

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS, STANHOPE, IN THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM

The Charity is governed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC). All trustees are members of the PCC, alongside the minister and other *ex officio* officers who hold deanery or diocesan voluntary roles. The parish comprises the parish of Stanhope, plus the former parishes of Frosterley and Rookhope, whose churches closed some years ago. Each year at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting three members of the PCC have completed their term of office and new people may be recruited to fill vacancies, or they may choose to stand again for re-election. All members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll are eligible to stand for office on the PCC. The PCC meets every six weeks.

We welcomed a new priest-in-charge for Upper Weardale, the Rev Graeme Holdsworth, in February. Rev Graeme has brought some exciting new initiatives, such as 'church in the wild' to encourage people not confident in attending a formal service of worship in church, and a series of blogs tackling topics of interest to those exploring their faith.

Activities

The church is a place of worship, our activities include educating people about religion, pastoral care and outreach, evangelical missionary, interfaith activities and providing and maintaining a building for religious practices, conducting religious services including celebration of baptisms, marriages and conducting funerals. The church helps the general public within the parish. During 2025/26 we have held regular weekly services, sacrament services (baptisms, weddings, funerals) and some outreach work.

It has been a particularly challenging year for the church. In 2020 dry rot was discovered in the underfloor boiler area. This has now been eradicated and in January 2026 work commenced to reorder the church in accordance with the procedures and faculties via the Diocese of Durham. The decision was taken by the PCC to take advantage of this opportunity to replace the whole floor in church, with underfloor heating which will be more efficient than the current radiator system. A raised dais in front of the chancel will make the minister more visible during services, and also open the church to hold concerts and other community events.

This has meant that we have had to worship in the church hall, which has been very successful and new members have been encouraged to attend services. The work in phase 1 is drawing to a close and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to church. Phase 2 comprises seating, storage and heating for the tower area (so we don't have to heat the whole church when holding small meetings or services) and we will be applying for grants for this work. We will then be able to hold community and heritage events to explore the rich history of the church within the dale, as well as plan how our mission may go forward.

The public have been aware of the work in church, and a project by the 'Friends of St Thomas Church' group, who are not generally churchgoers, has raised a good sum by inviting people to 'sponsor a stone'. Everyone is looking forward to having the church back in the centre of village life.

Financial Review

Financially it has been a challenging year – some of our investment funds have been difficult to access as signatories have died or moved away. We have also put the church hall (formerly a Georgian vicarage) for sale. We have continued to have donations during services and through

the Parish Giving Scheme, many with Gift Aid. We are required to keep at least three months' general running costs in reserve.

The audited financial accounts are attached, showing that much of our reserves has been spent on the re-ordering project.

Administrative Information

Our charity registration number is 1213719

St Thomas Parish Church is situated on the Market Place, Stanhope, Co Durham and is part of the Diocese of Durham.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity.

PCC Members who have served from 19 June 2025 to the date of this report are:

Rev Graeme Holdsworth, Priest in Church (from February 2026)

Sue Andrews

Katharine Adams

Moiria Carden

Julia Horne

Margaret Hufford

Paula MacLeod

Carolyn Richardson (Churchwarden)

Elaine Watson (Churchwarden)

Deanery Synod:

Margaret Oxley (to APCM 2026 – 17 May 2026)

Kathleen Kirby (now too unwell to actively serve)

Approved by the PCC on 17 August 2026 and signed on their behalf by Rev Graeme Holdsworth (PCC Chairman)



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Rev Graeme Holdsworth

	note	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	1	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts and Payments Account							
Receipts							
Voluntary Receipts							
Regular Giving:							
Planned Giving	5	8,933	-	-	-	8,933	4,166
Collections at services	5	5,008	-	-	-	5,008	4,093
All other giving / voluntary receipts	5a	4,989	-	16,015	-	21,004	14,036
Gift Aid recovered		-	-	-	-	-	5,519
		<u>18,930</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,015</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,945</u>	<u>27,814</u>
Activities for Generating funds	5b	600	-	-	-	600	4,287
Receipts from Church Activities	5c	15,296	-	-	-	15,296	26,754
Investment income	5d	7,654	-	3,489	-	11,143	83,992
TOTAL RECEIPTS		<u>42,480</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,504</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>61,984</u>	<u>142,847</u>
Payments							
Church Activities:							
Parish Share		15,000	-	-	-	15,000	13,000
Clergy and Staffing Costs	5f	3,600	-	-	-	3,600	3,600
Church running expenses	5f	24,719	-	-	-	24,719	20,876
Cost of Trading	5f	18,616	-	-	-	18,616	15,027
Mission Giving and donations	5f	733	-	-	-	733	8,995
Major Repairs and building works	5f	13,124	-	-	-	13,124	17,028
Cost of Generating funds	5f	100	-	-	-	100	813
Governance Costs	5f	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL PAYMENTS		<u>75,892</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>75,892</u>	<u>79,339</u>
Excess of receipts over payments	-	33,412	-	19,504	-	13,908	63,508
Transfers between funds	4	97,562	20,630	(20,540)		97,652	-
Bank Current and deposit accounts 1 Jan		<u>50,812</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>205,952</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>256,764</u>	<u>193,256</u>
Bank Current and deposit accounts 31 Dec		<u>114,962</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>204,916</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>340,508</u>	<u>256,764</u>

Statement of Assets and Liabilities	note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Cash Funds							
Barclays Community Account		135,592	-	126,373	-	261,965	76,214
Barclays Deposit		-	-	-	-	-	80,325
Stanhope Co-op Society		-	-	-	-	-	9
Barclay's BBRT (PCC Fabric Fund)		-	-	2	-	2	2
NSI account (Fabric)		-	-	38,541	-	38,541	35,221
NSI Bond		-	-	40,000	-	40,000	40,000
Church Hall Current		-	-	-	-	-	24,993
		135,592	-	204,916	-	340,508	256,764
Other Monetary Assets							
Gift Aid Recoverable		-	-	-	-	-	0
Assets retained for Church Use (Church hall Fund)							
Church Hall and Parish Room	2						
Investment assets							
CCLA Held Stock	3	-	-	-	31,296	31,296	124,565
CCLA Deposits		-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	31,296	31,296	124,565

The attached notes form part of these financial Statements

Notes

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis

Numbers are rounded to the nearest pound and as a result totals may display small discrepancies.

2. The Church Hall and Old Library are held in Trust for the PCC by the Diocese.

3. Investments funds - Capital and Deposits

	Bal B/Fwd Capital £	Bal B/Fwd Deposit £	Investments £	Interest/ Capital Gain £	Bal C/Fwd Capital £	Bal C/Fwd Deposit £
Unrestricted						
246/13 School House	95,682	-	(95,873)	191	-	-
	95,682	-	(95,873)	191	-	-
Restricted						
011056001S Ellen Richardson Trust	28,883	-		2,413	31,296	-
	28,883	-	0	2,413	31,296	-

4. The movements in designated and restricted funds during the year were:

		Bal B/Fwd	Receipts	Payments	Transfer	Bal C/Fwd
		£	£	£	£	£
Designated						
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
Restricted						
	Poor Funds					
246/3	Butcher Poor Fund	21,445	-	-	-	21,445
246/5	Miss Butcher Poor Fund	1,828	-	-	-	1,828
		23,273	-	-	-	23,273
	ChurchYard Maintenance					
246/4	Butcher Church Yard Fund	5,214	-	4,655	-	559
	Receipts for Church Yard	377	300	-	-	677
		5,591	300	4,655	-	1,236
	Choir					
246/6	Miss Butcher Choir Fund	1,182	-	-	-	1,182
246/11	Branston Choir Fund	586	-	179	-	407
	Choir Fund	(179)	179	-	-	-
		1,590	179	179	-	1,589
	Mission					
246/7	Hartwell	28,551	-	-	-	28,551
	Flowers Fund	314	-	-	-	314
	Ellen Richardson Trust Fund	601	-	-	-	601
	Rookhope Church Fund	2,303	-	-	-	2,303
	Receipts for mission	40	-	-	-	40
		31,809	-	-	-	31,809
	Fabric & Development					
246/8	Church Fabric	6,889	-	-	-	6,889
246/9	Livingstone Fabric Fund	6,425	-	-	-	6,425
	NS&I PCC Fabric Fund	35,221	3,320	-	-	38,541
	NS&I PCC Fabric Fund Bonds	40,000	-	-	-	40,000
	West Window Fund	3,368	-	-	-	3,368
	Bainbridge Church Fabric - Bond - inc in Flo	47,671	-	-	-	47,671
	Dry Rot Fund/New Floor	655	-	-	-	655
		140,229	3,320	-	-	143,549
	Youth Work					
246/12	Branston Sunday School Fund	1,251	-	-	-	1,251
	Youth and family work Fund	1,962	-	-	-	1,962
	Toddler Group	247	-	-	-	247
		3,460	-	-	-	3,460
	Total Restricted	205,952	3,798	4,834	0	204,916

Income

5. Receipts and Payments Analysis

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Planned Giving						
Standing Orders (FWO)	6,374	-	-	-	6,374	1,600
Other giving (envelopes)	2,559	-	-	-	2,559	2,566
	8,933	-	-	-	8,933	4,166
Collections at services						
Sunday Collections	2,496	-	-	-	2,496	3,920
Other Services	2,512	-	-	-	2,512	174
	5,008	-	-	-	5,008	4,093
a. All other giving / voluntary receipts						
Donations	2,422		16,015	-	18,437	8,051
Church Hall Donations	-	-	-	-	-	132
	2,422	-	16,015	-	18,437	8,183
 Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	5,853
	-	-	-	-	-	5,853
 Church Hall Grants	500	-	-	-	500	1,000
Church Grants	300	-	-	-	300	-
	800	-	-	-	800	1,000
 Candles	464	-	-	-	464	207
Donations Box	1,303	-	-	-	1,303	1,398
	1,767	-	-	-	1,767	1,605
 Totals	4,989	-	16,015	-	21,004	16,641
b. Activities for generating funds – receipts						
St. Thomas Social	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parish Events and coffee mornings	-	-	-	-	-	1,347
Weardale History Festival	-	-	-	-	-	-
Children and Families events	-	-	-	-	-	440
Sundries	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church Hall Development Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frosterley Carparking	600	-	-	-	600	2,500
	600	-	-	-	600	4,287
c. Receipts from Church Activities						
Statutory Fees						
Fees	3,401	-	-	-	3,401	3,833
	3,401	-	-	-	3,401	3,833
Trading						
Church Hire	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church Hall Hire	8,545	-	-	-	8,545	16,812
	8,545	-	-	-	8,545	16,812
Other Incoming resources						
Frosterley Church Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-
Endowment Fund Closure	-	-	-	-	-	65,658
Other Income (insurance, asset sales)	3,350	-	-	-	3,350	6,109
	3,350	-	-	-	3,350	71,767
	15,296	-	-	-	15,296	92,412
d. Receipts from Investments						
Dividends on CBF Investment Funds	-	-	-	-	-	2,911
Bank and CBF Deposit Fund Interest	-	-	956	-	956	-
Standard Life Acc	-	-	-	-	-	-
SL 1st Bond Acc Interest - now Acc 2377926	-	-	942	-	942	-
SL 2nd Bond Acc Interest - now Acc 2377926	-	-	123	-	123	-
National Savings interest	-	-	561	-	561	-
Ellen Richardson Trust	-	-	906	-	906	884
Church Hall Buildings	7,654	-	-	-	7,654	14,539
	7,654	-	3,489	-	11,143	18,334

Payments

f. Church Activities – payments	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Charitable Giving						
Church running expenses:						
<u>Utilities</u>						
Heating	3,879	-	-	-	3,879	2,690
Lighting	1,224	-	-	-	1,224	3,388
Water	214	-	-	-	214	503
	<u>5,317</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,317</u>	<u>6,581</u>
Insurance	4,637	-	-	-	4,637	4,531
Fire and security Detection	2,185	-	-	-	2,185	2,900
Building Maintenance	4,069	-	-	-	4,069	6,236
Churchyard Maintenance	4,670	-	-	-	4,670	54
Cost of Services	3,226	-	-	-	3,226	178
Vergers and Organist Fees	300	-	-	-	300	-
Cleaning	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cost of Music & Licences	300	-	-	-	300	396
Printing and Stationary	15	-	-	-	15	-
	<u>19,402</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,402</u>	<u>14,295</u>
Governance Costs						
Secretarial and meeting costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>24,719</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,719</u>	<u>20,876</u>
Mission						
Baby and Toddler Group	-	-	-	-	-	92
Young people and families	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boxing Club	-	-	-	-	-	1,020
Poor/Old Peoples	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mission	33	-	-	-	33	143
Food Bank	700	-	-	-	700	7,740
	<u>733</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>733</u>	<u>8,995</u>
Cost of Fundraising						
Cost of Sales	-	-	-	-	-	-
Card Fees	30	-	-	-	30	-
Envelopes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cost of Fundraising events	70	-	-	-	70	813
Church Fellowship	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>100</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>813</u>
Cost of Trading:						
Hall Running Costs						
Church Hall	16,605	-	-	-	16,605	14,512
Flats and parish room	2,011	-	-	-	2,011	515
	<u>18,616</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,616</u>	<u>15,027</u>
Major Repairs to Church Building:						
Professional Fees	8,575	-	-	-	8,575	4,990
Major Repairs - Fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church, Fees, Projects	2,494	-	-	-	2,494	2,457
Church Hall, Parish Room, Flats	2,055	-	-	-	2,055	9,581
	<u>13,124</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,124</u>	<u>17,028</u>
Clergy and Staffing Costs						
Benefice Expenses, Equipment, Rectory	3,600	-	-	-	3,600	3,600
Interegnum Fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>3,600</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,600</u>	<u>3,600</u>
	<u>60,892</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>60,892</u>	<u>66,339</u>
Fees Paid to Diocese	1,661	-	-	-	1,661	24
Fees Paid to Non Stipendiary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fees paid to Vergers/Organists.	300	-	-	-	300	460
Special Service Collections and fundraisers	1,166	-	-	-	1,166	-
	<u>3,127</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,127</u>	<u>484</u>

Notes on the Investment Trusts

246/13 **School House**
Restricted
The fund is available for general purposes

Notes on the 2023 Trust Funds

246/2 **Branston General Purposes**
Interest is available for general purposes
Unrestricted

246/3 **Butcher Poor Fund**
Interest paid direct to the PCC for the poor of the parish over 67 years of age
Restricted

246/4 **Butcher Church Yard**
Interest is available for the care and maintenance of the church and churchyard
Restricted

246/5 **Miss Butcher poor Fund**
Interest paid direct to the PCC for the poor of the parish over 67 years of age
Restricted

246/6 **Miss Butcher Choir**
Interest is for the benefit of the Choir
Restricted

246/7 **Hartwell**
Interest is available for furthering the religious and other charitable works of the Church of England within the parish
Restricted

246/8 **Church Fabric**
Interest is available for the upkeep of the church fabric
Restricted

246/9 **Livingstone**
Interest is available for the upkeep of the fabric of the church
Restricted

246/10 **Branston Geneal Purposes**
Interest is available for general purposes
Unrestricted

246/11 **Branston Choir**
Interest is for the benefit of the Choir
Restricted

246/12 **Branston Sunday School**
Interest is for the benefit of the Sunday School
Restricted

011056001S **Ellen Richardson Trust**
Income available for printed or recorded material for communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ but not for general purposes
Restricted

Where funds are restricted and there is no obvious beneficiary in existance - the choir fund for example
The PCC reserve the legal right to convert the capital into income and use the funds as near as is possible to which the fund was originally intended.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH, STANHOPE, FROSTERLEY AND ROOKHOPE PAROCIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for the above charity for the year ended 31st December 2025, as set out on pages 1 to 6

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner

As trustees of the charity, the members of the Parochial Church Council are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement Independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting reports 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.

Signed:

Gillian Herron

Gillian Herron
2 Dales Street
Stanhope
DL13 2XD

Date: 10th August 2026