

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE APCM

18th May 2025

INGLEBOROUGH TEAM REPORT FOR 2025 - Team Rector

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting gives us an opportunity to step back from the weekly and monthly routines of the five churches in the team and take a broader, more relaxed and considered view of church life.

In the 2023 report I wrote about St Augustines' words in concluding his book 'The City of God' that in eternity we shall rest and we shall see, we shall see and we shall love, we shall love and we shall praise. My emphasis is to try to use this as a pattern for myself and for my partnership in mission with you. For the 2024 report I wrote about our decision to use the following headings as something of a guide for our life together...

2025 - a year of prayer

2026 - a year of mission

2027 - a year of generosity

2028 - a year of vocation

2029 - a year of prayer

2025 was our first year of prayer. In our joint services across the Team we took this as one of our emphases. We did a Lent course on The Lord's Prayer. We offered training for those who lead prayers of intercession during Sunday worship. Morning and evening prayer continued at Thornton and Burton in Lonsdale. 24/7 prayer events were held at Ingleton. Silent prayer and 'lectio divina' was offered every other Saturday morning in Bentham. Bishop Anna led an excellent quiet day at Bentham. Across the Team prayer was made every Sunday and festival day in our regular worship. We prayed at every baptism, wedding and funeral. We prayed individually and we prayed together. We prayed to prepare for 2026 as a year of mission.

Thank you all very much for sharing the journey. Thank you to Nick and Harriet and all our retired clergy colleagues. Thank you to all our named church officers who work so hard for our churches and communities. Thank you to all those who work hard, whose name and role may or may not have a name. Thank you to all of you who have the ministry of turning up, it's so important. Thank you for 2025. May God bless us for 2026.

Bentham

There were many other things that we did at Bentham; we worked on a new mission statement, and came up with a what3faithwords of "loving.welcoming.sharing"; we had a wonderful concert with Rural Arts; we had great cream teas on the Bank Holidays; Archdeacon James visited us for a visitation, and as result we have a programme of action for safeguarding, finance, building, and mission, which the PCC are working through. You dusted, polished and cleaned, and arranged flowers inside, mowed the grass and looked after the churchyard and building outside, you rang bells, you sang in the choir, you made coffee, you read the Bible and lead prayers, you were involved in

the life of our town and community in many other ways e.g. Pantry, Lunch club, Youth Club, Hub, both in personal capacities and because you are known to be church members, representing Bentham Parish Church.

I'm sure I have missed events out and forgotten to thank someone, but to cover myself, thank you all for making 2025 another great year in our church's history. Let's do the same for 2026.

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PCC TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2025 – Libby Wheildon

The Accounts for the year 2025 have been drawn up by myself with the support of Janet Smith, retired Chartered Accountant, using the template provided by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales for the Receipts and Payments Accounts for registered charities, as in 2023 and 2024.

The accounts have been independently examined by Mike Fitzsimmons.

For the year 2025, the payments have exceeded the receipts by £66,038.

Income

Our income in 2025 totalled £50,175. A decrease of £13,464 from our income in 2024. This is partly due to a decrease in the amount of Gift Aid received in 2025 compared to that which we received in 2024 (£8,721 in 2024). The larger sum of gift aid received last year was due to receiving two years of claims instead of just the one year reclaimed in 2025.

The claims for Gift Aid (GA) on donations are done retrospectively and includes Gift Aid on the tax efficient planned giving which is done by church members directly through their bank, and from the envelope and cash collections given on the plate during services (Gift Aid on Small Donations: GASDS).

We also receive Gift Aid through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), which takes the amount payable by the donor by direct debit every month and then pays it straight to the church. Gift Aid on these donations is also paid monthly directly to the church.

Gift Aid reclaims (not PGS) under GASDS for the tax year from 6 April 2025 to 5 April 2026 will be reclaimed after 5th April 2026 as well as the Gift Aid on other income for the whole of the calendar year 2025.

The amount of gift aid outstanding on 31 December 2025, therefore is for the GASDS income received in the tax year 2025/26 (from 6 April 2025 to 31 December 2025) and the gift aid on other income for the whole of the calendar year 2025 (including the period before 5 April 2025). Please see page 1 in the Notes to the Accounts for further detail.

Income Fluctuations 2024-2025

Our church community continue to give very generously in different ways to our church although the amount we received in 2025 is only slightly more than in 2024 (£166).

We continue to see increases in our weekly cash collections in services and in our PGS

income, but tax efficient planned giving decreased by £1,164 in 2025 and by £119 in non-taxable planned giving.

Other fluctuations in income show that donations decreased in 2025 by £600. The money we receive from the Diocese in PCC fees for weddings and funerals has increased this year by £500 and we were fortunate to receive a £250 grant from the Diocese towards funding the Summer Holiday Club held in the church during the August Summer holiday.

The amount we received in dividends and interest from restricted funds decreased by £1,145 in 2025 due to the withdrawal of funds from the CCLA account to pay for the building and renovation work on the Children and Families' Room.

The decrease in income of £13,464 in 2025 from that of 2024, is also because we received no VAT reclaim in 2025. The VAT reclaim application for invoices paid for the Children and Families' Room was made to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme in January 2026 once all the work had been completed. A payment of £8, 927.03 has since been made into our current account on the 11th March 2026.

We were also very fortunate to have received a £5,000 legacy from the estate of Mary Harrison which helped to boost our income significantly in 2024. We received no legacy in 2025.

We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to all members of our church community for their unwavering generosity, both through regular weekly and monthly donations and through their enthusiastic participation in our fundraising activities. The support shown extends far beyond financial contributions, many have generously offered their time and effort to organise and support various events, including providing refreshments at Coffee Mornings, Bank Holiday Cream Teas, Easter Egg Bingo, and the Ceilidh. Others have donated gifts for raffle prizes, contributed plants for the Plant Sale, and assisted in countless other ways. It is thanks to this collective spirit and willingness to give, that our church continues to flourish and serve the wider community

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Expenditure

Our expenditure in 2025 totalled £116,213. This is an extra £63,068 on that which was spent in 2024.

The main reason for the increase in expenditure is the £61,326 that was spent on major capital expenditure for the building and renovation of the new Children and Families' Room. Other increases include fundraising costs (Rural Arts Event in March, £502 and the cost of the Ceilidh Band in November, £545) and the increased share payment in 2025 which added an additional £8,121 to the Diocesan Share expenditure in 2025.

We paid a total of £36,039 to the Diocese in 2025 including £2,538 which was December 2024's share payment being drawn from our account in January 2025. Please see the detail on page 4 of the notes to the accounts which explains the Share payment for 2025.

Our share request from the Diocese has increased again in 2026 to £36,851 per annum (£3,071 per month). As a PCC, we have decided we are not in a position to be able to pay the full amount every month following our deficit last year. Instead, we have decided to pay £2,000 every month to the Diocese in 2026 and pay the difference owing, only if we have sufficient funds at the end of the year.

Details about the Diocesan Share Request payment and what it is used for, as well as a letter from the Bishop of Leeds explaining the reason for the increase in Share payments, is available for everyone to see on the Giving Display at the back of church.

Expenditure Fluctuations 2024-2025

Charitable donations increased in 2025, the details of which are explained in the notes to the accounts on page 2.

Additional money (£500) was spent on the provision of services in 2025, and churchyard maintenance costs increased by over £1,000. This is due to the boundary wall repairs that were completed in 2024 but only invoiced in September 2025, costing £1,334.

In 2024, we used a firm of accountants to draw together the final accounts, this was an additional expense that we have never previously had.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

The Statement of Assets and Liabilities on 31 December 2025 includes cash at Santander Bank representing unrestricted funds and at CCLA now also representing unrestricted funds. Please see the notes to the accounts on page 3.

Looking to the Future

In 2025, we had a monthly deficit in income and expenditure for ten months out of the twelve, with an average monthly shortfall of - £900. In order to address this ongoing deficit, we have held two stewardship meetings, gathering interested parties from our church community to discuss ways in which we can create additional income for our church. The initial meeting focussed on how we might raise the profile of our church within the community of Bentham. A series of six articles for the Bentham News, written by David Channing and David Johnson, detailed aspects of the unique heritage of the church, its architecture, the graveyard and notable former members of the church. Historical guided tours of the church were also undertaken by several community groups as a result.

Our aim is to work towards developing a group called 'Friends of Bentham Parish Church' which we hope will encompass many more people in our wider community who have an affiliation to the church, and who may wish to support the church's ongoing sustainability.

We have also published a Financial Newsletter for our church community, highlighting our financial position and illustrating the different ways of giving to the church, as well as thanking each giver personally by card, for their continuing contributions.

To further review and reduce our annual expenditure, we have negotiated a cheaper Insurance policy with 'Trinitas', offering like-for-like cover and saving us over £1,000 per annum.

In May 2026, we also move onto new gas and electricity contracts which will also save us money. The new gas contract should save us £884 per annum and the electricity contract £110 per annum. These contracts are sourced by 'Green Journey' who provide

an opportunity for Churches and Church organisations to reduce overall energy costs while improving green credentials and reducing environmental impact.

This year, we are required to submit our final accounts for the first time to the Charity Commission as well as to the Diocese. We are grateful both to Janet Smith for her invaluable support in drawing together our accounts, and to Mike Fitzsimmons for examining them and signing them off.

Thank you once again also to David Channing for taking charge of the Gift Aid claims and for counting and banking the weekly giving at the end of every service.

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PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2025 - Maggie Bruno

Aims and Purposes

The primary objective of the PCC is to promote the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The PCC has a duty to consult with the Minister on matters of general concern and importance to the Parish. This includes promoting in the Parish, the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC must also consider and discuss matters concerning the Church of England and any other matters of religious or public interest (except doctrine), and link with the Diocesan and Deanery Synods in relation to any provisions these Synods make, and offer advice and feedback if requested. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St John's Church, graveyard and carpark, and retains responsibility for St Margaret's graveyard though maintenance is carried out by Craven District Council.

Objectives and Activities:

Following the Church Vision Party on 1 February 2025, the PCC has adopted the Mission Statement: 'Loving, Welcoming, Sharing' and is seeking to take this forward with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The PCC is also following the 5 years mission plan for the Ingleborough Team. 2025 was a year of prayer for the Ingleborough Team and 2026 is a Year of Mission.

Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure 1956. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2011.

The serving members of the PCC are:

The Revd Canon Peter Greenwood (Team Rector and Chair)

Christine Bosman (Vice Chair), and David Channing - Churchwardens. Ex Officio.
Elected on 12 May 2024

Elected Members:

Judith Johnson – (Lay Licenced Minister) - elected 2023 for 3 years

Chris Birkbeck - elected 2024 for 3 years

Ruth Poole – elected 2023 for 3 years

Maggie Bruno (Secretary), elected 2023 for 3 years

Libby Wheildon (Treasurer) – elected 2023 for 2 years

Mary Taylor – elected 2024 for 3 years

Trevor Wheildon – elected 2022 for 3 years

Barbara Vigour – Deanery Synod Representative – elected 2024 for 2 years

Members of the Standing Committee are – Churchwardens, Chair (Team Rector), Vice Chair, Lay Licenced Minister, Secretary and Treasurer.

Other Church Office holders:

Gift Aid – David Channing

Electoral Roll Officer – Christine Bosman

Safeguarding and DBS Representative – Tessa Tyndall (Ex Officio), assistant Maggie Bruno

Disability Representative – Mary Taylor

Environmental Representative – Revd Timothy Fox (Ex Officio), assistant Mary Taylor.

Churches Together in Bentham Representative – Judith Johnson

Assistants to Churchwardens –Maggie Bruno, Trevor Wheildon, Libby Wheildon.

Data Protection Officer – Christine Bosman

Health and Safety Officers –David Channing, Chris Birkbeck

Family and Children's Officers –Ruth Poole and Tessa Tyndall (Ex Officio)

Building Committee: David Channing (Chair), Trevor Wheildon, Chris Birkbeck,

This year the PCC has met on 28 January 2025, 20 March 2025, 27 April 2025, 18 May 2025, 27 May 2025, 12 August 2025, 14 October 2025, 18 November 2025.

The Standing Committee has met on 21 February 2025, 12 July 2025, 30 September 2025, 30 November 2025, 12 December 2025.

The PCC reviews its responsibilities in terms Health and Safety and Safeguarding at every meeting. The Diocesan Safeguarding Policy is displayed at the back of church. It has been adopted at the APCM and by the PCC. Other Safeguarding information is also displayed in church. All members of the PCC and those engaged in pastoral activities and youth activities are DBS checked. All PCC members have attended the required Diocesan safeguarding courses. The PCC is implementing the Church of England Safer Recruitment procedures.

The full Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessments for the church and any church activities which take place in other locations, are updated annually and reviewed by the PCC, along with the Safety and Security Management Plan.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer.

The pattern of services of 9.00am Holy Communion has continued alternating between Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship. The 10.30am service is now a Eucharist on every Sunday except the 4th Sunday of the month when a 'Something Different' Café style service is now held. The Elements are now distributed through sharing the common cup. We are fortunate to still receive the ministry of our Lay Licensed Minister and occasional assistance from retired clergy and other ministers in the Ingleborough Team.

The average congregational attendance in 2025 was 37 adults and 3 children. Christmas Eucharist services were attended by 62 adults, 115 Adults and 15 children were at the Carol Service, and 51 adults at 16 children at the Crib Service. The Christingle Service was replaced this year by a Messy Christingle, which was attended by 22 adults and 14 children.

The number of Easter communicants in 2025 was 59. In 2025 there was 1 adult baptism and 2 child baptisms, 16 funerals which included 5 committal of body or ashes only with no service in church

In November we held our Remembrance service and 'In Loving Memory' service, where we mourned and gave thanks for the lives of those we have loved and lost personally, and members of the congregation known to us all.

Our Crib/Christingle Service was led by our Lay Worship Leader Tessa Tyndall.

Our Easter Eucharist in church was followed by an Easter Egg hunt in the churchyard.

We joined Churches Together in Bentham and the school in their Auction Mart Nativity and sang carols at Bowland View. As part of Churches Together in Bentham we take our turn in the monthly service at Bowland View. We hosted the Churches Together in Bentham Unity Service and joined with Churches Together in Bentham for the Good Friday service at School Hill. Easter Sunday celebrations started with the Churches Together in Bentham service at Sunrise at the Big Stone.

St John's hosted the Ingleborough Team Candlemass service with Choral Evensong in February, and the Ash Wednesday Service was held at Ingleton. We joined the Team Maundy Thursday service at Thornton, and joined the Team Good Friday service at Ingleton and the Stations of the Cross walk up Ingleborough. All Saints Burton in Lonsdale hosted the Ascension Day celebration. In June we supported the Team Evening Prayer service at Chapel Le Dale and were delighted to welcome Bishop Anna for the Quiet Day in July. In August, The Revd Nick Trenholme led the Team Compass Day to explore our next step in mission.

The monthly time of meditation and reflection on Saturday mornings has continued, a quiet time for spiritual reflection, prayer, and Lectio Divina.

In February, May and November, we held Messy Church afternoons for children and families. Attendance has been between 14 and 9 children, and 14-15 adults (including parents and helpers)

In October Archdeacon James Theodosius visited St John's to carry out an Archdeacon's Visitation to examine the whole life of the church – mission and growth, fabric and registers, safeguarding, and finance. It was a very helpful opportunity to reflect on the overall 'health' of the church and assist us to identify areas to take forward for the future.

Community Outreach

The monthly Lunch Club continues to meet on the second Thursday at the Black Bull, with an average of 14 members. We have had some new members, and sadly lost some who have passed away. It is a time for food and fellowship and the opportunity to keep in touch with those who are now more isolated due to illness, lack of transport, or living alone.

Our pastoral ministry to those in need continues through delivering cards and flowers to the bereaved, and posies around the community at Harvest, as well as ongoing visiting

and support to members of our community. It is an informal but very active ministry by those in church with concerns for others.

In August we started our Thursday Cafés - a space to come during the summer for everyone, especially parents with children where craft activities were available.

St John's continues to be an active member of Churches Together in Bentham and a separate report is available.

The PCC has continued to support the community through the Ecumenical initiative of The Pantry Club, now overseen by Churches Together in Bentham and hosted in the Methodist Church. Members of the congregation volunteer regularly and are part of the Steering Group. The Pantry has continued both to help those struggling financially, and to be a means of reducing food waste through the Fairshare arrangements. Over 100 people are now registered members. St John's members also volunteer with the Youth Club, also hosted in the Methodist Church.

St John's has encouraged the links with Bentham Primary School and the Revd Canon Peter Greenwood visits fortnightly. Some members are also involved with the 'Open the Book' project in the school. In March St John's held an Easter Craft Session in the school and in April the school visited for their Easter Service. In July Year 6 pupils visited the church. In September the school held its harvest festival in church.

The PCC continues to support Fair Trade and are grateful to the Revd Tim Fox for being our representative on this, and for selling Fair Trade Advent Calendars. The Revd Tim Fox is also St John's Environmental Representative, assisted by Mary Taylor, and we are grateful for all the ways in which he focuses the PCC to achieve a more environmentally friendly church and personal lifestyle, as we care for God's creation.

The Church Building and Curtilage, and St Margaret's Graveyard

The PCC still retains responsibility for St Margaret's graveyard but the maintenance of it has now been passed to Craven District Council. We are grateful to all who have helped to maintain St John's churchyard, especially David Channing and Trevor Wheildon.

The building work on the new toilets, kitchen, and the Children and Family room has all been finally completed this year. The PCC thanks the building committee, and in particular David Channing to whom we owe an especially huge debt of gratitude for project managing the work throughout the process, and Libby Wheildon for her skills and success in obtaining the necessary grants to enable the work to happen. A full report on the building work will be provided by the Churchwardens.

The PCC is grateful to our fundraising team who continue to raise money for the maintenance of the building and the running costs of the church. Events this year have included a Ceilidh, 2 coffee mornings, afternoon cream teas, Easter Egg Bingo, a garden

party with Evensong, Rural Arts concert, and a Folk Carol Workshop. Jams continue to sell steadily from the table in church. Fundraising remains a priority at the moment, not only to repair the roof and maintain the church building, but also for the general running costs of the church. The PCC hopes that everyone will continue to financially support the church as generously as they are able.

Charitable Giving and Mission

As a registered charity St John's is no longer permitted to donate funds from its income to other charities. We have however supported The Pantry and Farm Crisis Network at Harvest, St John's Hospice at Christmas, and the Children's Society at Christingle from individual giving.

Future Plans

The PCC is working to develop its revised Mission Statement embedded in 'Loving, Welcoming, Sharing'. We will continue to support 'Fresh Expressions' of Church, particularly the 'Something Different' service, our Messy Church initiative, and serve local people through the Lunch Club, The Pantry, pastoral visiting, being a dementia friendly church, links with the schools, and local and ecumenical partnerships. We aim to become an environmentally friendly church, and to promote Fair Trade not only in Church, but in our personal consumer choices.

The PCC recognises that there is always outstanding work on the church building. We are grateful for how much we are able to do, for the financial gifts we receive, and we continue to support this through fundraising, prayer and generosity. Please continue to pray about this.

The PCC will support the Treasurer in terms of stewardship and congregational giving, and the fundraising that is needed more than ever now as the church is currently running at a monthly deficit. Each one of us has a responsibility to help and support our PCC team in this.

Volunteers

St John's church relies heavily on its many members, as the body of Christ, to perform a myriad of tasks voluntarily, often silently, supporting our worship and our mission in the community - cleaners, coffee servers, fundraisers, sacristans, singers, bell ringers, visitors, transporters, children's workers, helpers, printers, bakers, organisers, readers, intercessors, sides persons, flower arrangers, grass cutters, those who keep the church open daily - to name but a few. The PCC extends enormous thanks to everyone for their selfless giving to the life of the Parish. Though it is not possible to name everyone personally, we extend our thanks to Judith and David Johnson and Claire Oldfield for their musical contribution, and to Carolyn Woof for leading our amazing team of flower

arrangers, and for the pastoral support she gives to others. The Diocese has introduced new procedures for the safer recruitment of volunteers which the PCC will continue to implement in the coming year.

The PCC also thanks Libby Wheildon our Treasurer. Managing the church finances is a very responsible post involving long, hard and exhausting work, and she has undertaken it with dedication and commitment. Thank you so much Libby. Our thanks too, to Janet Smith who supports her in this, and to David Channing who amongst his myriad duties, is our Gift Aid Officer.

Our special thanks must go to our churchwardens David Channing and Christine Bosman, who have worked tirelessly and selflessly. They have maintained the church building and graveyards, overseen the building work, ensured our health and safety, organised rotas and arrangements for services, printed pew notices, and many other duties to keep the church worshipping and carrying out its mission. The PCC recognises it is greatly in their debt and extends huge thanks to them for all they have done and for their tireless dedication.

Ministry Team

The PCC owes a huge debt of gratitude and thanks to our Lay Licenced Minister Judith Johnson for all her work in leading services, as well as the pastoral duties and activities she undertakes. As Lay Licenced Minister she works tirelessly for St John's and the Bentham Community. Thank you, Judith.

The PCC thanks our Lay Worship Leaders Maggie Bruno and Tessa Tyndall.

Our thanks also go to the Revd Canon David Bruno who continues to assist the Revd Canon Peter Greenwood, in occasional preaching and leading services.

The PCC have valued the ministry of the Revd Harriet Johnson and the Revd Nick Trenholme when they have visited St John's. Thank you to them both.

Finally, the PCC extends our huge thanks and gratitude to the Revd Canon Peter Greenwood. He is bringing new gifts and leadership to our ministry, and it is exciting to discover the new direction and ways he is leading us and deepening our spirituality. The PCC continues to support him fully. Please pray for God's hand on him as he leads us forward. Thank you so much for everything, Peter. May God bless you richly.

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CHURCH WARDENS' REPORT FOR 2025 – David Channing/Christine Bosman

Since the last report the work on the new meeting room and improved vestry has eventually been completed. The meeting room is proving to be very useful. Besides use for children's activities during Sunday services, it has been used for a meditation group on Saturday mornings and PCC meetings. As a self-contained space it means that it can be heated using electric heaters rather than putting on the heating for the whole building. The vestry now has a bit more space and good storage cupboards. The ample loft space above the meeting room and vestry, with its good access ladder, is proving to be especially useful. There is now somewhere to store items that were being stored in corners of the building or in the homes of church members. The new altar frontal storage box in front of the old organ facade is a much needed improvement on the old one. The completion of the new heating system with a convector heater behind the choir stall by the vestry and radiators in the meeting room and vestry has improved the heating of the building this last winter.

Permission to sand and seal the existing wooden floor boards in the nave has been obtained and a contractor has been approached for a quote for the work. A generous anonymous donor has offered to pay for this work.

Memorials in the graveyard have been tested for safety and a number need attention of some kind. Families are responsible for the maintenance of a stone on a family grave. A notification and warning of this have been posted on the church notice board and in the graveyard. If nothing is done to make an unsafe memorial safe the PCC will have to decide on the action needed to be taken.

As was said in the last report, thoughts are going to the next major project which must be the re-roofing of the south aisle and repairs to the clerestory windows on the south side of the nave. Recently a panel in one of the windows had to be re-wedged to prevent further damage to it, and rain water ingress near the font end of the aisle is of concern.

The electric organ is also a matter of concern. The main electronics were replaced 12½ years ago, but now the keyboard, which started to fail well over a year ago, will have to be replaced, if possible, as spare parts for it are no longer available.

As usual the church wardens wish to thank the small band of volunteers who help maintain the building and care for the graveyard. The small band that are prepared to commit themselves to jobs is growing smaller, as is illustrated by the cleaning rota having no names on it for this year, so putting an extra burden on those who are already heavily committed.

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SAFEGUARDING OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 2025 - Tessa Tyndall

All safeguarding is currently up to date. We have completed level 3 on the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. Tessa has retrained as required as Safeguarding Lead this year, and attended a safeguarding meeting with all other safeguarding officers. This was a big help to unify everyone. Everyone agreed it is a 'big undertaking and responsibility'.

Tessa would like to thank Maggie Bruno for her ongoing support. With the new rule that DBS checks now need to be renewed every three years, Maggie has dealt with the reminders and some checks. There have been no significant safeguarding issues for us this year fortunately. Training and checks are ongoing and will be logged on the Dashboard as required. Thanks to everyone on the PCC for their continuing commitment to safeguarding.

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FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2025 – Judith Johnson

Our committee depends on a few members who give generously with their time and resources. We very much appreciate the help we receive from many of our church members which enables us help our church finances and be an outreach into our community.

We provide delicious Cream Teas on the several Bank Holiday Mondays throughout the year, bringing our community into the church.

With children in mind, we have arranged Messy Church parties in May, July, October and February and Thursday Cafe on four successive Thursday mornings in the school holidays in August. Harvest celebrations focussed on different aspects of Harvest as displayed in tableaux around the church and visited by Bentham School.

In November we had a great evening with the Batty Moss Ceilidh Band which followed a Folk Songs Carols Workshop with David Burbidge. Due to fierce competition from other local groups our Easter Egg Bingo was replaced by an Easter Bunny Drive. It was a good evening but not as well attended as previous years. For our own congregation we arranged a Jacob's Join Lunch on Palm Sunday.

Following the success of our Rural Arts sponsored concert in June 2025 we are to host the Saltburn Smugglers in April 2026. In addition, we have held two coffee mornings in the Town Hall, at Christmas and a Spring Coffee Morning with plants for sale.

Fund raising is becoming more difficult as personal and church budgets tighten. Could you consider joining our group? We are always looking for good ideas.

Many, many thanks to all who support these events.

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ENVIRONMENT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 2025 – Revd Tim Fox

This is about how we at St John's have cared and are caring for this corner of God's creation – how we meet the "5th Mark of Mission":

"To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth". This was the theme for the last of our Lent study group meetings at the Rectory. We are both part of Nature, and set apart with responsibilities to treasure God's gifts, "to hear the cry of the Planet and hear the cry of the Poor" (Pope Francis).

So, we include in our prayers in church the needs of those most affected by climate change, including farmers having to change to more sustainable practices. The monthly pew sheet usually includes subjects for our prayer. Our Rector shares in the Farm Community Network chaplaincy at the Auction Mart on Wednesdays.

A number of people look after the churchyard and car park to keep them tidy and wild life friendly. Additional help is always welcome, especially if we want to make the wild part of the churchyard –sometimes known as Glebe Field – accessible. A prayer walk is being planned for May 16th. Flowers and saplings have been planted alongside the car park fence. The wild flowers scrapbook with the late Doris Cairns' paintings is available inside the church, thanks to Mary Taylor and Tessa Tyndall. Flower displays in the church always look splendid especially at Easter. At any time they are a way of acknowledging the beauty of God's creation and his generosity. Thanks to all arrangers, and to those able to provide from their own gardens.

In the church building our listed status means restrictions exist on us putting extra insulation and double glazing, but the glass doors help! Gas and electricity are provided by Green Journey. We use mostly eco-friendly cleaning products and for refreshments we do not use disposable cups, although sometimes disposable plates. We ensure usually what can be recycled or re-used is. Some people took part in the Big Plastic Count in March, but perhaps more could have done so, including the writer of this! This is one of the problems that need government action and a change of life style nationally!

One aspect of our EcoChurch project is "Community and Global Engagement" and in many various ways church members involve themselves in what is going on in the town and area – including coffee mornings and the community hub which are for the benefit of local groups and charities, including FCN and St John's Hospice. There are continuing contacts with the Primary School and children from there occasionally visit St John's. We also support Christian Aid and Fair Trade.

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BELL RINGERS' REPORT FOR 2025 – Leila Atkinson Tower Captain.

The year started well with five new ringers joining the band following a presentation all about bellringing given by Leila Atkinson. They all made good progress learning 'the ropes'. Unfortunately, as we have very few ringers who are able to ring without supervision, Sunday service ringing has been rather sporadic.

All ringers (excluding the new ringers) remain members of both the Lancashire and Yorkshire Associations of Church Bell Ringers. We have been host to the YACR Branch Practice and have had three groups of visiting ringers. In August, St John's again hosted ringers who were attending the North West Ringing Course. Nigel and Carolina Goodship continue to visit regularly to help our band progress. Unusually, there were no weddings to ring for this year.

We were pleased to hear in February that permission had been granted to remove the clock weight casing in the ringing room. It was hoped the other work needed in the ringing room (see points below) would be done at the same time. There was a six-month deadline for the work to be carried out, which came and went with no work being done.

The issues raised in the last three annual reports are still outstanding:

- The light is in an unsatisfactory position. It has been situated at head height a couple of centimetres from the face of the person ringing bell four. The passing of arms past the light creates a strobe effect, which is unacceptable. The ringers suggest the light is moved to a central position on the ceiling.
- A fuse box has been installed on the clock weight casing next to the rope for bell one. The space here was already limited and is now even more so. Every ringer who has rung this bell since the installation has hit their elbow on it. The ringers suggest this box is moved, either to a completely new location, to floor level, or to at least eight feet above floor level.

Our practice night is Wednesday from 7pm to 8:30pm. Everyone is welcome whether complete novice or expert. Further information can be obtained from the Tower Captain (Leila Atkinson), or any member of the band.

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CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BENTHAM REPORT FOR 2025 – Judith Johnson and Mary Taylor

Chair, Judith Johnson, Secretary Marcie Potts, Treasurer Judith Johnson and clergy and representatives from all 5 churches in Bentham: Methodist, Anglican, Catholic, Society of Friends and Cornerstone.

During the year we have concentrated our resources on serving our community of Bentham both in worship and practical ways. Churches Together advertises church services of all denominations at Easter and at Christmas in flyers included in Bentham News.

The focus at Bentham Show in September was led by the Methodist Church and included games and quizzes and a huge map of Bentham with Lego houses to fix in position.

At Christmas 2025 Cornerstone lead the popular Auction Mart Nativity service for Bentham school and also Christmas crafts and dressing up for the Nativity at Christmas in the Mart.

Our monthly Afternoon Praise at Bowland View has been enjoyed by residents and friends and lead by the different denominations in rotation.

We worship together on Good Friday, Remembrance Day and Easter Sunrise.

Associated groups are the Pantry and Open the Book.

Open the Book now takes Bible Stories to three schools at Bentham, Austwick and Leck

The Pantry in Bentham is a practical example of concern for the disadvantaged in our community and has been supported with grants through N Yorkshire, Age UK, Morecambe Bay Health and donations from FairShare, the churches and community. It now helps to support in excess of 100 people per week.

Churches Together is an important opportunity to engage and support church members from different denominations and to be a visible witness of our unity in Christ.

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BOWLAND AND EWECROSS DEANERY SYNOD REPORT FOR 2025 – Revd Sue McWhinney

There were three meetings of the Deanery Synod during 2025. Meetings are always a good source of encouragement, news of interesting developments, and new ideas. We also pass on news of diocesan-wide events such as the Ripon Cathedral Rural Ministry Forum, and events taking place in our deanery churches.

Deanery Synod on 18th February at Settle Parish Church: Stephen Hogg presented an update on our hopes to appoint a Deanery Administrator for 8 hours a week (funded by the Rural Change Fund). Revd Sue McWhinney and Stephen Hogg were elected for a 3 year term as Deanery reps on the Ripon Area Mission & Pastoral Committee, and news of the Lent Series was shared.

Deanery Synod on 14th May at Langcliffe: Revd Nick Trenholme gave a presentation on Compass, a new group work tool designed to help our churches identify attainable priorities in mission. He has been trained in facilitation of Compass and is happy to come out and meet with PCC's. We also shared good news stories from around the Deanery, including an enthusiastic report of learning on the Introduction to Theology course at the lay training hub at Gargrave.

Deanery Synod on Wednesday 16th September at Ingleton: feedback was given on 'Confidence in Mission' conversations with Bishop Anna, Archdeacon James, and members of the Barnabas Team following interviews by Ian Greenhalgh and Nick Trenholme with parish clergy. Common themes emerged: the burden of administration, shortage of volunteers, older congregations less able to take on responsibilities, and the expertise required for complex building projects. However there were lots of encouragements to report eg the variety of worship on offer, and new people coming to church through mid-week activities and pastoral offices. Felicity the newly appointed Deanery Administrator was introduced.

The 2025 Deanery Lent Course: 'Peace is a Doing Word' in collaboration with local Quakers and others went really well, was well attended, and was co-ordinated as always by Revd John Davies.

Throughout the year we have looked for ways to share resources and work together as a Deanery. It has been agreed that PCC members and others are welcome to attend Synod meetings if they are interested in the subject (only elected Deanery Synod members can vote). The Deanery has a small fund for the purposes of supporting mission projects. If any local churches would like to apply for mission funding, please write to Sue McWhinney, Deanery Secretary.

We are thankful for the hard work of our Area Dean (Canon Ian Greenhalgh), Lay Chair (Stephen Hogg until September 2025), Revd John Davies who has co-ordinated the Lent Courses, and other members of the Deanery Standing Committee who have organised events and Synod meetings, together with members of the churches hosting meetings.

Deanery Standing Committee members:

Canon Ian Greenhalgh, Area Dean

Stephen Hogg (Settle, and member of General Synod), Lay Chair

Sue McWhinney, Deanery Secretary

Richard Pattinson, Deanery Treasurer

Sue Mann (Clapham with Keasden), Kate Croll (Langcliffe), and Marilynne Prayle (Stainforth) Revd's John Davies, Stephen Dawson, and Nick Trenholme.

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 CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	Charity Name: The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St John the Baptist Bentham			No (if any) 1210136 1210136		CC16a
	Receipts and payments accounts					
	For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date		
		1st January 2025		31st December 2025		
Section A Receipts and payments						
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year	
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	
A1 Receipts						
PGS Income	14,912	-	-	14,912	14,206	
Tax Efficient Planned Giving	7,557	-	-	7,557	8,721	
Non-taxable planned giving	1,119	-	-	1,119	1,000	
Cash Collections	5,560	-	-	5,560	5,055	
Gift Aid Recovered excluding PGS	3,310	-	-	3,310	8,816	
Charity Collections		1,241	-	1,241	467	
Tax Recovered from PGS	3,405	-	-	3,405	3,551	
Donations (taxable) General	362	-	-	362	184	
Donations (non-taxable) General	596	-	-	596	359	
Donations Restricted (taxable)			-		850	
Donations Restricted (non-taxable)		153	-	153	319	
Fundraising General	4,859	-	-	4,859	1,937	
Fundraising Restricted	-		-		2,858	
Dividends and interest from restricted funds		3,127	-	3,127	4,272	
PCC Fees-Weddings/Funerals	3,515	-	-	3,515	3,010	
Legacy		-	-		5,000	
VAT recovered		-	-		2,200	
Grants		250	-	250	-	
Income transfers within Team	172	-	-	172	86	
Other receipts	37		-	37	748	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	45,404	4,771	-	50,175	63,639	
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	
Total receipts	45,404	4,771	-	50,175	63,639	
A3 Payments						
Fundraising Costs	1,492		-	1,492	208	
Donations to charities-Congregation		1,188	-	1,188	865	
Donations to charities-from reserves		40	-	40	15	
Diocesan Share	36,039	-	-	36,039	27,918	
Clergy Expenses	28	-	-	28	419	
Organist Fees		-	-		175	
Insurance	2,756	-	-	2,756	2,781	
Minor repairs and routine maintenance	3,225	-	-	3,225	2,674	
Provision of services	1,803	250	-	2,053	1,500	
Churchyard Maintenance/wages	1,524	662	-	2,186	1,009	
Ministry	31	-	-	31	392	
Mission	240	-	-	240	283	
Pastoral Care	425	-	-	425	136	
Utilities-gas/electricity/water	4,138	-	-	4,138	4,102	
Church Admin	265	-	-	265	771	
Accountancy	780	-	-	780	-	
Major Capital Expenditure-new-build		61,326	-	61,326	9,700	
Major repair work	-	-	-	-	-	
Leeds Diocese Fees	1	-	-	1	1	
Miscellaneous		-	-		196	
Sub total	52,747	63,466	-	116,213	53,145	
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)						
Sub total						
Total payments	52,747	63,466		116,213	53,145	
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 7,343	- 58,695		- 66,038	10,494	
A5 Transfers between funds	11,592	- 11,592		-	-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	22,351	70,964		93,315	82,821	

Cash funds this year end	26,600	677		27,277	93,315

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period				
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander Main Account for Receipts and Payments	14,830	358	-
	CCLA-General A/C		319	-
	CCLA -CB..697/001 Extension Fund	11,770		
		-		-
	Total cash funds	26,600	677	-
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	VAT reclaim on Capital Expenditure Jan2026	8,927	-	-
	Gift Aid Reclaim for 2025/2026		-	-
	PGS Gift Aid received 12/1/26	323	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets				
	CCLA -CB....696/001 Shares-Fabric and Dilapidations			2,175
	CCLA-CO..258/001 THOMAS NOWELL for Churchyard Maintenance			19,940
	CCLA-90001T TA HORNER for Churchyard Maintenance			2,608
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Colin Woof Gardening Services	Unrestricted	198	31.12.25
	Flowerfields June to December	Unrestricted	378	31.12.25
	The Children's Society (Christingle)	Restricted	185	31.12.25
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name		Date of approval



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St John the Baptist Bentham

On accounts for the year
ended

December 31st 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1210136

Set out on pages

1-3

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended

Responsibilities and basis of
report

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

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

Independent examiner's
statement

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

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

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

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

Signed:

M. Fitzsimmons

Date:

14.4.2026

Name:

MICHAEL CHARLES FITZSIMMONS

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

AZIB

Address:

8 GREENFOOT LANE, LOW BENTHAM
LANCASTER LA2 7HB