

# **PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY, WEXHAM**

Annual Report and  
Financial Statements  
of the Parochial Church Council



**2025 – 2026**

**Rector**

Revd Andrew Parry

**Independent Examiner**

Jane Lawrence

**Bank**

The Co-operative Bank  
St Mary's Butts  
Reading

**PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY, WEXHAM**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26**

**1. BACKGROUND:**

Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the governing body of a Parish Church and is a charity. It is made up of members of clergy and lay members of the Church. Together, they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of the Church members and the Grade II\* listed Church and the Church Hall adjacent to the Church. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the Church within the wider community.

The incumbent and the PCC are required to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish; the PCC is to co-operate with the minister in promoting within the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

PCC members are responsible for managing the Church's finances and should ensure that all funds are properly accounted for, the books properly maintained, and the PCC annual accounts inspected and formally approved by the PCC prior to the APCM.

The Rectory is situated at No. 7 Grangewood and continues to be let by the Diocese, as it is not currently required for a priest at St. Mary's.

**Website:** [www.stmaryswexham.co.uk](http://www.stmaryswexham.co.uk)

**Facebook:** [st. mary's church, wexham](https://www.facebook.com/st.marys.church.wexham)

**A Church Near You:** [St. Mary's Church, Wexham](https://www.achurchnearyou.com/parish/st-marys-church-wexham)

**2. MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with Church Representation Rules.

**Incumbent:** **Revd Andrew Parry**

**Warden:** Miss V. Clayton

**Lay Chair:** Mr. P.A. Horth

**Elected Members:**

Appointed until

2026 Mrs. L. Shelley (Deanery Synod Representative)

2026 Mr. B.J. Edwards (Planned Giving Officer and Deanery Synod Representative)

2026 Mr. P. Horth  
2026 Mrs. B. Neame  
2026 Miss G. Knight

2027 Mrs. K. Allen  
2027 Mrs. P. Briggs  
~~2027 Mrs. H. James (resigned, moved to Scotland)~~

We will have 4 vacancies for 3 years terms of office for the PCC to be filled at the APCM as our Church Roll is 44 members, so there are 6 lay members on the PCC. (Members of Deanery Synod are automatically members of the PCC).

There are also 2 vacancies for Churchwarden.

### **3. COMMITTEES:**

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business between PCC meetings, subject to directions given by the Council.

### **4. ELECTORAL ROLL:** Paul Horth

The electoral roll numbers for 2026 are now 44.

### **5. REVIEW OF THE YEAR:**

#### **a) Worship**

Sunday Morning services have maintained their long-standing pattern:

8.00 am Holy Communion – Common Worship – Traditional Language  
(said)

10.00 am Holy Communion - Common Worship - Contemporary Language  
Young Church meets in the Church Hall

Church for All – Second Sunday in each month.

11.30 am Wholeness and Healing Service - last Sunday in month

We also have the occasional evening service.

#### **b) Permission to administer Communion has been granted to:**

Jane Boot, Vicky Clayton, Yvette Hickman, Diane Goldsmith, Paul Horth, Lynnette Shelley, Christine Elderfield, Pat Briggs.

**c) Finance Report** from Mr B J Edwards, Treasurer

**Income:**

Collections were up by nearly £1,000, reversal compared with previous year 2024. Both giving schemes were down just under 2%. This will continue during 2026 year due to reduction of five leaving for two reasons, moving away or deceased.

Under Tax Refund the figure of £7786.35 was inflated by £2738, due to late claim (January 2025) for the year accounts 2024. With this in mind, the actual figure for 2024 was £6001 and 2025 was £5098.

Statutory Fees for Services was double activity on previous year, which means that relief figure for Parish Share in 2027 will be higher than 2026, thus reducing the actual payment of Parish Share.

Fund raising was the highest for some time due to the efforts of Jill Bell.

Magazine ended at the end of 2024. But the costs of hiring the machine and paper and printing still carried on.

Non Gift Aid Donations increased due an extra person contributing.

In the Donations Section most items were transferred to Deposit/Savings account, the remaining two being Grants used against expenditure for year 2025.

Once again Friends of St Mary's contributed just under £2,000 and the church received a fourth donation of £2,000 for landscape from ADSM (Advance Demand Site Management). The Church is extremely grateful for all donors and givers as well as the congregation who give via Bankers Credits, which enables the church to have a stable base to the income each month.

**Expenditure:**

Parish Share was once again lower than prior year due to higher Statutory Fees relief.

Church Running Costs higher by non-recurring cost of £170 for Lightning Conductor check, and increases in Insurance £112, Fire Extinguisher check £153 and the balance on Electricity in the winter.

Statutory Fees to Oxford Diocese just over £1,110 due to more activity and in relation to receipts.

Printing expenditure much lower due to closure of the magazine but usage still continued.

Church Hall Running Expenditure up £700 due to mainly utilities. Gas costs up by £322, Water by £44 and Electricity was up by over by £500 but due to a mix up the Direct Debit was raised from May month, and throughout the Summer. Despite Brian's contacting supplier the Church account balance became credit at £550 until December when it was down to £300. Incidentally the usage in 2025 was equal to that in 2024.

Administration expenditure was reduced due to TJ leaving for pastures new in 2024.

Miscellaneous expenditure was up due to non-recurring items. Hire of Skip £300. Jill Bell's leaving present £258.

Donations Used activity was double previous year. Hall Ceiling Lights, first item was funded by FOSM. Balance in hand was over double, as General Income was in excess of £6,800 of General Expenditure.

See Appendix for Audited Accounts.

I am now in my fifteenth year as Treasurer and continue to enjoy the experience. I thank the church people for their co-operation.

#### **d) Young Church** - Sandra Horth

We continue to have a fair number of children and parents each week, most weeks we have between 8 to 12 children. We have fun with stories, art and crafts, cookery, painting and games to learn about God and how he loves them. We use the same Gospel reading each week as is used in main church.

We have some time playing in the toy area and on the sit-and-rides which are very popular and attract the children to come. We have some small children at Young Church, so play is important to them especially as they now start Nursery and School so young. We here at St Marys encourage them to have fun and enjoy coming.

On the second Sunday of the month, we have our Church for All services in the hall. Since changing the format and having more activities to do, the YC families now attend this more regularly. Those who attend enjoy it as it is a short, interactive service together.

For the first time in a very long time Mothering Sunday was held in the church: it was a non-Communion service together with the YC and their parents doing the prayers and lovely posies were given out. It was very well attended and the feedback from the families and everyone who attended was that they had enjoyed it and especially it being in church.

On Palm Sunday we had a Church for All in the hall covering Holy Week through lots of activities to represent each day, including hymns, talks and prayers. The children and parents enjoyed this and learning what happened to Jesus leading up to Easter Day.

On Easter day there was Young Church in the hall with lots of activities and finishing off the Easter Garden with opening the tomb and adding lots of fresh flowers. It was very busy and popular with our non-church families in the community. After the service the children had an Easter egg treasure hunt in the church grounds, working in teams, which they enjoyed. Young Church finished up in July with a picnic and fun out in the gated area before we had a summer break in August.

In September Young Church started back with a Church for All in the hall. It was lovely to see so many families back after the break. In October the Young Church families enjoyed the Harvest Church for All in the hall, this year with a scavenger hunt and lunch.

For Remembrance, Young church was in the hall having a story, talking about why we have Remembrance Sunday and making Poppy crafts. We then rejoined the congregation outside the church for the 2 minutes silence.

In December, we tried something different for Christingle: we held a Christingle and Carols in the hall around tables, starting with Bacon rolls and other refreshments served from 9.30am, then making up their own Christingles. It was very popular and we had to put out more tables and chairs, the hall was full! This was well attended especially by non-church families and people who thoroughly enjoyed it.

Church for All Crib Service on Christmas Eve was held in Church. The children who wanted to were able to dress up in Nativity costume of their choice from the good selection we have and take part in the Nativity story as it was told. All ages helped make up the Crib by the altar too.

Young Church continues to join the congregation in church for the last part of the service to have a blessing or communion, and to tell and show the congregation what they have been doing.

We continue to have Young Church in the hall three Sundays a month and Church for All once a month which gives us a chance for all ages to worship together.

The parents enjoy being with their children, learning about God and Jesus plus doing the activities. They enjoy coming into church for the last part of the service and the uplifting hymn.

Andrew has supported the running of Young Church and occasionally joins us to talk to the parents and see what the children are doing.

Karen has joined Young Church as a helper and helps once a month in Young Church and in Church for All. We continue to outreach to the families in our community, which remains difficult as families appear to do other activities, sport or family things on Sunday.

#### **e) Oak House Care Home** - Revd Chris Collinge, Lynnette Shelley, Vicky Clayton

Lynnette, Vicky and I have had another good, settled year visiting Oak House. The staff continue to be very welcoming and helpful.

It is good to share the worship throughout the seasons of the year. There are times when residents are moved to tears during communion – a reminder of how significant this action is for believers.

We choose well known, popular hymns as the people who come to us come from varied backgrounds and recognition of words and tunes is important. Some relatives and friends choose service times as a time to visit as they can share in the worship.

We continue to have a “sing song” following communion and we try to link those songs with the seasons too. A new addition was included this year “Lollipop, lollipop, oh loli, loli, lollipop.” I think that was a summer song!

Vicky and Lynnette are wonderful at reading any poems I select. The three of us

work well together. I plan the worship and the hymns, Vicky always ensures we have enough printed copies and Lynnette is the much valued music master

We were very sorry this year to lose a resident who has been with us throughout our time at Oak House.

This lady had a lovely singing voice and she would lead us in the singing of "It is no secret what God can do" with actions.

We usually have twelve to fourteen residents with us.

My thanks, as ever, to Vicky and Lynnette, the very welcoming staff at Oak House and, of course, the residents.

#### **f) The Pines Extra Care Housing** - Home Communion - Vicky Clayton.

Things have now changed as Jill Bell has moved out of the area, leaving just Vicky to take these services.

This short reflective service of Holy Communion is held on the second Wednesday of each month, in the second-floor meeting room. There are usually two ladies present but last December we welcomed another, new, resident, who we hope will continue to come.

The church weekly newsletter is either posted or hand-delivered to them every week. I then visit one person in his flat, for a further Communion service. He receives the weekly newsletter via email.

Posters are displayed on "The Pines" notice boards, giving time, venue, dates and contact details, and are always up to date. I am happy to continue this ministry for the few communicants.

#### **g) Home Communion** - Yvette Hickman

The Home Communion team (Diane, Christine and Yvette) visit people who are not able to come to St Mary's for a service, to give them communion in their homes. We currently visit just one lady now; this is on the last Friday of every month. It is a lovely service, and the communicant is always pleased to see us. For the team, it is a pleasure to be able to see the members of our congregation in their own homes.

#### **h) Safeguarding Report** - Revd Andrew Parry

**Team:** Sandra Horth (Children's Advocate); and Christine Elderfield (DBS Administrator); and Andrew Parry (Rector).

We have lost our very able Parish Safeguarding Officer, Heidi James. That is a major concern and we do not have a replacement despite some publicity.

The Safeguarding team continues to do a very good job of managing Safeguarding and is very vigilant but our Safeguarding dashboard has slipped from us averaging about 96% in 2025, to 85% in February.

As an indication of the time required to manage this resource, after Andrew worked on it for about 45 minutes, our average rose to 92%. Some of this will be addressed at the next PCC when we will present a report and a number of policies for approval.

The PCC members have all completed their required training, DBS checks are being completed (despite a large-scale data breach by the organisation administering DBS for many dioceses).

We are aware of no safeguarding matters that we need to bring to the attention of the church.

My thanks to Sandra and to Christine for their continued attention, devotion and efficiency.

### **i) Report on the Church Fabric of St Mary's Church, Wexham for 2025**

Vicky Clayton (Churchwarden)

During 2025, continuous routine maintenance work of cleaning, repairs, maintenance of Organ and Fire extinguishers took place. Gutters and drains were checked and cleared when necessary. Regular work in mowing and maintaining the churchyard was also on-going.

The lightning conductor received its 4-year check in January.

In March, a Health and Safety check of the church, church hall and grounds was undertaken, and necessary work was carried out.

Despite Rod Boot's efforts to re-touch the church walls with specialist paint to minimise the flaking paint on the walls, the problem remains.

During 2026 all portable electrical items will need to be PAT tested.

Our Quinquennial (5-year) inspection is due next year in 2027, so this year the challenge will be to make sure we have attempted to attend to the work recommended in 2022 by our Architect Neil Barr. It is likely to be a challenging year.

Grateful thanks go to all those whose tireless work helps to keep our church and churchyard looking so good.

### **j) Report on the Church Hall Fabric for 2025 – Sue Edwards.**

Regular maintenance continues in the church hall, with weekly cleaning of all areas. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are installed in the kitchen area and annual checks are made on the gas boiler as well as all fire extinguishing appliances.

The foundations of the hall were laid in 1963, and the building is inevitably showing its age, so a great deal of remedial work is needed, with continuing costs.

The following additional repairs have been completed:

- January 2025:

- All the hall ceiling lights were changed to LED.

- February 2025:

- A new alarm system was installed by Active Security. All codes have remained the same, but our ability to communicate with the new Company is greatly improved.

March 2025:

- The hall car park was partly re-surfaced by G R Grounds Maintenance Ltd. Although there can be a few puddles on a wet day, the result has been a great improvement.

- Also in March, the external floodlight system was changed from manual operation to automatic. Again, this has been welcomed.

Hall Use:

.The hall is of course used mostly for church events. We were sad to learn that the Brownie Group had closed. However, during the year it has been used more regularly for some non-church activities.

- Vijay Rakkar, runs weekly drumming sessions on Wednesday evenings.

We have also welcomed Carina Brown, who is now able to use the hall on Tuesday evenings when her regular hall at Wexham School for Zumba classes is used for school exams.

From February, Slimming World have been booked in for sessions every Thursday evening from 4pm to 9pm.

We apologise to some of our church people who may have wished to put on activities, but these outside bookings are an extra income for St Mary's.

Thanks must go to all those using the premises, who respect the building by leaving it clean and tidy after use and make life so much easier for the cleaning team – Beryl, David, John, Brian and Sue.

#### **k) Fund raising BY St. Mary's Church for:-**

##### **Slough Foodbank, Harvest, October - Vicky Clayton**

Our Harvest donations were taken to Slough Foodbank where they were very much appreciated. Our congregation had donated items specifically requested by the Foodbank and only one small tin of sweetcorn was out of date, so an excellent result. In total we donated 124 kg = 19 stone 7 pounds worth of food in 11 bags and 4 boxes + 12 boxes of fruit juice.

##### **Slough Homeless Our Concern (SHOC) November - Yvette Hickman.**

Every year St Mary's asks the congregation for some items so that we can give a Christmas gift to some of the homeless people of Slough through SHOC (Slough Homeless Our Concern).

We asked for socks, pants, gloves, hats, disposable razors, feminine hygiene products, sweets and biscuits. We also ask for empty shoe boxes that we can cover with festive paper, or gift bags, so that the gifts are wrapped.

This year, we were able to cover enough shoe boxes for all the gifts so that we didn't have to buy any gift bags, a huge effort that was really appreciated.

The extremely generous donations of goods and money from everyone enabled us to give 41 Christmas gifts for men and 10 for ladies (this is a big increase on the number of ladies we normally give a gift to). We were also able to give some communal items, like soap, shampoo and shower gel.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who contributed towards the gifts (goods and money) and to everyone who contributed time; both to collect and wrap the shoe boxes and collate the gifts.

Hopefully, we'll be able to repeat the same goodwill this year.

### **Children's Society, Christingle, December** – Vicky Clayton

We held our very enjoyable Christingle service on a Church for All Sunday. Several people worked very hard behind the scenes preparing the oranges, silver stars, sweeties and nuts, red ribbon, etc.

We had supplied the offering candles and envelopes on the Sunday before, and the total collected for the Children's Society amounted to **£214.34**.

Thanks must be given to our rather small, but very generous, congregation who unstintingly support our appeals, especially as there are three appeals in three consecutive months, October, November and December.

Your generosity and kindness are very much appreciated.

### **l) Fund raising FOR St. Mary's Church** – Vicky Clayton

#### **17th May, 2025 - A Musical Afternoon Tea raised £751.10 for church funds.**

Grateful thanks to all who supported our Musical Afternoon Tea on 17th May. Christine managed to raise an amazing £263.10 in the raffle which, combined with the ticket sales, raised £750 for church funds, but more importantly all those who came enjoyed the event. Many commented on the delicious food and thanks are due to Yvette, Karen, Jane, Chris and Christine for their hard work in creating it all. A wonderful afternoon.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> July** we had an evening of reminiscences. Jill presented a slide show 40+ years at St Mary's featuring some great memories of events at the church and the church hall and photos of people who are no longer with us. We had a quiz featuring the 4 decades featured in the slides and **£304 was raised for church funds**.

### **m) Keeping in touch** - Gill Knight

One of the many tasks undertaken for St. Mary's by Jill Bell began at the start of the pandemic when she wrote a short weekly letter to keep in the loop those who were unable to attend church or continue with social activities in the hall and those who may not have had access to parish information via a computer, etc. In the envelope, which was delivered by volunteers, she included the informative weekly church newsletter. The numbers have reduced but the envelope is still welcomed by some of the original recipients (and a couple of new ones), so in the middle of August 2025 when Jill moved to Dorset, I took on the role of letter writer. The format is similar to Jill's, with a variety of topics covered and often a cartoon or two; a joke; something to

colour or a wordsearch and I continue to include details of BBC's 'Songs of Praise' for that week and a copy of the much valued, church newsletter. There are currently eight recipients and sometimes on my round I have the pleasure of enjoying a short chat with them. The letter and newsletter are still pinned to the notice board in the church hall porch.

#### **n) Churchyard Care** - Colin Goldsmith, Judith Allen, Gill Knight

It was another interesting and varied year for carers of our lovely church grounds. In order to reduce damage to the stable block and garage, in March 2025 (which falls just outside the period of this report but not in time for the previous one) we cut down saplings and cleared undergrowth from the area behind these buildings.

This was in readiness for larger trees to be professionally felled at a later date.

Greenwood Tree Surgeons carried out this work in August and also felled and shredded a dead churchyard tree. (The resulting wood chips are used for levelling grass paths, sunken graves, etc.)

In the churchyard, many general tasks were regularly undertaken by a small team of volunteers in two-hour Saturday sessions and we give thanks for the time spent and effort made. They are sociable times and new volunteers would be most welcome.

Work not completed at these sessions was done in between them by a few individuals. However, although willing, our small team is unable to tackle some tasks and cannot fully look after the whole churchyard. Once again, a generous donation, most gratefully received, enabled us to employ M.W. Garden Services (with their professional grade equipment) three times during the year – twice working in the old graves section and once cutting back the overgrown shrubs and trees along the northern boundary.

The sensitive monitoring and maintaining of memorials, in keeping with regulations set down by the Diocese, steadfastly continued.

We await information from the Diocese regarding the future of the stable block, which houses churchyard care equipment but which is in a poor state of repair. Due to this it was thought the garage should be made ready to store the equipment, so in May, during a Saturday morning session (with a skip in the car park) some of the team cleared out the cobwebby garage, whilst others worked in the churchyard.

Historical care and our current gentle management have led to St. Mary's Churchyard, Wexham, being selected as a Local Wildlife Site. (This is an initiative supported by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes councils which aims to 'identify the most valuable non-statutory sites for wildlife at a county and local level and to encourage ongoing management that will protect and enhance their wildlife interest into the future.') Primarily of course our churchyard is a precious sacred space. Its natural beauty enhances its tranquillity and we do our best to achieve the right balance for visitors and wildlife, carefully tending most but leaving some intentionally untended.

The 2025 summer-of-drought reduced the frequency of grass cutting but, when necessary, areas such as the paddock and other large expanses, continued to be mown by a volunteer on the tractor mower, which has been serviced in readiness for the next season. Smaller equipment was effective in other sections.

Previously, approximately every two years, John and Steve Whitby have generously arranged for the main hedge to be flailed and we are most grateful to them.

**o) Men's Fellowship** - Paul Horth

The Men's Fellowship has continued to meet every last Thursday of the month (except December), alternating a meal in the hall with a meal at a local restaurant. In 2025 we went to quite a few restaurants in the area and, for our nights when we meet in the hall continue to have takeaway meals. We enjoyed pizzas, Indian food, fish and chips and now we are lucky in having found an excellent Chinese Takeaway in Burnham. In January we had a Burns night in the hall with haggis, tatties and neeps...and, of course, whisky.

In 2026, the bad news is that we can no longer use the hall on a Thursday evening so we are in the process of deciding what we shall do on alternate months.

If anyone would like to join our fellowship for good food and lively debate, you are more than welcome to contact me at paulhorth@virginmedia.com

**p) Friends of St Mary's** - Lynnette Shelley

Once again, this year has been challenging as I am still the only Friend raising funds. Monday night bingo has continued, whenever I am available and I would like to thank all those who come on a Monday night to support me and raise funds. I also have people that regularly help, making tea, washing up or clearing away at the end of the night, a big thank you to them all.

We were given a £15 donation in March, from a friend in Lanzarote and also a £25 donation at the beginning of January, both gratefully received.

Andrew continues to give me his support whenever he is available and I am very grateful to him.

The Friends had their annual quiz night, in January, and I would like to thank Yvette, my daughter Samantha and my husband Michael for their support, setting up, before, during the evening and of course at the end of the evening. The evening appeared to be a great success and we raised £1096.13. A big thank you to all who came and supported this event. I believe the quiz master just about managed to keep control.

Last year we were not asked to fund any maintenance projects, from the church, so our money raised is held in a ring-fenced fund until we are asked for assistance. If anybody would like to raise money for The Friends, or join me in running The Friends I would love to hear from you.

Also, if you would like to give a donation, so that we can keep our beautiful Church and Church Hall in good repair, then please do not hesitate to speak to me. Once again thank you to those who have given me support over the past year.

**q) Bible Study Group** – Revd Chris Collinge (Jill Bell)

The Bible Study Group sadly said goodbye to Jill who had led them with such enthusiasm and insight. She is sadly missed.

The group continued to meet at Chris' house over the autumn. Using a study programme from Embrace the Middle East the group looked at the relationship between Israelites and Palestinians in the light of Biblical teaching and history. The course used sections from the Letter to the Romans as its foundation. We found the course both challenging, enlightening and useful in helping us understand and receive the upsetting news from Israel/Palestine.

We are a very happy group where conversation is valued and all ideas and thoughts are welcome. Come and join us!

We meet Tuesdays at 10am at Chris' house. 07790366241.

#### **r) Emmaus Road Fellowship Group - Exploring Belief** - Andrew Parry

We continue to meet mostly every second Thursday evening to share, to discuss various matters that come to our attention, and to pray.

#### **s) Main Topics of PCC Discussion**

Since the last APCM the PCC has met 7 times and has followed the High Level Agenda agreed, looking at Finance, Fabric, Outreach and Technology, plus APCM preparation, Safeguarding is on the Agenda for every meeting.

#### **2025 Meetings**

6 April, (Brief PCC directly after APCM to appoint PCC Treasurer and PCC Secretary).

10 June

12 August

14 October

9 December

#### **2026 Meetings**

20 January

10 March

### **6. A FINAL THANKS**

While it would be impossible to individually name all names, the PCC is indebted to the large number of people who voluntarily devote huge amounts of their time, skills and resources to the life and ministry of St Mary's. It recognises that without such input, the work of the Church would collapse and is grateful for the support and commitment it receives from the congregation and the community.

On behalf of the PCC: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chaired by): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Rector's Report for 2026

The past year seemed to me to be characterised by many farewells.

- Through moving away and moving on (Jill and John, TJ, Heidi)
- Through the death of many long-standing members of the church (Ethel Voller, Gordon Evans, Pat Higgins, Doris Young, Malcolm Wright)

We have also had high points. Baptisms of Sophia, Adam, and Olivia. Confirmations in the hall of Adam, Belinda and Olivia in a wonderfully alive service led by Bishop Dave, who was gracious and engaging, arriving early to get to know candidates, and staying for some time after the service. The memorable wedding of Charlotte and James.

On balance, we close the year more stretched than before. While we are being very ably served by highly capable and dedicated church members, some key roles are vacant: second Churchwarden, PCC Secretary, Parish Safeguarding Officer. The work of these roles is largely being covered, but by the same already busy pool of people.

Young Church is running extremely well and it is reassuring to have Karen involved to provide some support and cover for Sandra when required. Church for All continues as our regular family-focussed service. For services, I am very well supported by Chris and Gordon (and Vicky, one day when sudden illness made me unable to attend). Fund raising continues largely through the very active Friends of St Marys and the churchyard is being diligently cared for.

The Deanery is now more fully staffed with clergy than was the case last year, though it is important to note the pattern of replacement. There is little or no like for like replacement. When someone leaves, their successor invariably has to pick up more responsibilities (for example one colleague is looking after three parishes).

The influence of the Diocese is sadly still most keenly felt through that running sore which is the repair (or demolition) of the Stable Block.

- We approached the diocese about repair of this (their) structure.
- Their surveyor first told us that it was fine and proposed building in the Paddock and turning the Stable Block into a Rectory.
- Then a diocesan-arranged fly by inspection of the exterior concluded that it was so unsafe that we should put out cones and warnings.
- We have had it inspected and are awaiting a quote (a draining and drawn-out process) and have been told it is not as unsafe as we had been told.

This entire process has consumed much time of the Rector, Wardens, PCC and still we have to chase to make any headway.

At national church level, details of some deeply troubling details emerged.

- The resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury in January and the circumstances around that.
- The resignation of the Bishop of Liverpool in early 2025 following news becoming public of allegations against him of sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- Details emerged that the Archbishop of York had put the Bishop of Warrington (who had complained of sexual harassment) on study leave (!) for over a year. A truly bizarre response to someone who has made an allegation of sexual harassment.

- And then allegations emerged that in appointing Bishop of Liverpool, senior bishops on the panel (the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Oxford) had pushed the selection committee to take multiple votes until their preferred candidate was selected. The panel thereby dismissed the importance of the candidate's poor safeguarding knowledge. I wonder if such latitude would have been shown to a parish-level candidate.

Sadly, this pattern of applying different standards to Bishops seems to have continued with the new Archbishop of Canterbury. She faced allegations about the way she handled a safeguarding matter, and these were swiftly dismissed.

I have included this in some detail because it has been widely reported and has been deeply troubling to me as an incumbent in the Church of England.

So we continue, as a parish and within the parish, to try to share the message of God's love with those people we encounter. Community Hub continues and is a blessing to all who come (and, I think, to those of us who are involved in running it). The service of Wholeness and Healing continues, neither growing nor declining. We are organising, in 2026, a review of our Mission Action Plan, to hear where God might be leading us.

Andrew Parry

### **Deanery Synod Representatives Report for the APCM 2025** – Brian Edwards

Brian attended 4 out of 4 Synod Meetings, Lynnette 3, and Andrew 3. There were 2 Deanery Treasurers Meetings, Brian attended the first in June and Andrew attended the one in October on Brian's behalf.

Each Meeting commenced with opening worship after a warm welcome and the hosts were: Farnham Royal St Mary's, Colnbrook St Thomas, Wexham St Mary's and Langley St Mary's.

Attendances were very much down at the first two, but the second two had larger attendances.

It was recorded that at one venue, the attendance sheet had been misplaced.

Each host began the meetings with minutes of previous meeting being approved, followed by what was happening at each church. Any new Members were welcomed by the Area Dean, Janet Binns.

As I had given detailed information at each of the four meetings to the PCC, the following will be a summary of subjects for this report.

- 1) **Financial Update each meeting:** Parish Share was the main subject with finances but despite a fragmented start for the year, at the half year The Deanery managed to receive a rebate of £8,000 by reaching the target of 50% with the help from a few of the parishes including St Mary's Wexham. Sheila Warburton, Deanery Treasurer declared that the final year's position for Parish Share payments reached 93.6%, best year for some time. Early part of the year, a report was created for a Parish Share Strategy Plan 2024-2027 to meet the cost of ministry whilst addressing the spiritual needs of its parishes.

- 2) **Mission & Outreach for three meetings:** Varied stories from around the Parishes during the meetings except at St Thomas Colnbrook.
- 3) **Grow Course:** This Course was a new initiative to enable more holistic, sustainable and impactful growth and relationships with God, loving all and working with the community.  
There is a cost involved and in particular for the coaching provision for leaders.
- 4) **Youth & Child Ministry:** This subject was mentioned at all of the meetings. Funding news was awaited in the first meeting. The second meeting, a presentation given by St Paul's Youth worker, offered assistance to interested parties by proposed running a Workshop for the Deanery. At the third meeting it was announced that the application was unsuccessful and no scope to apply before 2029. At the fourth meeting, Manor Park reported success of the Black History Month service and will be an annual event.
- 5) **St Paul's Resource Hub:** Representatives reported that there would be funding for International Mission and Diversity from Oxford Diocese.
- 6) **Deanery Mission Fund:** Wycombe Deanery generously gave Burnham & Slough Deanery a sum of £6,000, to be used on individual small projects.
- 7) **Deanery Re-Organisation:** At the meeting at St Thomas of Colnbrook, Presentation Plan was declared after all the Consultations and Committees and Meetings. St Mary's Wexham were positioned in the Eastern Group along with Parishes Iver and Richings Park, Iver Heath, Langley Marish Team Ministry. This resulted in reduction of 2 Full Time Stipendiary roles.
- 8) **Christian Connections in Schools:** Wayne Dixon explained that CCIS was a registered Charity of 30 years and has a Board of Trustees and its aim to bring Jesus to Schools. It was a fact that 95% of children and young people were not in churches on Sundays.
- 9) **The Turning Point in Slough:** This organisation dealt with Drug & Alcohol addiction. Its objective to focus with Faith Groups to raise awareness of the issues.
- 10) **Parish Development Officer in the Diocese:** Revd Asa Humphreys spoke about the role working with the Bishop and Archdeacon of Buckingham and the parishes, with the main role of recruitment of new incumbents.
- 11) **Group Ministries:** The Area Dean, Janet Binns, reported that the new Groups met on a regular basis, except the Southern Group which would commence soon now that vicars were in the parishes. The Eastern Group continued to support service cover when required.
- 12) **Emerge Advocacy at Wexham Park Hospital:** Joy Wright, the CEO for this charity explained the role being to support anyone aged from 10-25 years following admission due to self-harm or attempted suicide. Although supported by churches at present, were seeking the role to be run by a Church, to which Emerge would support it.
- 13) **Vacancies:** At the beginning of year 2025, it was reported that during the Transition Period there would be less Full Time Clergy and replaced by Half Time Clergy.  
At the last meeting, a House for Duty vacancy would be advertised in early 2026 for Datchet, Eton, Eton Wick & Dorney to support the Vicar.

At Langley Marish, the retirement of Shola Aoko in October has led to the Deanery and PCC to explore what role was best to support Fr Chris Ferris.

With the resignation of Revd Andrew Wickens from his role as Chaplain to Slough Eton Academy and Parish Priest at St Peter's Chalvey, a meeting with the school would take place to ascertain whether the role would continue.

Each meeting ended with a prayer by the Host Clergy. The Evening meetings ended between 9.30 and 10.00pm, the Saturday morning meeting ended 12.21pm.

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