



ST MARY THE VIRGIN, SALEHURST

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

No Incumbent – St Mary’s was in “suspension”

ALM: Helen Winning

Safeguarding Officer: Gail Augarde

PCC

Churchwardens: Stuart Thompson (Deanery Synod Rep) and Gail Augarde (Safeguarding Officer)

Deputy Wardens: none

Treasurer: Tony Davies

Secretary: Linda Thompson (Deanery Synod Rep and Electoral Roll Officer)

Susan Anderson, Evelyn Goodsell, Gary Randall, Nigel Thonger

Co-opted: Helen Winning (ALM)

Our aims and purposes as a charity:

The Sequestrator /Churchwardens and the PCC are responsible for:

- The promotion of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the Parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic, and ecumenical.
- To deepen our understanding of our faith thereby knowing Jesus better and being better equipped to make Him better known.
- To provide practical, emotional, and spiritual support and care for all people in the parish wherever such care is needed.

- To provide support to our Church of England Primary School

How we planned to achieve our charitable objectives:

When planning our activities, we have, as Wardens and the PCC been mindful of our responsibilities towards those who live in our Parish, in particular in regard to our responsibilities for the advancement of religion. We have complied with our duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising our duty to have regard to the House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We have completed Simple Quality Protects, all PCC members DBS checks are up to date, and all PCC members have undertaken the Diocesan basic level Safeguarding Training. The Churchwardens, ALM and safeguarding officer have attained advanced level Safeguarding Training.

Objectives and Activities planned in order to achieve our aims:

- Enabling as many people as possible to attend our Services and become a part of our worshipping fellowship.
- Providing additional resources to help people to pray and worship
- Teaching, baptising, and nurturing new and existing believers.
- Offering a variety of styles of Worship in order to include as many people as possible.
- Putting faith into practice through prayer, scripture, music, sacrament and serving others.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish, where possible without an incumbent.
- Aiding those in need in the parish.
- Giving to other charitable organisations.
- Reaching out to the unchurched through events such as the Christmas Fair and seasonal Services such as Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas, and Easter.
- Providing Foundation Governors, leading Collective Worship, supporting the Headteachers and Staff and welcoming the school into the church for their Seasonal and Leavers Services.
- Establishing and maintaining a Children's Library in the church.
- Maintaining the fabric of the church building as a historic centre and seeking to re-establish it as a focus of life in the villages

What we achieved in the last year:

Worship

Like most churches, our regular congregation has never fully recovered to pre-covid numbers. We had an average weekly congregation of around 35 during 2025, with numbers steadily growing, particularly for the family service on first Sundays.

Church attendance figures for key services April 2025-April 2026:

Christingle 22nd December 168 adults 56 children

Christmas day 2024 131 adults 15 children (71 communicants)

Easter Day 2025 90 adults 22 children (70 communicants)

First Sunday Family Communion/Music Makers average = 36 adults 16 children

Salehurst School – end of term service in December 2025 = 140 adults 160 children

The usual summer and Easter end of term services were not held in St Mary's this year due to scaffolding/works.

MHV School Carol Service – Sadly, the new Headmaster of Marlborough House Vinehall School decided at the last minute to move their carol service to Battle because he was concerned that, with our building works, they wouldn't fit in all the parents and children at St Mary's.

Funerals, including memorial services and burial of ashes:

2025 = 13 2026 up to APCM = 2

Baptisms: 2025 = 8 2026 1 infant + 2 adults 7th June, 1 infant 12th June

Weddings: 2025 = 4 2026 = 2 - 1 in July and 1 in August

As last year, the PCC has worked very hard to maintain all services despite not having an incumbent. The only service we were unable to cover was Midnight Mass. Otherwise, there was a full calendar of Christmas, Holy Week and Easter Services.

We are so grateful to the following ministers who have so kindly continued to cover our services enabling us to keep all those services going. Huge thanks to the Reverends Ann-Marie Crosse, Peter Doodes, Malcolm Elwis, Liz France, Kevin Mephram, Anne Pollington, and Robin Tree who along with our ALM Helen Winning have led, and continue to lead, Communion and Matins services at St Mary's. In addition, we are so grateful to this team for taking on baptisms, funerals, cremations, burials, and weddings.

The Diocese also supported us with visiting senior Clergy including Bishop Martin of Chichester, Bishop Will of Lewes (x2) including a memorable Christmas Day address

with a snow machine triggered remotely as he processed out at the end of the service.

The Pattern of our monthly worship:

1st Sunday 11 am informal Family Communion with Music Makers – Pat and Pete Beament have continued this very successful format, starting at 10.15 teaching children to accompany, with percussion instruments, some of the songs for the service that follows. Adults and older children play piano, violin, guitar, and recorder to accompany the songs with a small informal choir, and children are encouraged to go to the front and play percussion instruments. Numbers for this really joyful service have been consistently growing - regularly 40+. Jane Ollis mostly gives the Talk, captivating the children (and adults alike). The two retired vicars who have led these services have both repeatedly said they think this is unique and brilliant format!

2nd Sunday 11am Sung Eucharist, traditional language, sung worship led by organ and choir.

9 am Prayer book Communion

3rd Sunday 11 am Matins, traditional language, sung worship led by organ and choir.

9 am Prayer book Communion

4th Sunday 11 am Sung Eucharist, traditional language, sung worship led by organ and choir.

5th Sunday 11 am Matins, traditional language sung worship led by organ and choir

General

Friends Of St Marys the Virgin Report

The aim of the Friends is to contribute towards the maintenance of the church building including fixtures and fabric by means of fund-raising events and membership fees.

At present we have seven committee members, holding meetings throughout the year to discuss the business of the friends. We are always looking for new members to join the committee to increase our expertise and diversity.

Since my last report we have had both annual members and life members join as Friends. We aim to send out two newsletters each year to keep the Friends informed of fundraising events.

The process of registering with the Charity Commission continues albeit at a slow pace.

Since the last Meeting of the PCC the Friends have held a very successful cheese and wine quiz evening. They have assisted with the open day and art exhibition and Christmas Tree and Christmas Fair events held in the church.

Following the well-attended fundraising event last summer and the increase in membership it has allowed the Friends to donate £6,000 towards the restoration of the church and urgent repairs.

Along with Robertsbridge churches they had a stall at the highly successful Robertsbridge 800 event. We continue to assist the PCC where possible with their fundraising efforts and use any opportunity to raise the profile of the Friends.

JT Hopwood, Chair

ALM

Helen Winning was commissioned as ALM at Chichester Cathedral in May 2025 and has regularly led Matins services in St Mary's. She has also led various non-communion seasonal services at St Mary's, including Light in the Darkness, Christingle and Good Friday, and has also led several services of Matins, when she has also preached.

During this year with no incumbent, Helen has continued to give pastoral support, visiting sick and housebound parishioners and offering Holy Communion at home. She also works as an ALM for Holy Trinity, Hurst Green.

FUNDRAISING:

We held several social and fundraising starting with a Spring Fair and plant sale in the Village Hall (to replace the Christmas Market cancelled the December before) which was very successful. St Mary's shared tables with FOSM and Robertsbridge Community Church at the Robertsbridge 800 in July, and FOSM organised a very successful wine tasting fundraiser in August. In September, FOSM and the PCC jointly hosted an Open Day in the Church with an Art Show and sale, several stalls, the ever popular tea and cake (café style in the open area at the back), and the Teddy Zip wire whizzing teddies and cuddlies down from the tower. Fundraising for 2025 finished on a high with another very successful Christmas Tree Festival, drawing in village groups, businesses and organisations, alongside a slimmed down Christmas Fair attended by Father Christmas and the Christmas Fairy! Fundraising events planned for 2026 include a joint RAP/St Mary's Opera concert on the 12th June, Spring Plant Fair, Art Show and sale and cream teas on Saturday 20th June and year 3 Christmas Tree Festival with Christmas Fair. All in St Mary's, now with WC's, heating and drainage! The 100 Club continues to be popular, raising much needed regular income for the Church and providing windfalls for the three lucky winners drawn on the first Sunday of every month.

Mission and Prayer

Nigel Thonger, our Prayer Leader, continues to lead prayer for our church and villages on 1st Tuesdays at 1pm in the Church and 3rd Thursdays at 6pm on Zoom. Nigel shares the prayer lists for each meeting by email to those who have expressed an interest, and he publishes them on St Mary's website, which he regularly updates.

There are currently two weddings booked for 2026 – the first on 11th July. And one booked for 2027.

Electoral Roll:

The Electoral Roll was completely revised last year. There were 145 on the Roll at the 2025 APCM. Since then, several have sadly passed away, some have moved away, and 3 new people have joined. The revised 2026 ER stands at 138,

Plans for the future:

The major re-ordering project for St Mary's is well underway (see Re-Ordering and Fabric Officer's Reports attached for more detail). The stunning space created at the back of the church, by the removal of some pews and installation of an oak floor, has already proved it's worth, hosting two funeral wakes as well as the Christmas Tree launch and convivial gatherings for coffee and biscuits following the family services. A Quinquennial will take place later this year.

At the end of last year, a connection was made to mains sewerage enabling W.Cs to be installed during the first quarter of 2026. Similarly an upgrade to 3 phase power and 2 radiant heaters over the rear space will be connected and commissioned.

Moving from Suspension to Interregnum

During late summer last year, Archdeacon Martin Lloyd asked us to prepare a Parish Profile at short notice (available by email on request from

stmarysalehurst@outlook.com), with a view to sharing it with a potential candidate for our vacancy. The Church Wardens were instructed to keep the entire process confidential.

At the same time, it was made clear that we needed to increase our Parish Share if we were to be successful in preserving our status with a full-time stipendiary priest, for the United Benefice with Holy Trinity Hurst Green.

To raise our contribution and communicate the need for regular financial support to the wider community, a letter was hand delivered, in early September, to 1,200 households in Salehurst and Robertsbridge. Happily, this produced a positive response, for which the Trustees and the Diocese are very grateful.

In early October the “applicant” visited the Parish and was interviewed by a panel consisting of senior clergy, Church Wardens Stuart Thompson and Alan Digman, together with Patricia Barnes, who kindly stepped in for CW Gail Augarde, who was away.

Having successfully completed the interview process, and accepted the offer to serve as Priest-in-Charge of St Mary’s, Salehurst, and Holy Trinity, Hurst Green, the Reverend Hugh Reid was formally appointed by the Diocese on 30 January 2026. Rev Hugh was licensed and inducted by the Bishop of Lewes and Archdeacon of Hastings on Monday 18th May. Rev Hugh’s wife, Francesca, was licensed the following day as Rector of Brede, Beckley, Peasemarsch and Udimore. Hugh and Francesca are living in the Vicarage in Brede, and Rev Hugh has a daytime base in Robertsbridge. The Diocese will be renting out the Vicarage in Glenleigh Walk – the PCC has no further responsibilities for the Vicarage.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN SALEHURST

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2025

For The Year Ended 31st December 2025

ST MARY THE VIRGIN SALEHURST

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2025 - INDEX

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ST MARY'S SALEHURST 2025 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

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INCOME		2025	2024
		£	£
GIVING, DONATIONS AND LEGACIES			
GIVING			
Parish Giving Scheme		20,692.89	20,460.55
Standing orders		3,421.00	2,330.00
Cash collections:			
St Mary's		8,062.53	6,191.37
CMR			1,130.90
		32,176.42	30,112.82
GIFT AID RECOVERABLE			
Planned Giving Scheme		5,266.13	5,085.46
Other		17,288.97	6,395.00
		22,555.10	11,480.46
DONATIONS		85,559.82	27,535.42
LEGACIES		2,000.00	10,285.63
		142,291.34	79,414.33
FUND RAISING		9,210.48	7,919.68
TRADING ACTIVITIES			
Fees for weddings and funerals		3,697.60	3,093.80
Parish Magazine		3,682.32	
INVESTMENT INCOME		5,306.78	3,962.17
SUNDRY INCOME		761.51	
TOTAL INCOME		164,950.03	94,389.98

ST MARY'S SALEHURST 2025 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

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EXPENDITURE		2025	2024
	£	£	£
CLERICAL EXPENSES			
DIOCESAN CONTRIBUTION			
Parish share	33,600.00		
less: Hurst Green contribution	<u>(3,600.00)</u>		
		30,000.00	34,331.28
CLERGY LIVING EXPENSES			
Council tax & water rates	3,203.20		
Visiting clergy fees	<u>325.55</u>		
	3,528.75		
less: Hurst Green contribution	<u>(1,100.00)</u>		
		2,428.75	3,286.00
CHURCH EXPENSES			
CHURCH EXPENSES			
Insurance	4,546.85		
Electricity	1,902.19		
Water & other	<u>355.04</u>		
		6,804.08	6,545.06
CHURCH REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE			
Fabric	7,440.20		
Other	<u>1,824.00</u>		
		9,264.20	12,693.42
CHURCH MISSION ROOM EXPENSES			
		419.33	1,437.98
ST MARY'S REORDERING			
		63,082.44	22,133.46
CHURCH LIFE			
OUTREACH			
		(201.44)	1,221.52
SERVICE EXPENSES			
		753.04	1,393.96
CHOIR & ORGAN			
		1,775.00	1,479.00
OTHER			
DONATIONS			
		1,162.50	300.00
		<u>115,637.90</u>	<u>84,821.68</u>

ST MARY'S SALEHURST 2025 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

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BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
ASSETS HELD BY PCC		
BANK ACCOUNTS		
CURRENT ACCOUNTS	71,607.65	26,981.53
DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS	<u>65,090.90</u>	<u>65,037.54</u>
	136,698.55	92,019.07
PETTY CASH	58.65	260.26
DEBTORS	<u>20,391.25</u>	<u>7,487.91</u>
	157,148.45	99,767.24
LESS LIABILITIES		
CREDITORS	<u>39,430.29</u>	<u>38,815.38</u>
	<u>117,718.16</u>	<u>60,951.86</u>
ASSETS HELD BY DIOCESE		
BATES TRUST	37,637.99	36,738.74
CHANCEL TRUST	<u>2,860.63</u>	<u>2,733.22</u>
	40,498.62	39,471.96
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>158,216.78</u>	<u>100,423.82</u>
REPRESENTING		
PCC FUNDS		
GENERAL FUND	15,000.00	27,361.33
PROJECT FUNDS	<u>102,718.16</u>	<u>33,590.53</u>
	117,718.16	60,951.86
DIOCESE FUNDS	40,498.62	39,471.96
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>158,216.78</u>	<u>100,423.82</u>

ST MARY'S SALEHURST 2025 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS BY CLASS -
 PARISH SHARE
 GENERAL EXPENSES
 PROJECT FUNDS

		TOTAL	PARISH SHARE	GENERAL EXPENSES	PROJECT FUNDS	
		£	£	£	£	
INCOME	GIVING	32,176.42	32,176.42			
	GIFT AID	5,266.13	5,266.13			
	PGS	17,288.97	2,585.88	1,291.84	12,500.00	REORDERING
	ANNUAL CLAIM				880.00	WC FUND
					31.25	CHOIR
	DONATIONS	85,559.82		6,210.82	75,215.00	REORDERING
					4,009.00	WC FUND
					125.00	CHOIR
	LEGACIES	2,000.00		2,000.00		
	FUND RAISING	9,210.48		9,210.48		
	FEES	3,697.60		3,697.60		
	INVESTMENT INCOME	5,306.78		5,306.78		
	TRADING INCOME	3,682.32		3,682.32		
	SUNDRY	761.51		761.51		
		<u>164,950.03</u>	<u>40,028.43</u>	<u>32,161.35</u>	<u>92,760.25</u>	
EXPENDITURE						
	PARISH SHARE	30,000.00	30,000.00			
	CLERGY LIVING EXPENSES	2,428.75	2,428.75			
	CHURCH OVERHEADS	6,804.08		6,804.08		
	REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	9,264.20		9,264.20		
	ST MARY'S REORDERING	63,082.44			63,082.44	REORDERING
	CMR EXPENSES	419.33		419.33		
	OUTREACH	(201.44)		(201.44)		
	SERVICE EXPENSES	753.04		753.04		
	CHOIR & ORGAN	1,775.00		1,775.00		
	DONATIONS	1,312.50		1,312.50		
		<u>115,637.90</u>	<u>32,428.75</u>	<u>20,126.71</u>	<u>63,082.44</u>	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		49,312.13	7,599.68	12,034.64	29,677.81	

SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS IN THE YEAR
(INCORPORATING YEAR END APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFERS)

	b/f 1.1.25 £	2025 INCOME £	2025 EXPENDITURE £	APPROPRIATIONS/ TRANSFERS £	c/f 31.12.25 £
PROJECT FUNDS					
GRAVEYARD RENOVATION FUND	21,036.00				21,036.00
SUNDAY CLUB	1,360.00				1,360.00
FLOWER FUND	886.74	14.50			901.24
ALPHA FUND	300.17				300.17
ORGAN FUND	2,177.72				2,177.72
REORDERING FUND	4,047.07	92,604.00	(63,082.44)	43,052.82	76,621.45
DIOCESE BATES INCOME	1,298.22			(1,298.22)	-
DIOCESE CHANCEL INCOME	-				-
CHOIR FUND	165.33	156.25			321.58
GENERAL EXPENSES RESERVE	2,319.28			(2,319.28)	-
TOTAL OF PCC PROJECT FUNDS	33,590.53	92,774.75	(63,082.44)	39,435.32	102,718.16
GENERAL FUND	27,361.33	79,629.45	(52,555.46)	(39,435.32)	15,000.00
TOTAL FUNDS	60,951.86	172,404.20	(115,637.90)	-	117,718.16

SUMMARY OF INVESTMENTS HELD WITH THE DIOCESE AND ANNUAL CHANGE IN VALUE

	Type	A/C Number	No of units	Market value	Market value	Appreciation/ -Depreciation
				31.12.2025	31.12.2024	2025
				£	£	£
BATES TRUST	Fixed interest fund	110001352F	24,637.03	37,637.99	36,738.74	899.25
CHANCEL TRUST	Investment fund (income)	110001472S	456	withdrawn by DBF February 2020		
	Fixed interest fund	110001029F	57.48	withdrawn by DBF February 2020		
	Undistributed income			2,860.63	2,733.22	127.41
				40,498.62	39,471.96	1,026.66

The value of the investments in the Chancel Fund withdrawn in 2020 was £8,835.29 on 31.12.19, £10,232.08 on 31.12.25.

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

1.ACCOUNTING BASIS

The accounts are prepared on an accruals, not a cash, basis.

2. PARISH SHARE

In 2025 the contribution of St Mary's Salehurst to Parish Share was £30,000.

From 1st January 2026 the contribution was increased to £40,000 pa, and from 18th May, the date of Licensing of Dr Hugh Reid, will be increased to £50,000 pa. Monthly payments of contribution will be adjusted accordingly.

Any contributions received from Holy Trinity Hurst Green from 1st January 2026 will be paid in addition to the above amounts.

In recent years St Mary's Salehurst has paid a supplementary contribution to Parish Share in the light of actual income from Giving in the year. This practice will be discontinued.

3. RESTRICTED FUNDS

As required, the PCC restricts withdrawals from Restricted Funds to the purposes specified in each case. Sums added to and charged to Restricted Funds, referred to in these Accounts as Project Funds, are shown on page 6 of the Accounts.

4. GENERAL RESERVES

In recent years the PCC of St Mary's Salehurst has endeavoured to maintain a consistent balance on General Reserves at each year end. With effect from the year ending 31st December 2025 this balance has been reduced from £27,361.33 to £15,000.00

5. ARCHDEACON'S LOAN

An Archdeacon's Loan of £18,500 was raised in 2022 to enable purchase of heated pew cushions in the church. No interest is payable on the Loan, and the agreed terms specify that it will be repaid out of the share of the proceeds of the sale of the Mission Room site accruing to St Mary's when the sale is effected.

6. THE VILLAGER

With effect from 1st January 2025 the transactions of the Villager, the parish magazine, have been incorporated in the accounts of St Mary's Salehurst, and the general reserves of the Villager at 1st January 2025 - £7439.67 - were added to those of St Mary's on that date.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN SALEHURST IN THE DIOCESE OF
CHICHESTER

On accounts for the year
ended

31/12/2025

Charity no
(if any)

1212642

Set out on pages

1-8

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2025.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 all 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 in connection with the examination (~~other than that
disclosed below~~*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material
respect:

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

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

Signed:

Date:

01/06/2026

Name:

Richard Davies

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

None held.

Address:

67 High Street

Robertsbridge
TN32 5AN

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.