



The Parochial Church Council of Sandon with Burston Trustees'
Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2025
Registered Charity 121838

Objectives and Activities

The Parochial Church Council of Sandon with Burston (the PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also spiritually responsible for the maintenance of the church.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer, scripture, music and sacrament. Also, through nonsacramental activities of hospitality and fellowship we aim to reach non-church members of the community.

Public Benefit

The trustees of the PCC are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit and have had regard to it in their administration of the Charity. The trustees believe that, by promoting the work of the Church of England in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sandon with Burston it helps to promote the whole mission of the Church (pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical) more effectively, within the Ecclesiastical Parish, and that in doing so it provides a benefit to the public by:

- Providing facilities for public worship, pastoral care and spiritual, moral and intellectual development, both for its members and for anyone who wishes to benefit from what the Church offers; and
- Promoting Christian values and service by members of the Church in and to their communities, to the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.

Clergy

The Parish and wider Mid Trent Team of Churches have been in vacancy again throughout 2025. Having failed to secure any interest in the post of Priest in Charge which had been advertised three times in 2024, the Team Council, made up of representatives of each Parish, in conjunction with the Archdeacon, decided to use 2025 as a period of reflection. The Archdeacon supported a Team Mission and Vision Day held in August facilitated by the former Chief Executive of the Diocese. The outcome was four areas of focus for our future namely:

Deepening our individual and team discipleship/ confident leadership

Outreach and evangelism

Knowing and responding to our communities

Strengthening the Benefice

The Team Council has subsequently been working on a completely new style of profile focusing less on the number of churches which is seen as a barrier and much more on our culture and our ambitions in these four areas. At the year end, this work was well in hand with a view to advertising in the first quarter of the new year.

Meanwhile, we continue to be most fortunate to have the ongoing dedication and commitment of our non-stipendiary Associate Minister, the Rev'd Vivienne Starkie, supported by our lay Reader Andy Cooper, a number of clergy, either retired or from nearby parishes, and lay members of our congregations, willing to take services.

The Team Council continues to pay a part-time Treasurer which works well, Rev'd Vivienne and Andy Cooper plan the rotas, and three members of the Team Council have responsibility for all administrative functions associated with Funerals, Baptisms and Weddings.

National Lottery Heritage Fund Project

In 2024 we reported on the successful application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a grant to conserve rare heritage features in Sandon Church, including stained glass windows, a Royal Coat of Arms, tombs, wall paintings and monuments. The main grant of £558,268 was awarded in 2024 but a further grant of £121,391 was awarded in September 2025 to cover additional works. The grant includes an element for activities to engage a wider audience in the heritage of our Grade 1 listed building.

Work eventually started in November. Conservators have been onsite since then working on the tombs, wall paintings and monuments in the Chancel. Work has taken place outside to improve drainage.

Access to the church has been limited. The Chancel has been boarded up and out of bounds since work commenced. We have been able to host services according to our rota by using the Lady Chapel Altar and managing movement around the building, but we have not been able to hold any other events or activities. No untoward incidents have been noted.

Church Services

A more settled rota has been in place in 2025. The first Sunday of the month Communion takes place at Sandon, on the second Sunday one Communion service is held across the team, Burston hosts the Communion Service on the third Sunday and the congregation returns to Sandon on the fourth Sunday for Matins. Where a month has a fifth Sunday a Team service on a special theme is held, one example in 2025 was a Pet Service. We are grateful to all those who have led services in the Parish and the wider Mid Trent Team.

We are pleased to report that we held nine weddings at Sandon in 2025 (Burston is not licensed for weddings). Whilst administration is led by a Team Council member, our Parish wedding coordinator provides essential and much-appreciated practical help and support to wedding couples and to clergy.

There were six baptisms in 2025, three adults and three infants. There were seven funerals/services of Thanksgiving in 2025, three burials and two interments of cremated remains. The Team held services throughout Holy Week culminating in most churches hosting an Easter Day service. Ours at Sandon was a well-attended joyful occasion with Easter eggs offered to young and old alike. Our annual Harvest service attracted 33 people. Donations of produce went to the House of Bread Charity, and the collection was sent to RABI (see below).

The format for our Remembrance Service was the same as in 2024. The Police were unable to close the roads in the village for the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial, so a local volunteer erected a temporary Remembrance display outside church overlooking the Sandon Estate. Inside, a member of

our congregation affixed an enormous card poppy to the wooden partition installed in front of the Chancel. The service in church afterwards, led by our former Interim Team Rector the Rev'd Dr Lesley Bentley and attended by 63 people was well-received. We anticipate this being the format for years to come.

All Saints' was beautifully decorated for Christmas, albeit on a smaller scale than usual due to the Heritage works. Our lay-led Carol service attendance was 81, a similar attendance to the previous year. We also held a Carol Service for children from the local day nursery who were accompanied by their parents and nursery staff. Our popular Sandon Christingle service was retained in its usual slot on Christmas Eve. The addition of Rev'd Duncan's large inflatable and illuminated nativity scene not only helped to conceal the wooden partition in front of the Chancel, but it delighted the children. Attendance was 142 with a good mix of children and adults. We were pleased to see the return of Rev'd Duncan Leake to lead our Midnight Communion, where he delivered his Christmas message as he played gentle music on his keyboard. The congregation numbered 44, a large increase on last year.

We continue to benefit from having two regular organists at Sandon and one at Burston who greatly enhance our worship. Between them they cover all weddings and funerals as well.

Charitable Giving

We have maintained our usual practice of making charitable donations from church funds and collecting for charities at special services. This year we made donations of £200 to each of the following:

The Myanmar Earthquake Appeal
The Samaritans
Salt Church Roof Appeal

We also donated £100 to the MOD Chaplaincy to support their Mission efforts with families.

In addition, specific collections were held and remitted to the Royal British Legion, Dougie Mac Charity (Donna Louise Hospice for children), The National Children's Home, Oak Tree Farm Rural Project for Adults with a Learning Disability, and RABI, the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

In conjunction with other churches in the Mid Trent Team, we continued our practice of regular collections of donations of food, toiletries and clothing for House of Bread, a Stafford based Christian Charity supporting homeless and vulnerable people.

Other Activities

The Associate Minister ran a Lent and an Advent course across the Team. Those members who attended from Sandon with Burston benefitted from her work.

Members of our congregation and friends enjoyed a two-course meal for Harvest Supper followed by an entertaining quiz.

On Sunday 21 September 2025 All Saints' held its customary National Heritage Open Day when we welcomed 136 adults and 14 children an increase on 2024 numbers. Many guests took a guided tour of the interior of the church and the churchyard; enjoyed chiming a bell and taking refreshments. This year we were supported by the Heritage Project Activities Coordinators who offered crafts to children in our new gazebo purchased with Heritage funding. Members of our Heritage Project History group displayed their research and were on hand to talk to visitors.

Children and staff from the local day nursery have visited the church at Easter, Harvest time and Christmas learning about our festivals and participating in activities.

Under our Heritage Project up until November when works started we continued to be open on Tuesday mornings with a steady flow of visitors, on Monday evenings which are more popular in summertime, and we continued to trial Sunday afternoon opening but with limited success. Before the works started, we were able to offer visits to 5 groups including guided tours of the heritage of the church, bellringing history and an opportunity to chime the bells and/or guided tours of the graveyard. We had hoped to continue hosting school visits but due to the need to plan and the uncertainty of timing for the heritage works this did not materialise.

We have continued to distribute information regularly to over 50 people on the Parish 'Who's Who' contact list. The website content on A Church Near You continues to be efficiently updated by the dedicated support of a Team Council member. The number of enquiries through the 'contact us' facility has increased again on previous years. Our own website (www.sandonallsaints.com) set up as part of the Heritage project is now constantly updated with service and event information as well as the Heritage content and a News blog. Interested parties can now contact us directly through the website to order tickets for events.

The PCC is grateful to the Stafford Arts Society which has undertaken a project to produce a bound book of the contents of All Saints Church. Two copies have been made for use by groups and individuals interested in the record of historical artefacts.

The COMPASS benefice/community magazine goes from strength to strength. Its attractive layout and interesting content is very much applauded by congregations and the community, which in turn has encouraged more advertisers thereby supporting the production costs.

Fundraising

2025 was a busy year for the Fundraising Group who arranged and hosted a Winter Walk, Bluebell Walk, and a talk about the history of chimney sweeps in Staffordshire and another on local railways. They also held two musical events. Songs at Suppertime when a meal was accompanied by a local choral group and a concert at Sandon Hall which showcased the musical expertise of members of the Birmingham Conservatoire. All events were extremely popular and contributed £4,888 net of costs to funds. Book sales contributed a further £460. This group makes a significant contribution each year to the PCC funds.

Bell ringing

The Church has an enthusiastic band of 16 ringers who practise every Monday evening. They regularly ring for services and host ringers from other Towers. They have rung for all our weddings this year and in September they rang to celebrate the 400th anniversary of number 5 bell. Visitors to the church and first-time attenders at services much appreciate the opportunity to ascend to the bell tower and chime a bell. None of this could happen without the time and commitment of both our Bell Captain and Tower Captain

Active involvement of volunteers

As a Parish we continue to benefit from the many volunteers who so willingly give of their time to support our churches. Over 40 people help by supporting services, serving on the PCC and committees, maintaining and cleaning both church buildings and grounds, planning and helping at events, catering, ringing bells, communications, and more recently supporting the Heritage Fund project, including undertaking history research and taking tours. Most undertake several duties. Without this level of support, we simply could not function. The PCC and the Churchwardens are most grateful to all those who have supported the work of the Churches.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty to have regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy was reviewed by the PCC. Every meeting of the PCC and the Benefice Team Council includes Safeguarding on the agenda. We are up to date with DBS checks of all PCC members. More training has taken place this year, including both Wardens undertaking the Leadership training required because of being in interregnum.

Our Safeguarding work has further improved this year. Led by our Parish Safeguarding Coordinator, we have progressed to level 3 on the Church of England Safeguarding Dashboard. This enables us to keep abreast of compliance on this wide-ranging agenda. The Dashboard produces an Action Plan which now forms part of the regular reporting to the PCC.

Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC is a Body Corporate established by the Church of England. In the past we have been exempt from registration with the Charity Commission but the turnover in funds associated with the Heritage grant reached the threshold for full registration. We are indebted to our Treasurer for processing our application and overseeing the requirements of our new status.

The PCC is governed by the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended that came into effect on 2nd January 1957, and the Church Representation Rules (contained in Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended).

The Mid Trent Benefice has a Team Council made up of representatives of each Parish, in the case of Sandon with Burston the Churchwardens fulfil this role. Under a Rule 20 Scheme the Team Council has some delegated powers.

The method of appointment of the PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The PCC has adopted a policy of a 3-year rotating term of office of members. The Council chaired by the Rector, when one is in post, comprises the Churchwardens, and 9 members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, by those on the Electoral Roll. The Secretary and Treasurer are elected members of the PCC and therefore have full voting rights. In addition, there are two co-opted places, one of which is reserved for a representative of the Burston Church. In 2021 the Annual Parishioners Meeting voted to increase the PCC membership by two. This took effect from the 2022 Annual Meeting. Members of the congregation are always urged to join the Electoral Roll, and to stand for election to the PCC. Nomination forms for membership of the PCC are available in Church at least two Sundays prior to the APM.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish, and for all financial matters. A full meeting of the PCC is normally held four times a year and there is an Annual Parishioners Meeting (APM).

Sub-committees operate to facilitate the work of the PCC. These are:

The Wardens Committee (Standing Committee)

The Church Building and Churchyard Committee – chaired by Ken Pemberton

The Fundraising and Social Committee – chaired by Rose Pemberton

The Heritage Committee – chaired by Ken Pemberton

These committees report to the PCC at every full meeting of the PCC. A representative of the Burston Church always attends PCC meetings and is fully involved in all decision-making. The Church Wardens have continued to supply a monthly Action Log by way of report to PCC meetings.

Financial Review

2025 saw the most complex set of accounts the PCC has had prepared and the largest turnover in recent years at £224,239. This is made up mostly of the turnover related to the National Lottery Heritage Fund project which accounts for £119,746 in grant funding and £69,503 which is part of a bridging loan from the Diocese of Lichfield.

Funding for the Delivery Stage of the project is provided based on invoices presented for reimbursement and the funding percentage is 86% of expenditure but pays 91% to take account of contributions made to the project in the form of volunteer hours. Part of the project funding was due to be covered by the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPOWGS) which has now closed. We were able to recover the maximum possible from the LPOWGS in the 2025/26 tax year and the shortfall has been made up by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in the form of an additional grant. The PCC is most grateful to the fund for their generous support of the project. It has also had support in 2025 in the form of cash grants from the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Laslett's Charities, the Edward Cadbury Trust and the Lichfield Diocese. We also received a grant payment in 2024 from the Benefact Trust. Grants from the Leche Trust and Staffordshire Historic Churches will be paid when the conservation work is completed. We are also most grateful to these trusts for their support.

The day to day running of the churches including the Common Fund contribution, repairs, insurance, power, delivery of services and miscellaneous expenditure has continued to be met from general funds generated by donations, collections and fund raising.

Summary of the Financial Statements

Income

- The figures shown under Unrestricted Funds include funds designated for specific purposes such as fund raising for a new Tea Point and funds held as provisional matched funding raised by the PCC but that may not be required for the completion of the current project. They also include the funds for Burston Church which are held separately and designated for the use of that church and building. This means not all the Unrestricted Funds are available for immediate expenditure other than as designated.
- The general income for the year was £34,202. The largest contributor to this was voluntary donations and Gift Aid tax recovery of £20,932, fund raising of £7,088 before costs and fees for weddings and funerals of £5,532.00. This total is in line with previous year, with the large numbers of weddings being offset by fewer services.
- The restricted income all relates to the Bell fund and the heritage project. The restricted income includes the draw down of £69,503 from a Diocesan bridging loan.

Expenditure

- The general expenditure for the period was £26,231. The single largest expenditure item is the operation of the two churches over and above the conservation work at £11,546. This includes maintenance, £4,222, the running costs such as power, £1,695.31 and insurance at £3,886.43.
- The cost of events to support fund raising were £2,200 and includes the hire of venues, fees and donations to performers.
- Restricted expenditure relates to the Bell Fund and the NLHF project where we spent £93,830 on repairs and conservation and £17,418 on supporting activities to enhance the projects outcomes.
- The Common Fund was paid in full for the year.

Assets

- The balance of the general fund excluding designated funds was £17,159.38 at the end of the year plus £7 held in the CCLA account.

Liabilities

- The balance of the Diocesan Loan at the year end was £69,503 as noted above. This will be repaid as funds are drawn down towards the end of the project. In the meantime, interest is charged at 0.5% above the CCLA (SBF) deposit rate and is capitalised into the loan balance.

Approval

The Financial statements for the year were approved by the PCC at its meeting on 25 February 2026, and the Examiner's Certificate is appended. We are grateful as ever to John Boulton ACMA for his support in examining and concluding the accounts.

**Independent examiner's report to the
Parochial Church Council of Sandon with Burston
All Saints Church Sandon and St Rufins Church Burston**

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2025, which is set on the following 2 pages, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and s.144(2) of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

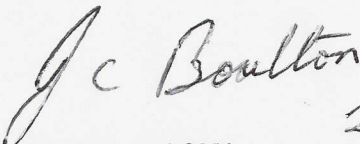
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under s.145(5)(b) of the Act. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the financial statements with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as 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 financial statements 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:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulationshave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



25.2.26

Mr. J. C. Boulton ACMA
Chartered Management Accountant
Butterhill Cottage, Burston, Stafford.

Parochial Church Council of Sandon with Burston - All Saints Church Sandon & St. Rufins Church Burston
Combined Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December, 2025

		Receipts & Payments Account			
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	
Receipts		Funds	Funds	2025	2024
		£	£	£	£
<u>Voluntary Receipts</u>					
1	Planned Giving	8,726	0	8,726	9,967
2	Collections at Services	4,050	0	4,050	6,625
3	Gifts & Donations	3,523	348	3,871	4,764
4	Gift Aid Recovered	4,633	0	4,633	3,262
		20,932	348	21,280	24,618
<u>Activities for Generating Funds</u>					
5	Fund Raising	7,088	0	7,088	5,664
6	Books, Magazines & Other Trading	460	0	460	599
		7,548	0	7,548	6,263
<u>Church Activities</u>					
7	Fees for Weddings & Funerals	5,532	630	6,162	5,365
<u>Investment Income</u>					
8	Bank Interest & CBF Deposit Interest	0	0	0	1
<u>Other Receipts</u>					
9	NLHF & Other Grants	190	119,556	119,746	45,251
10	Cash Loan	0	69,503	69,503	0
Total Receipts		34,202	190,037	224,239	81,498
<u>Payments</u>					
<u>Church Activities</u>					
A	Parish Share	10,285	0	10,285	12,084
B	Clergy & Staffing Costs	400	0	400	780
C	Church Running Expenses	11,546	221	11,767	10,807
C2	Major Repairs & Restoration	1,080	93,830	94,910	0
D	Mission Giving & Donations	720	0	720	571
		24,031	94,051	118,082	24,242
<u>Cost of Generating Funds</u>					
E	Fundraising	2,200	0	2,200	922
C3	Heritage Activities	0	17,418	17,418	0
E2	Applications for NLHF Grants	0	0	0	51,574
		2,200	17,418	19,618	52,496
<u>Other Costs</u>					
L1	Interest on Loan	0	1,135	1,135	0
Total Payments		26,231	112,604	138,835	76,738
Excess of Receipts over Payments		7,971	77,433	85,404	4,760
Cash at Bank and in Hand at 1 January		14,527	10,788	25,315	20,555
Cash at Bank and in Hand at 31 December		22,498	88,221	110,719	25,315
Cash at 31 December Excluding Cash Loan		22,498	18,718	41,216	25,315

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
<u>Cash Funds</u>				
Bank Current Accounts	22,491	88,708	111,199	25,713
CBF Deposit Account	7	0	7	7
	22,498	88,708	111,206	25,720
Less: Unpresented items	0	-115	-115	-456
Less: Agency		-372	-372	16
Plus: Uncleared Deposit				35
	<u>22,498</u>	<u>88,221</u>	<u>110,719</u>	<u>25,315</u>
<u>Other Monetary Assets</u>				
Fees Refunded on behalf of the Diocese			0	70
<u>Liabilities</u>			£	£
Cash Loan			69,503	0
Contract Retentions			1,631	0
Parish Share Common Fund			0	4,000
Agency Collections			372	54

Notes

- The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- The accounting for All Saints Church Sandon & St. Rufins Church Burston is now combined and a separate designated fund is held for St. Rufins Church.
- The Cash Loan has been received from Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd to fund expenditure on the Church restoration in advance of receipt of grant funding. Interest is charged at 0.5% above the CCLA (CBF) Deposit Rate & the loan is repayable on receipt of grant funds.

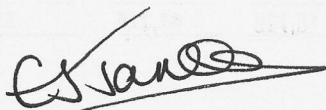
- The movements in the Restricted Funds and Designated Funds during the year were:

<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Bell Fund</u>	<u>Heritage Matched Grants</u>	<u>Heritage NLHF</u>	<u>Cash Loan</u>	<u>Total (Excl Agency)</u>
	£	£				£
Balance at 1 January	-16	1,550	9,350	-112	0	10,788
Receipts	4,021	978	18,124	101,432	69,503	190,037
Payments	-3,633	-221	0	-112,383	0	-112,604
Balance at 31 December	<u>372</u>	<u>2,307</u>	<u>27,474</u>	<u>-11,063</u>	<u>69,503</u>	<u>88,221</u>

<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>St. Rufins Burston</u>	<u>Heritage Matched</u>	<u>Tea Point</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January	2,088	1,068	0	3,156
Receipts	1,210	874	800	2,884
Transfer from Undesignated Funds	0	0	1,300	1,300
Payments	-929	0	-1,080	-2,009
Balance at 31 December	<u>2,369</u>	<u>1,942</u>	<u>1,020</u>	<u>5,331</u>

The negative Heritage NLHF balance is expenditure paid in advance of the next grant payment request.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on
and signed on their behalf



25.2.26

Reference and Administrative details

The Parish Church of All Saints' Sandon is located just outside the village on Church Lane, Sandon ST18 0DB. St Rufin's is in the centre of the village of Burston ST18 0DS.

The Parish, within the Diocese of Lichfield, is part of the Mid Trent Team of Churches comprising eight parishes and ten churches. We have one full-time Priest-in-Charge (currently vacant) and a non-stipendiary part-time Associate Minister

PCC members who have served from the APM 2025 until the date this report was approved were: Ex Officio Members

The Incumbent	Vacant	
Associate Minister	The Reverend Vivienne Starkie	
Churchwardens	Mrs Elizabeth Jarrett	Vice Chair
	Mr Stephen Butt	Vice Chair
Deanery Synod Representatives	The Churchwardens	
Team Council Representatives	The Churchwardens	
Mr Kenneth Pemberton	Honorary Deputy Churchwarden	Elected 2023
Mrs Jeannette Butt	Secretary	Elected 2024
Mrs Janet Dawson	Treasurer	Elected 2025
Mrs Rosemarie Pemberton		Elected 2023
Mrs Anne Stringer		Elected 2023
Mr Michael Capper		Elected 2025
Mrs Josie Capper		Elected 2025
Mrs Susan Unwin		Elected 2023
Mrs Lesley Brandon		Elected 2025
Dr Pamela Hirrell		Elected 2025
Mrs Carol Pilling	Burston Representative	Annual Appointment

Advisors

- Bankers
The Co-operative Bank Limited
42-43 Greengate Street
Stafford
ST16 2JA
- Investment Managers
CCLA
Senator House
85 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4V 4ET
- Independent Examiner
Mr John Boulton ACMA