments Accounts 2024

<u>Receipts</u>	2024	2023
Donations and Legacies		
Legacies	1000	0
Planned Giving	23933	22546
Collections, donations, other giving	8258	9775
Tax refund	0	16478
Other Activities		
Magazine income	357	224
Income from other Properties	0	0
Fete/events	15264	9800
Receipts from investments		
Interest	3723	510
Receipts from Charitable activities		
Parochial fees	6653	5653
Other Receipts		
Church Commissioners Chancel repairs	0	4000
Bells designated	0	33695
Loans received	0	0
Other	11363	10820
Collections for Charities	1086	1162
Total Receipts	71637	114663
Payments		
Charitable activities		
Donations/grants to Charities	1620	671
Mission and Evangelism	0	0
Parish Share	18385	15939
Clergy Expenses	4335	3514
Church Running Expenses	13858	14040
Churchyard Maintenance	3499	3425
Cost of raising funds	10865	5104
Support Costs		
Administration	475	174
Governance		
Other	3082	4657
Major Expenditure		
Repairs to Church Buildings	13777	110727
Repairs to the Property	15152	5320
Capital Purchases, Additions	0	0
Loan Repayments	0	0
Total Payments	85048	163571

Surplus(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments (13411)	(48908)
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Transfer funds to Skipton B Soc deposit		
from Lloyds current account	50000	85000

Cash at bank and in hand 31 Dec	180016	193427
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Current account	5727
Saving accounts	36501
Skipton account	137788
Cash	0

R.A. Sykes
30/4/25

3. Safeguarding Report

Background

You will be aware that Safeguarding within the Church of England setting has and is receiving a significant amount of publicity nationally. This publicity has led to some critical eyes on general policy decisions made by individuals and Parishes. This matter cannot be ignored and at Parish level we are very aware of our responsibilities regarding safeguarding matters.

Local initiatives

During the year we have made some progress both in terms of the Parish and the wider benefice. Simon Baldwin is now taking responsibility for benefice safeguarding however I will continue to look after the interests of North Curry Specifically and to ensure that we continue to make progress.

Register of need for Safeguarding training and Enhanced safety checking

I now have in place a register for all members of the PCC, and this will form the basis of need going forward. There are some needs in terms of additional training and DBS. These will be identified and possible ways to move these needs forward in 2025. I stress as always that any such checking is to safeguard all of us and there is of course no suggestion that there are specific concerns it is good practice and required of us from Bath and Wells safeguarding team.

Dashboards

The Diocese now has in place dashboards identifying actions taken and possible future actions to be taken. These dashboards are benefice specific with a list of what is required by each Parish to comply fully with safeguarding principles and practices. As a Parish we have made some progress however there is more to do going forward. Simon Baldwin, will I believe concentrate on getting the other Parish's up to speed.

Safeguarding and the Bell Tower

Due to the remoteness of the bell tower safeguarding always remains a strong feature of general compliance in the church. Each member of the tower has seen a copy of the tower handbook, and many members have now completed the basic awareness course online and both Darren and myself hold a DBS Enhanced for the benefit of training younger recruits.

Overview

Both the Benefice and Parish Safeguarding policies are updated and available for viewing in the white folder at the rear of the church. It is important that all members of the Church take responsibility for good safeguarding practice. I am confident that we

are on the right path to achieve the full complaint approach to safeguarding in the Parish.

Thank you for your continued support in our endeavour.

Owen J Cullwick Parish Safeguarding Officer

4. Fabric Committee Report

During the year we resumed monitoring of the solar panels. It was found that 8 of the 54 inverters on the solar panels no longer work. Unfortunately, it is not cost effective to replace them at present.

The chancel roof leak was repaired by Ellis & Co lead workers. Fortunately, the underlying woodwork seems to be in satisfactory condition. The overall condition of the lead roof is satisfactory, but it is deteriorating with the effluxion of time.

The worn floor coverings in the chancel were removed and the tiles were much improved by a deep clean.

High level lighting to the transept and chancel was replaced/improved.

The hearing loop was repaired in January 2024.

The appearance of the chandelier in the nave was much improved by volunteer labour and different cleaning material.

Inspections, reports and estimates for a major overhaul of the organ were obtained and the work is being carried out in May/June 2025

Some preparatory work on reordering has been done but this project and the repair to the South Porch statues and replacement of St Peter's head have been deferred for the time being.

A satisfactory introductory meeting was held with the new Chancel repairs Officer of the Church Commissioners. The Commissioners have 97% of the liability for fabric repairs to the chancel.

In 2026 a quinquennial inspection will be due. We have been warned that some work will needed on the parapets and that painting of rainwater goods should be done when there is scaffolding in place.

The perennial annual tasks were undertaken including:

- Two well attended "clean-up "days which were well supported by parishioners
- Routine checks to lightening conductor, fire equipment, alarm, clock, bells.

David Akerman, Chairman of Finance and Fabric committee.

5. Events Committee Report

Events Committee was established by North Curry PCC in 2019 and meets to organise specific non-worship events in or for the parish church, and offer support to others organising similar events. The Committee is chaired by the Vicar or by Mary Piers as lay chair, and clerked by David Walker. Other members are Lorraine Bryan Brown, Helen Griffiths and Denise Walker.

Thanks go to Anne Williams for leading on Coffee Wednesdays. And to Lorraine for continuing to organise a monthly Produce Market at the village hall and the annual Harvest Supper, and Jenny Satchwell for her popular quiz nights.

There are concert-type events at monthly intervals or so, some partly subsidised by the Take Art rural touring organisation which helps us afford a diverse range of productions. Some worship events are included where they involved the Committee in hospitality.

More ambitious still is the North Curry Music Festival - now in its third year - supported by the PCC and which is reporting separately to the APCM.

Events at or for the Church in 2024:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2 March | Quiz Night (Music Festival fundraiser) |
| 16 March | Sax-22 concert (Music Festival fundraiser) |
| 22 March | Max Calaf trampolinist (Take Art subsidised) |
| 20 April | Village Choir spring concert |
| 14 June | Mellstock Band (Music Festival) |
| 15 June | Kosmos Ensemble (Music Festival) |
| 16 June | Festival Worship (with NCVC and choirs from both schools) |
| | Festival Evensong (with In Ecclesia) |
| 31 August | Zeffe Klezmer Band |
| 6 September | A Flight at the Opera (Bluebirds Theatre Company) |
| 19 September | Linarol Consort of Viols |
| 27 September | Kathakali stories in mime from south India (Take Art subsidised) |
| 12 October | Taunton Military Wives Choir |
| 17 November | A Remembrance Evensong (with In Ecclesia) |

6. Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod met three times in 2024 with the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG) meeting more frequently to set the agendas and discussion on the new Benefice Share. DMPG has continued to consider Deanery re-organisation.

The first meeting of the year was held on 12th March at Holy Trinity where the Revd Dean Whitaker lead us in a time of worship.

The speaker the Revd Ronnie Crossman, who is the Ministry Team Leader for the Diocese, was introduced. The Revd Crossman then spoke on Shared Ministry this provides a framework within which it is possible to explore a wide variety of ministry roles in the local church and community shared between clergy and lay ministers. She gave an overview of pathways open to interested lay participants once a specific ministry is discerned.

Our next meeting was held on the 27th June at Westonzoyland. Unfortunately the speaker Jenny Hollingsworth, Diocesan Secretary was unable to attend.

Members present then shared in a celebration of Holy Communion together, this was led by the Revd Jane Sutton and the Revd Kirsty Wells preached.

Thanks and a gift were presented to Katherine Cannell on her retirement from Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod.

Refreshments were then served during which the members were able to look at the Maundy money that had been presented to Katherine Cannell in York together with the many photos of that occasion.

An opportunity for the parishes and benefices to share with what was going well in their home churches. The result was that there were very many new. and exciting initiatives going on in Sedgemoor Deanery. Some difficulties were also discussed.

On a very dark November evening the next meeting was held at North Curry on the 5th November. We didn't see any fireworks but many of us explored the village trying to find the church!

The evening commenced with Evening Prayer led by Revd Simon Bale.

The speaker Jenny Hollingsworth, Diocesan Secretary outlined her many duties, that she undertakes in her role. Her role(s) include liaising with other dioceses, regular contact with the Diocesan Synod, many committees that run and guide the Diocese, finance, links with Parishes and Benefices and also looking after Bishop Michael.

Business

The Treasurer presented the accounts. These were proposed, seconded and unanimously accepted. It was confirmed that the parishes would not be asked for any financial contribution this year.

Deanery Representatives on Diocesan Synod.

Clergy	Kirsty Wells	Lay	Katherine Cannell
	Dean Whitaker		Ann Philcox
	Ed Moll		Trish Lewis

7. Bellringers Group Report

It has been a rewarding year as secretary and vice-captain of North Curry Bellringers and the support of the ringers, and the Church members has been very heartening. Thank you.

Thanks

Firstly, I would like to thank Darren for his dedication and leadership of our ringers during the past year resulting in considerable progress on our Bellringing journey. Also, Penny who has maintained our publicity with great dedication. Special mention should be made to David Birch who has used his incredible skills and knowledge to make our tower safer and to produce some incredible pieces of workmanship that we can all enjoy.

Membership

The membership over the past year has been similar the previous year and we currently have a subscribed membership of 14. This has allowed to maintain a regular standard of ringing both for worship and practice. We are actively seeking new recruits for learning the noble art and we are confident that during the forthcoming year we will have new members to join us.

Our 3rd Saturday practices have continued successfully

These practices run by Darren/ Owen are advertised on the Bath and Wells association website and are attended by several ringers with a range of skills and experience. They are also a great opportunity for local ringers to extend their knowledge with other ringers in the area. We are delighted that our own ringers are given the opportunity learn and ring amongst more experienced ringers and will give confidence to all. Our next practice is on the 17th of May.

The branch holds occasional practices at North Curry which is aimed at a variety of skill levels.

The new training simulator ready for set up with some tweaking by Darren to complete. This will be extremely helpful with the training of new ringers.

Visiting ringers to North Curry

We have had a full calendar of ringing from visiting bands during this spring including a superb peal by the Exeter band in April which was a joy to hear and there were several comments from local people which is always encouraging. We have also had an excellent Call Change band from Paignton who really made their mark as a team of experts in this style of ringing.

A quarter peal by the ringers from Axbridge will be attempted 14th June and a full peal of North Curry Surprise Major that will be attempted with Darren as the local ringer participating in this exciting event.

Creech St Michael/Curry Rivel and Lyng

We have enjoyed during the year a close association with the ringers from Creech St Michael and thank Paul who has supported us during the year. Also, Liz and Patrick Rendell and Paddy Sowter who have attended our practices regularly during the year. Members of the Lyng band have hopefully benefitted from the support of Darren whilst attempts have been made to get regular ringing going again.

We have again recently been assisted by members of Creech St Michael and Curry Rivel and have also enjoyed the company of the Lyng ringers at some practices this has been a great boost to them.

Tower Open Day

On 10th May we were delighted to open the tower during the May Fair when we welcomed over 80 visitors to hear about the exceptional Bells of North Curry.

Sanctus Bell

Mary has been doing a wonderful job in ringing the Sanctus Bell during 2024/25.

Health and Safety

Owen is maintaining the health and safety documentation which has been extended from the Church Policy to ensure that we made every to maintain good health and safety standards in all that we do

Safeguarding

I am delighted to report that most ringers have now completed foundation training on safeguarding and Owen and Darren have fully compliant DBS enhanced certification.

Ringers Outing

We are planning an exciting trip to Buckfast Abbey on 12th July and will ring some surrounding towers to make an enjoyable day out for the ringers

Summary

We are blessed to have a committed membership who turn up each Sunday and ring which is certainly more than can be said for so many towers. Darren continues to provide excellent leadership and support for the ringers of North Curry.

Owen Cullwick, Tower Secretary

8. Music Festival Committee Report

This is a report on the second North Curry Music Festival that took place over a weekend in June 2024, and the plans for the 2025 and future Festivals. The Festivals are presented under the auspices of the Church and form a part of our church's mission to serve our community.

2024 Festival

Professional performances were provided by the Mellstock Band and the Kosmos Ensemble in the church, a family storytelling performance of the Magic Flute by the Bluebirds Theatre Group on the Greenway Playing Field plus two Village Hall workshops to experience the Javanese Gamelan. Local musicians gave performances in the Pavilion and Queen Square Garden, and Sunday saw the church full for a morning family service, and for Evensong led by In Ecclesia.

Overall, music from these local and professional musicians covered folk, classical, choral, world, pop, jazz, blues and opera.

There were events aimed at families and primary school children through to adults. Attendance by children and their families was strong at the Family Service, with over 20 children in the Stoke St Gregory Primary choir and around 10 children in the North Curry Primary one, plus many family members (children and adults) at the service. At the Magic Flute performance there were about 50 adults and children, a good attendance given the weather. Both church concerts were very well attended, with just under 100 attending each one, though numbers at the Gamelan workshops were lower than anticipated.

The Festival Committee set some objectives that would guide the content and structure:

1. To hold a weekend (in the Summer of 2024) of musical events
2. To appeal to a wide audience in terms of age and musical taste
3. To offer a platform for local non-professional musicians
4. To engage the services of some professional musicians

5. To offer affordable ticket prices

The Committee felt that these five objectives were successfully met:

1. All planned events took place, even though the wind and cooler weather made some of the open air events more challenging for the musicians!
2. There was a breadth of music genres (see above) and a wide range of ages attending.
3. There was great participation and enthusiasm to perform from our rich talent of local musicians, with 12 different local groups taking part – the two children and youth street bands, the guitar group, the ukulele orchestra, a guitar duo, a solo guitar, the Jazzical Swing band, the village orchestra, village choir, church choir, village primary school choir and Stoke Primary school choir.
4. The professional concerts in the church were well received, particularly the outstanding Kosmos Ensemble. One of our additional aims was to give an opportunity to hear international performers that otherwise could not be afforded in the village. Kosmos was a great example – ticket sales did not cover the cost of staging the concert even though it was well attended, but we were able to bring them to North Curry by funding the loss on that concert from other festival events and fundraising.
5. Ticket prices for the two church concerts were held at last year's level (£15 and £18), and grants from the Coffee Shop and the Parish Council enabled us to put on the family Magic Flute for free.

The Festival was not just a success in its own right as a music festival. Importantly it succeeded as a community event – bringing in performers and attendees of all ages from across the village and beyond.

The church can I believe take pride from facilitating a significant and successful community event, drawing in a large number of people to the building, attracting many children and families to the Family Service and proving itself relevant to the life of the village.

Financially the Festival made a small surplus which will be used to support future Festivals. Details are included in the church's annual accounts and are separately identified. We were grateful to Jenny Satchwell for organising a village quiz to fundraise for the Festival, and to Sax-22 for waiving their performance fee to put on a fundraising concert for us.

A wider group of volunteers was recruited this year (eg for stewarding, first aid, ticket sales etc) than last year, which was very welcome. We were very thankful for all who helped in any way to make the Festival such a success.

I am grateful to the Festival's "management team" – the Committee (in 2024 Rev Simon Bale, Jenny Satchwell, Helen Griffiths, David Walker, Philippa Trim, Owen Culwick,

Robert Wheatley, Anna Bushell) for their wisdom and oversight. In particular I wish to thank my colleagues on the Working Group who worked so hard over the year in sweating the detail on a monthly, weekly and daily basis – Philippa, Robert and Anna.

2025 Festival and Beyond

As there was much support and enthusiasm for last year's Festival, the decision was made last September to hold a Festival on 19-22 June 2025, maintaining the momentum built with the community so far and building on the success of the last two years. Robert and Owen stepped off the Committee and Martin Horrox replaced Robert on the Working Group.

The 2025 programme is finalised, again showcasing a wide variety of local and professional talent and tickets are now on sale. We look forward to another successful Festival.

To ensure we can bring our first choice of international musicians in the future to North Curry we have also booked our first performers for the 2026 Festival!

Hugh Andrews,
Chair of North Curry Music Festival Planning Committee

9. North Curry Prayer Fellowship

We host the north curry village prayer meeting - as well as members of the parish church we are joined in the group by friends who go to Creech Baptist, Fivehead Baptist, Stoke St Gregory Baptist and the Methodist Church. We meet at 9.30 on the fourth Saturday of the month with an extra breakfast together at the start of the year. Our youngest member is one and our oldest iswho knows?

Each month we follow a simple pattern of saying thank you for God's goodness to us and praying for God's blessing on different areas of village life and praying for any topics of need or challenge we are aware of. Some people voice their prayers aloud and others voice their prayers quietly in their hearts. We believe that God hears all of our prayers.

People have often commented that they find our hour together encouraging and enjoyable. Most of us cannot make it every single month so there is the opportunity to join in and pray in your own time by receiving the monthly emails or picking up the sheet from the table by the prayer board. To find out more speak to Hugh or Judith 07941326559

Judith Sergeant and Hugh Andrews, Coordinators

10. Music in Church Report

I would like to thank all those people whose support and participation have meant that every week music continues to play a part in our worship together, as well as on special occasions. There is always a choir and always an accompanist, quite on which instrument is currently another matter!

Regularly throughout the year the core of the choir meets with the vicar to choose the hymns for the services. I would like to say that they are not chosen on a whim, for their brevity or for their primary school associations but based on the content and theme for the service itself. The Royal School of Church Music published a magazine, *Sunday by Sunday*, in which the lessons are listed and a selection of hymns suitable for that day's theme are offered. We make our choices from these lists. I am sure you already realised that prayers, sermon, lessons and hymns are all linked, but within these confines we do aim to please.

We were very pleased to welcome Mary Stewart-Wilson into our ranks this Spring and newcomers are always welcome. There is plenty of space in the pews and due to a gift from Curry Rivel Choir we now have many more blue robes of all shapes and sizes.

As is obvious in church the organ is undergoing its long-awaited overhaul. Our team of organists look forward to playing the new improved version. Thanks to the generosity of choir members at weddings we are able to sponsor three stops from fees not taken.

Patrick Rendell continues to play for us on the first Sunday of the month and Helen Griffiths is still playing for other services. We are so lucky and thankful to have welcomed Andrew Goodwin into the team. Andrew is newly arrived as a resident in the village and we share his gifts with The Methodist Chapel. Andrew plays for our Evensong and one Eucharist each month, and we must not forget that we can also count on the vicar and his guitar.

There were times last year when the future of the choir and organ seemed in jeopardy, but prayer is a wonderful thing. We look forward to the future.

Jenny Satchwell, Music Coordinator

11. Electoral Roll Report

Since the last Annual Church Meeting five people have died and seven have moved away.

Every six years the electoral Roll is closed and everyone needs to reapply. This is what happened in April. Our new Electoral Roll has a total of sixty-five members, four of whom live outside the parish. This number will rise within a few weeks as some people missed the closing date through illness or holidays.

Once our 2025 APCM is concluded the Roll will be open again to new members and I expect the number to settle at around seventy. We have had a steady membership for some years.

Jenny Satchwell, Electoral Roll Officer