

ANNUAL REPORT

ST. MARY'S
AMERSHAM WITH
ALL SAINTS'
COLESHILL



COMMUNITY - WELCOME - WORSHIP

Building a faithful community of Jesus that provides a warm welcome where all may come and worship God in a place that is loving and safe.



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Rector's Report



What a year it's been! There is so much to celebrate and look back on; I've found myself struggling to know where to even start. It is safe to say that it has been a busy year for the parish in a whole host of different ways, which has seen a mind-boggling number of volunteers giving their time and energy to supporting the life and work of the parish. This got me thinking: How many volunteers does it take to make this parish run? To find out the number, I dived into various rosters, team lists, and emails to try to pinpoint just how many volunteers support parish life.

The answer: 166.

166 people devote their time in various ways to ensure that we build community, welcome and worship in the parish. After spending some time going through the rotas and team lists, it was incredible to see just how many people support the life and ministry of the parish. With 166 people making sacrifices for the flourishing of the church, it is likely to be one of the largest volunteering teams (if not the largest) in the parish. I am incredibly humbled to see that people are willing to make sacrifices in order to support the church. As a priest, I simply couldn't ask for more from those whom I am called to serve.

St Paul talks about the church being the body of Christ. In the same way every part of the body has its purpose, so too does every member of our church community contribute to our shared journey with Jesus. This passage helps us to recognise that it should never be down to a select few people, but it is about everyone supporting the mission of the church to share the love of Jesus with others. It would simply be impossible for one person to do this all on their own - our churches only flourish through the hard work of volunteers. We are blessed to see increasing numbers coming to church in the parish, and this is down to the commitment of every single person who enables our worship to welcome others. As we reflect on the year just gone, there is lots to celebrate. Our numbers have grown, we have grown in faith and in opportunities for people to be welcomed into the church in real and life-changing ways. But this profound growth is not down to me, or any one individual; instead it is every single one of those 166 people who commit their time to ensuring the growth of the church.

The church is nothing without the many people who give of their time to build the kingdom of God in our parish. The church is not just a landmark that people enjoy looking at (although it can be). The church is not a museum simply there to reflect on the past. The church is a living thing. Kept alive by the people who have made it their spiritual home. It is no surprise that St Paul uses a living body as an analogy for the church. He could have chosen many examples to describe the church, but he deliberately chose something that is alive. Because that is what the church should be: alive!

If you look through our weekly notices, our pre-PCC meeting church updates, look at the website, or read the annual report, you will read about a church community that is very much alive. Not just alive in the physical sense, because simply putting on lots of wonderful events is not enough, but it shows that we are spiritually alive as we grow deeper in our faith in Jesus. In this report, you will read about some (no document is big enough to cover everything we do!) of the amazing teams, events, services and discipleship that show we are a living community of Jesus. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supports the life and work of the parish. For all those who dedicate themselves to building a living church. A church that grows not just in number, but a church that grows in faith.

The Revd Jonny Rapson



PCC Secretary's Report

All members of the PCC are trustees of the Parish, which is registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC makes an annual return to the Charity Commission describing its aims and accounts. The independent examiner and the Secretary are responsible for this.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Immediately following the APCM in 2025, the PCC consisted of clergy, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives, and elected members drawn from the parish's Electoral Roll. All members of the congregation are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

The primary purpose of the PCC is to cooperate with the Rector in promoting the whole mission of the Church within the parish, including pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical work. The PCC also considers matters of religious and public interest and acts as a link between the parish and the deanery and diocesan synods. PCC members are responsible for decisions on matters of general concern and for determining how parish funds are allocated.

The Standing Committee, comprising key PCC members, is authorised to make decisions between PCC meetings within agreed guidelines. All decisions are reported to the next full PCC meeting.

Meetings and Attendance

The PCC met on five occasions between the APCMs in 2025 and 2026. Attendance at meetings remained strong, averaging approximately 80%. Each meeting included regular reports from Churchwardens, safeguarding, GDPR compliance, parish housing, and the financial health of the parish, including charitable giving and fundraising.

Changes During the Year

During the year, there have been several changes in roles and responsibilities:

- **Sue Pounce stepped down as PCC Secretary on 31st October 2025.**
- **Bart Schmal was appointed PCC Secretary on 25th November 2025.**
- **Loraine Hollett stepped down from her responsibilities as Sacristan in February 2026**
- **Clare Atkinson is stepping down from the PCC at the 2026 APCM. Clare is kindly continuing her role as planned giving officer.**

The PCC records its gratitude to all those stepping down for their service to the parish.

Policy Review

During the year, the PCC undertook a comprehensive review of all parish policies. Most policies have been updated to ensure they remain current and compliant with relevant guidance and legislation. These policies are available on the church website.

PCC Membership

The membership of the PCC during the year has been as follows:

Clergy

- Rev Jonny Rapson – Rector (Chair)
- Rev Sue Gill – Honorary Associate Rector
- Rev Tim Barnard – Honorary Associate Rector (co-opted)
- Rev Michelle Fotherby – Assistant Curate

Churchwardens

- Chris Suttie
- Jane McNeilly
- Tessa Cornish
- David Skinner (Lay Chair)

PCC Members

- Aurelia Paton – Church Rooms
- Bart Schmal – PCC Secretary (from 20 November 2025) and Insurance
- Becky Benn – Social Activities
- Clare Atkinson – Planned Giving / GDPR (until 2026 APCM)
- Clare Samuels – Safeguarding Officer
- David Elliott – Charitable Giving
- Gillian Atkinson – Website
- Graeme Coles – Treasurer
- Joseph Noaman – Health and Safety
- Loraine Hollett – Fete
- Pamela Holden – Charitable Giving
- Sarah Ainsworth-Coles – Electoral Roll Officer
- Simon Hollett – Sunday School
- Steph Shinner – Streaming and Communications / Noticeboards
- Sue Pounce – PCC Secretary (until 31 October 2025)
- Val Simmonds – Charitable Giving / Fete

Elections at the APCM 2026

The following positions will be subject to election:

- 4 Churchwardens
- 4 Deanery Synod representatives
- Elected PCC members

Further details will be confirmed at the APCM.

Conclusion

The PCC continues to play a vital role in supporting the parish's mission and ministry. The commitment of its members supports the parish's governance, development, and smooth running. The PCC would like to thank all members and volunteers for their ongoing dedication and service.

Bart Schmal

St Mary's Wardens

1. Church roof

The only current leak is above the organ, but this has diminished recently. Stephen Crawley and Simon Bowler (roofer) have inspected the leak site and will repair it after a period of dry weather.

2. Annual Church spring clean.

We are grateful to all those who helped with the above. Sterling work was done by those cleaning the body of the church, and those labouring (in the dust) in the Tower.

During the cleaning we noted that the floor of St Catherine's chapel (an area of heavy footfall) needs restoration. A quote is being sought for sanding and resealing, last done in 2020.

The red aisle carpet would benefit from some minor work to avoid further fraying, and again a quote is being sought from M&C carpets (High Wycombe) who restored All Saints' carpet recently.

3. Church heating

After the new boiler installation last year, we have fine-tuned the system to provide adequate heating during the many times the Church is used each week. This means pre-setting the length of time the heating is on before the Church is used, optimising the thermostat settings and ensuring there is no air in the radiator/pipe system.

We should also remember that the Diocese took some persuading to allow us to install a replacement gas boiler, instead of a variety of other suggested green options which would have cost in excess of £300,000. In addition, beautiful as our Grade 1 listed Church is, it is not easy to heat. Double glazing and a lowered roof are not options.

4. Organ

Edward McCall (our Director of music) is leading a substantial project to both maintain and develop our historic organ. This has been supported by the PCC. He has completed an impressive, and extensive application, now submitted, to the Heritage lottery fund (HLF).

This project has been enthusiastically supported by our parishioners, as well as the Diocesan organ advisors. We await the result of the application. A Faculty has been submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC).

5. East Window

The restored stonework (tracery) remains in place following restoration (Corinthian Stone), and there is currently no need for further works.

6. Drains

These are regularly inspected and cleared as necessary. None have recently overflowed except the foul waste drain which was rodded and cleared. An overflow from the organ humidifier system has recently been replaced (50+ contractors) and a guard fitted. The outflow pipe had broken which was damaging the south side of the Church wall.

7. Churchyard

The Council has recently (with the Rector's permission) developed some 'wildflower areas' throughout the Churchyard. They have additional ideas to increase diversity including a hedge (approved by PCC) as well as benches (to be considered by PCC in due course) etc. A Faculty is in process.

We have also recently 'tidied' the 'bin area' on the north side of the Church, and hope the arrangement proves satisfactory.

8. Quinquennial Church Survey

Our inspection is due to take place this year (last inspection by Stephen Crawley, our Church surveyor, in 2021) and we are currently identifying a suitable date.

The 2021 inspection report (stored in the Church logbooks in the Upper Vestry) is a comprehensive and detailed survey (40 pages), and areas needing attention are categorised (1-5) with '1' being 'matters of utmost urgency' through to '5', 'desirable improvements with no timescale'. The summary of major works carried out since the 2021 inspection include:

East window stonework (tracery) restored and stabilised.

New boiler installed by Argonaut heating limited.

Boiler house restored as part of the above with extensive stone slab work by Corinthian stone. It is now secure and waterproof.

Restoration of Elizabeth Drake memorial (the Drake chapel).

There are no category 1 items outstanding, but numerous less urgent items remain.

9. Security/CCTV

The system was tested on 24th March by GBSG, and a report was received. Although the system works, including an audible alarm, the batteries have failed on two cameras, and a third has a failing battery. We have asked for a quote for the replacement of these batteries.

10. Fire assessment

We have completed an assessment (check form advised by our insurers, Ecclesiastical) of our readiness for dealing with a fire at St Mary's and will complete the same for St Mary's Church Rooms. Initial completion of the form for St Mary's has shown that we are at 'relatively low risk'. Our Church log book contains a professional fire assessment (*Protec Fire Safety*, February 2021) which indicated a slightly higher risk. However, all fire extinguishers are checked annually and fire exits are clearly marked. It is our view that those at most risk are the bellringers and we plan to discuss how this risk could be mitigated. In addition, we will need to carry out a 'fire drill', as advised by Ecclesiastical, and this will test our readiness, as well as highlighting deficiencies in our preparedness. All Saints' have already completed their assessment and no major issues have been highlighted.

11. First Aid/Cardiopulmonary resuscitation/ Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

We are grateful to Patricia Goode for kindly ensuring that there are now a number of qualified and certified First Aiders in both St Mary's and All Saints'. In addition, she has ensured that both the Church and Church Rooms are provided with First Aid kits. First Aid has been required on a number of occasions....and it has worked. Please remember to complete a form (adjacent to the First Aid kit) each time an incident occurs. This ensures we identify 'high risk' areas (and try and deal with them), and that Patricia Goode is aware of the need to restock the First Aid kits (plasters/bandages etc).

An AED has also been introduced with suitable training provided (for 19 parishioners and Clergy, in the Parish) for both CPR and the safe use of an AED. All are now certified. The 'green light' continues to flash on the AED (on the wall opposite the electrical cupboard, outside the kitchen/lower vestry), which confirms it remains ready for use (have a look when you pass, perhaps better phrased, when you walk past).

12. Amersham United Charities (Almshouses, Days & Drakes, Old Amersham).

The Church continues to take a lead in the continuing provision of suitable, low cost housing for single individuals who need it. This involves a substantial amount of work by Trustees including Sue Pounce, Tim Barnard, Val Simmonds, Tessa Cornish, Joe Noaman, our Rector, and others. We know that the residents very much appreciate this provision.

Finally, as Churchwardens, we are constantly aware of the amount of work done by Jonny and the clergy, Dorothy and our lay preachers, as well as a substantial number of volunteers who sustain the work of the Church, from flowers to fetes, bells and bellringers, coffee, cakes, candles, choir members, concerts and cash (thank you Graeme), readers and intercessors, sidesmen and women, those working with children and many (many) others without whom St Mary's wouldn't be such a welcoming and vibrant Church.

David Skinner and Tessa Cornish

All Saints' Wardens



Firstly we would like to congratulate Jonny and Jenna Rapson on the birth of their son Jude on 6th August.

WORSHIP

The pattern of services has remained the same as in previous years, with the continuation of several themed services.

Our normal Holy Communion service is held on Sunday at 9.00am followed by coffee and the opportunity to catch up with those in the congregation and the clergy. We have an average of 30 in the congregation but only occasionally do we have any children. We continue to offer communion either by sharing the chalice or by intinction for those who prefer it. We also have choral evensong on the first Sunday in the month at 6.00pm and a prayer meeting in the church on the first Saturday in the month at 10.00am.

Audrey Tridgell continues to hold a weekly House Group for Bible study, prayer and fellowship in her house on Wednesday mornings with a group of 14 members.

SPECIAL SERVICES

We again held themed services to encourage villagers to join us, particularly children, using an All-Age service on Mothering Sunday and Harvest Festival and these were well attended although slightly down on last year.

During Passiontide and Easter, we held several special services including Ash Wednesday (with the marking of an ash cross), a procession around the church on Palm Sunday (joined by Marble the donkey and Bob the pony), Compline (an evening service on the Tuesday of Holy Week) and a special service of hymns, prayers and meditation with the lighting of candles on Good Friday. We celebrated Easter Day with Holy Communion at 9.00am and the church was filled with spring flowers. The service was followed by coffee and hot cross buns.

We held the annual pet service in July, again in the church rather than outside, not because of rain but extreme heat. Attendees were mainly dogs but we did have a box containing caterpillars and ladybirds and a photo of a cat. Our Patronal Festival service was held on 2nd November and was also well attended with coffee and croissants served afterwards. The Service of Remembrance was held and followed by the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial and refreshments in the Red Lion.

We ended the year with our Christmas services including the Christingle Service, Carol Service, followed by mince pies and mulled wine, and the Crib Service. They were all very popular with families with attendance greatly increased from last year with over 100 for the Carol Service.

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, FUNERALS AND BURIALS

Three couples were married in the church in 2025 but there were no baptisms this year or funerals.

MISSION DOCUMENT

This development continues to be a work in progress.

PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH

Pastoral care continues under the “patch scheme” which supports those who are ill or need company and welcomes newcomers to the village. It meets twice a year and is very ably organised by Ruth Murphy.

The Magpie Club for pre-school children holds weekly meetings in the Village Hall every Friday during term time when an average of 10 children with their parents meet each week.

COLESHILL VILLAGE SCHOOL

In September 2025 the school joined three other infant schools (Hyde Heath, Little Missenden and Lee Common) to become the Chiltern Village Schools’ Federation under one Governing Body. Rev Jonny Rapson stepped down as Governor but still plays an important role in Coleshill School and Jane McNeilly remains as a Foundation Governor. The schools retain their own headteachers and staff but share some administrative posts. All village schools are vulnerable financially because of their small numbers and the reduction in birth rate.

ACTIVITIES

In January 2025 the “Flower Ladies” held a coffee morning in the village hall, raising £1300. This money was shared between the Flower Fund, Medical Detection Dogs, Rennie Grove Peace Hospice and Gateway Club.

In May the churchyard was used to host a plant swap and sale raising money for the Greenfingers Charity and a donation made to the church.

In October a flower festival was held to coincide with the Harvest Festival. The theme was “God’s Harvest in Art” and was brilliantly planned by Rosemary Valentine with some superb arrangements made by her team. Donations received were given to the church.

FABRIC AND CHURCHYARD

Faculty approval was finally granted for the disposal of the four pews which were being stored in a villager’s barn. These were given to local people who give their time to either the church or the school.

We had good support for the annual clean and tidy up in the church and churchyard including the clergy. The carpet has been taken up and the underlay replaced with new brass edging. The church clock was serviced and repaired. It kept losing time and missing out striking the quarter hours.

At the end of September, a bench was commissioned by Sally Pool in memory of Howard.

The two dead oak trees which had been felled were replaced by a Mountain Ash and a Field Maple. Two headstones in the churchyard were found to be dangerously "wobbly". No relatives could be found for either, so the diocese granted permission for us to make them safe.

PARISHIONERS

Many people help to support the running of the church, including those who give their time and service to the Church Committees to discuss the upkeep and daily running of the church. There are also others with specific roles. We also thank the parishioners who contribute regularly to provide the financial support on which the church depends.

We are fortunate to have a faithful team of organist, sides-persons, readers, choir and those who prepare the church for services. We also need to thank our excellent lay preachers and most importantly our clergy for leading our worship and providing spiritual guidance to us all.

Jane McNeilly & Chris Suttie

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to provide you with our annual accounts and this Executive Summary:

Key objectives for 2025 were to:

- Provide finance and strategic guidance and controls to support day to day cashflow and support Mission and Fabric proposals across our Parish

As reported at our quarterly PCC meetings, the workings of the parish and our finances have continued to have been impacted by the macro-economic environment of an economy struggling to grow with market pressures due to ever changing geo-political landscape & continued evidence that the cost-of-living crisis is still very much with us.

However, as you will read below, due to the hard work and generosity of many we have been able to produce a steady financial performance despite everything that was thrown at us during 2025.

Summary of Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2025:

- Good news in challenging times! Across the Unrestricted Funds, the PCC has made a surplus of £3.8k pre-investment movements.
- Both income & expenditure has increased in 2025.
- Total income for 2025 was £288.5k. Key contributors included voluntary income of £205.7k supported by the continued contribution by Oxford Diocese towards curate's tenancy; income from church activities of £65.2k (eg Church and Room hire; and investment income of £14k.
- Tax efficient regular giving saw significant increase (+£20.8k).
- The increase in voluntary income is especially encouraging and provides a strong foundation for longterm financial resilience.
- Small decrease in income from use of church (-£0.7k) and Church Rooms (-£2.9k) that evidences although there continues to be strong collaboration with our local community, the local rental market is still challenging.
- Total expenditure for 2025 was £329.1k. The primary cost was a one-off boiler repair/replacement.
- Restricted funds saw higher-than-usual expenditure due to the boiler project.
- Endowment funds reduced slightly due to market valuation changes.

Net Result for the Year

After all income and expenditure, the Parish recorded a **net expenditure** (deficit) of **£40.7k** before investment losses.

When unrealised investment movements are included (**£14.2k loss**) the final net movement in funds is **-£54.9k**.

- The Independent Examiner emphasises that this deficit is not a cause for concern, being overwhelmingly related to the one-off boiler cost rather than structural overspend.
 - Overall, I feel that our operational financial performance has stood up well given the challenges we faced in 2025:
 - Voluntary income increased.
 - Overall reserves remain strong.
 - Expenditure tightly controlled.
- Piggotts End Property - Surplus contribution static at £14.8k. The property is a reserved asset held in trust (with an ongoing debate whether this should be included in accounts at 89k or at current market value). With the valuation of the property, we are allowed to take one of two different approaches. First - the current policy is to take the cost value and leave as it is in the accounts without any revaluation: this was allowed during the transition period to the new reporting standards and can remain in place if we choose. The second option is - to revalue the property and then undertake regular valuations to ensure that the correct market value is shown in the accounts: the valuation should be prepared by a professional. As a PCC, we are remaining with the current policy but this can be reviewed at any point.
- Parish Share increased by £1.8k. We continue to pay our Parish Share in full every year. In terms of 2025. Parish Share 2026 will be increased by **£897 (0.94%) to £96,230** – yet again I feel that the Deanery Treasurer has done a very good job in keeping increases to a minimum despite the numerous challenges and competing priorities within the wider deanery.
- Balance Sheet: Total funds stood at £562.4k (2024: £617.3k). Cash at bank was £154.7k. Investment holdings ended the year at £340.1k.

It is important to understand when analysing Parish Finances that there are three types of Funds:

- Unrestricted Funds – general funds for general objectives of the church – Day to day operational cash flow but does include unrestricted assets – decreased to £173.4k of which £89k is the Piggotts End property. The increase is largely due to a paper entry transfer from General funds to Restricted to cover the costs of the new boiler at St Mary's.
- Restricted Funds – can only be used for the specific purpose for which they have been given e.g. Fabric – increased as per above.
- Endowment Funds – represent endowments where capital must be maintained, and the dividend income used only for the restricted purposes specified in the establishment of the endowments – decreased due to re-valuation by £7.8k to £186.8k.

- **Good Box 2022 - 2025 Comparison** - Good Box has become an important revenue generator - also being used for Bookstall, Marquee Hire & other parish events.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Totals	Ave Donation
2025	£3,203 (438)	£2,964 (493)	£2,941 (544)	£4,281 (689)	£13,389 (2164)	£6.19
2024	£1,485 (253)	£2,193 (427)	£2,088 (395)	£2,913 (506)	£8,679 (1581)	£5.49
2023	£1,605 (303)	£2,148 (422)	£2,584 (495)	£2,816 (500)	£9,153 (1720)	£5.32
2022	£1,172 (219)	£2,133 (404)	£1,777 (320)	£2,312 (432)	£7,394 (1375)	£5.38
Difference +/- 2025 to 2024	£1,718 (185)	£771 (66)	£853 (149)	£1,368 (183)	£4,710 (583)	+0.70

- Interesting lens to look through that shows continued growth in card usage over cash within services and our charity book and flower stalls.
- This points to increased foot flow / usage of GB within the parish.
- Note that 2025 average donation up 70p from 2025 but overall donations received up 54%.
- After provider charges – CAF account credited £12.9k

In terms of Missionary and Charitable Giving, this will be covered in detail through those sub-committees – we have now set up separate funds in both our accounts and with the bank to ensure it is fully transparent and managed in accordance with our own internal PCC Policy and Charities' Commission Regulations. I would like to acknowledge the fantastic contribution of Loraine, Martin & Simon Hollett and all those who support the Annual Fete, Book and Flower Stall and the Gazebo / Marquee rentals that contribute a significant percentage of our Charitable Giving.

Key Finance actions undertaken to address our key challenges and support delivery of sustainable 2025 financial performance:

- All Regulatory (including Diocesan, HMRC & Charities Commission) returns up to date including recent completion and update of bank mandates and KYC Due Diligence process.
- Mercer Lewin Ltd completed their independent examination and reported no material concerns regarding the accuracy of accounting records, compliance, or the preparation of the accounts.
- Comprehensive Treasurer's Report prepared and discussed at every PCC meeting.

Our 2025 operational cashflow (excluding curate's tenancy) showed that we needed:

- 2025 Monthly / Daily Fixed Costs (the costs we have no choice in paying eg salaries / utilities - £15,317.46 / £503.59
- 2025 Monthly / Daily Operational Expenditure (excl boiler) £24,073.84/ £791.49
- 2025 Monthly / Daily Operational Expenditure (incl boiler) £28,244.51/ £928.59

This shows the significant amount of money that we need to raise just to stand still. It is vital that we continue with focussed, disciplined management of our finances. In terms of operational cashflow, there is very little margin for error, every penny is used and if it is not used for day to day operations, then we need to ensure it is only used to support the main good causes both at local and national level. It is Important to give credit where credit is due: Oxford Diocese continued to provide full tenancy funding support in 2025 but they have now very kindly agreed to go above and beyond and provide 100% funding support for 2026. This is hugely generous and will have a lasting positive financial impact for the parish.

Planned Giving and Gifts are our largest income source (c.71%) and we must thank every one of our congregations for their continued support and contribution during another challenging year. Without ongoing Planned Giving and those generous "one offs" we simply cannot function. Thank you for what you donate now. If you are able to give more, then I can assure you, that we will put it to very good use and that every penny is accounted for and nothing is wasted.

In summary, 2025 was another challenging year. However, despite the headwinds and with phenomenal support of our congregation we were able to deliver a roust financial performance whilst at the same time meeting our parish share and supporting new Charitable and Mission Giving Initiative.

Looking Ahead to 2026 and Beyond

- **Financial Sustainability** - The core financial operations of the parish remain stable. With voluntary giving on an upward trend and expenditure largely under control, the Parish is well positioned going into 2026 to support our mission work.
- **Fabric and Maintenance Planning** - the boiler expenditure highlights the importance of continued longterm planning for major works. Using Quinquennial inspection findings as a roadmap, we will continue to refine our approach to:
 - forecasting major maintenance costs,
 - aligning them with available restricted funds, and
 - protecting unrestricted reserves.
- **Reserves Strategy** - protecting and rebuilding unrestricted reserves will remain a key priority, ensuring that unexpected costs can be absorbed without compromising ministry, worship, and community activities.

- **Key Challenges**

- Continued financial challenge at All Saints with discussions already underway regarding solutions.
- Listed Places of Worship Scheme whereby we could claim back VAT on Fabric projects now closed – we were one of the last PCC's to successfully claim in Q4 2025 and were paid full 100% VAT refund £8.9k for the Boiler Project at St Mary's. The closing of this scheme could potentially put future fabric projects in doubt.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support from Rev Jonny Rapson, Rev Tim Barnard, Rev Sue Gill, Rev Michelle Fotherby, Loraine Hollett, Clare Atkinson & Dorothy Potter who work so hard to support the parish finances. In addition, the Church Wardens and Parish Secretaries during 2025 Sue Pounce & Bart Schmal for giving me the time at PCC to report, discuss and debate key financial challenges that we are facing.

Should you have any queries concerning the contents of this review or should you have any general questions about the parish finances, please do not hesitate to contact me via mobile 07703 963990 or email at treasurer-pcc@outlook.com.

Graeme Coles - PCC Treasurer

Planned Giving

An enormous thank you to all of those who contribute via either the Envelope Scheme or through making donations via Standing Orders. Each month, I ensure that I claim as much as I can using our specialist software which ensures that HMRC is a major donor to the Church each month. To give an idea, I roughly claim at least £1500 each month. This year has seen changes to both our banking system and our planned giving software. Whilst this has at some times thwarted my attempts at efficiencies we are now back to normal.

One small plea - we are only able to claim gift aid on £8000 a year in either cash, or through the tap machine. If you regularly use the tap machine to make a donation and are a tax payer, please do consider making your gift by Standing Order as there is no limit to the amount we can claim through that mechanism. If you are interested in doing this, please do email me or speak to a sidesperson who will have a stock of forms for completion and return to me. Thank you for your generosity.

Clare Atkinson

Charitable Giving



2025 was another successful year for Charitable Giving and a busy year with the choosing of two new charities for 2026.

In 2025 £2,990.44 was raised via Stream 1 and distributed between the two nominated charities:

- Niche International
- The Hospice of St Francis

Stream 1 income is all money raised by the parish through events and special services. This includes but is not restricted to: parish Fete, book and plant stall sales, loaning of parish resources, special services, & social events.

In addition, £2250 went to support Steve and Lindsey Poulson and their work with Street Kids Direct in Honduras.

During 2025 the Charitable Giving Policy was revised and brought up to date. It was important that transparency in where the money came from and how it was distributed was clearly understood by all in the parish. Valerie Simmonds kindly organised the introduction of a Charitable Giving notice board in each church. These boards were to inform the congregations of who was receiving monies raised and any additional information the charities like to supply.

Towards the end of 2025 the committee started the process to choose two new charities for 2026. It was decided that both congregations would be asked for nominations for charities which would all be put for a vote. 95 votes were received, over 70% of the two congregations, which was amazing.

The vote had been divided into 1. International and 2. National & Local. From these two groups charities were voted on and the following chosen to receive funds in 2026;

- British Ukrainian Aid
- Wycombe Homeless Connection

All of this giving is made possible by the hard work and commitment of many volunteers from both churches and the wider community. Thank you to all of you who have contributed whether practically or financially over the past year, it is much appreciated.

The Revd Michelle Fotherby, Valerie Simmonds, Pam Holden, David Elliott, Catherine Elliott

Mission Fund



This year has seen the establishment of a new Parish Mission Fund, with £14,072 held at year end. The fund has been built through the generosity and effort of the church community, including income from the fete, sponsored events, and surplus from activities such as tea dances and Brickfest.

The PCC adopted the Mission Fund Policy in November 2025, setting out a clear purpose: to support the mission and outreach of the church through our core values of Community, Welcome, and Worship. The fund is designed to enable initiatives arising from within the church community, supported by a clear and accountable application process.

An initial commitment of £4,000 has been made towards running an Alpha course over ten sessions, including an away day, with costs scaled for 20–40 participants. This reflects a priority to create space for people to explore faith in a welcoming and accessible way.

Approval has also been given for the purchase of a church laptop to support communication and publicity across church groups.

Although in its first year, the Mission Fund is already enabling a more intentional approach to supporting mission within the parish. We are grateful to all who have contributed to making this possible, and we look forward to seeing how God will use these resources in the year ahead.

The Revd Jonny Rapson

Outreach Team

The outreach team continues to look for ways to strengthen links between church and community by creating welcoming spaces where relationships can grow naturally and where the love of God can be shown through hospitality, kindness, and shared activity. Through a range of simple but intentional gatherings, people continue to find accessible and comfortable ways to engage with church life, helping relationships to grow and encouraging a wider sense of belonging. Regular opportunities to meet together in this way continue to show how important steady presence and conversation can be in building community over time.

The Café Recitals continue to be an important point of connection between church and community, bringing people together each month for coffee, cake, conversation, and music in a warm and welcoming setting. These gatherings are very well attended and are enjoyed by both those who come regularly and those visiting for the first time. The atmosphere helps people feel at ease within the church building and often encourages people to return, with friendships continuing to develop through repeated contact. The recitals offer a gentle and enjoyable way for people to spend time in church and experience it as a place of warmth, hospitality, and shared enjoyment.



Friendship lunches have provided a lovely opportunity for people to gather socially, particularly for those who appreciate companionship, conversation, and the chance to form new friendships. The two lunches held so far have been well received and thoroughly enjoyed by those attending, with positive feedback reflecting how much people value the chance to sit together, talk, and share a meal. These gatherings have helped to strengthen a sense of belonging and fellowship, especially for those who may not always have regular social contact. They continue to show how simple hospitality can quietly offer support and encouragement within the wider community.

Breadmaking workshops have brought together people of different ages, interests, abilities, and backgrounds through a practical shared activity that naturally encourages participation and conversation. These sessions have created an enjoyable environment where people are able to learn together, share skills, and build relationships in an inclusive and relaxed way. The workshops have also encouraged creativity and confidence, while strengthening the sense of community that develops when people work alongside one another. As this part of the outreach work continues, thought is being given to how it may best develop and continue to support those who take part.

Looking Ahead

We remain encouraged by the way these activities continue to create natural opportunities for connection within the wider community. The aim is to build on what has already been established by supporting activities that help people feel welcomed, deepen relationships, and encounter the life of the church in an authentic and accessible way. We hope to continue offering opportunities that encourage participation, strengthen existing relationships, and open further ways for people to connect with the life of the church in the coming year.

The Revd Jonny Rapson, The Revd Michelle Fotherby, Joe Noaman, Pam Hooley, Catherine Elliott

Social Team

Overview: The social committee is now into its second year of activity, building on the successes of the previous year and continuing to develop new ideas and events for the congregation and wider community. The purpose of the social committee is to find ways to practically strengthen relationships and foster a sense of belonging within our church community and to be an outward symbol of Christ's call for us to love our neighbours. We seek to align with the Mission Action Plan (community, welcome and worship) and further the mission of the church.

Rector's Ramble: February, May

We have put on two guided walks across the parish which were well received. Our plan for 2026 is to organise one walk every quarter.

Let's Dance: March

We had around 40 attendees to our 'Let's Dance' event where Michelle taught us dance steps and we practiced and performed our moves. This was all enjoyed with an afternoon tea and prosecco! It was great to be joined by the Wycliffe Hall trainees and show them the life and variety in the parish, and to welcome people from outside of the church.

Easter Egg Hunt and Crafts: April

We put on an Easter egg hunt after the Easter Sunday service and had lots of craft activities for all children to participate in including egg decorating, basket making, easter cards and colouring. We were very fortunate to have sunny weather and hope for the same again this year!

Bring and Share lunches: Epiphany, Pentecost, Welcome for Wycliff Hall trainees, Baptism Renewal, Summer

We hosted a number of bring and share lunches throughout the year. It was great to have so much support from the congregation with great food provided and shared by all, and a chance for people to sit, meet, talk and build relationships.

Social evening: November

We hosted a social evening inviting some of the newer 'young-adult' members of the congregation. Having recognised that we have a number of new people in the 20s- 40s age bracket attending on Sundays, we wanted to start building that community and establishing relationships.

Advent Trail: December.

We had 26 windows decorated this year as part of the advent trail, with a large concentration in the Old Town. Around half of the houses were different to last year with several windows decorated by people outside of the congregation. Whilst a walk was planned for 18th December, this had to be called off last minute due to exceptionally wet weather.

2026 so far:

Barn Dance: March

A live band and caller led us in a barn dance attended by over 50 people complete with square dances, promenades, and a little bit of running to keep up! There may have been a few missteps but good fun was had by all, accompanied by drinks and hot dogs to sustain the dancers.

Upcoming events in 2026:

Easter Egg Hunt and Crafts: 5th April.

After the Easter Sunday service, children will be invited to participate in an Easter egg hunt and join in with Easter craft activities such as making cards and baskets.

The Revd Michelle Fotherby, Becky Benn, Jenna Rapson, Joe Noaman, Sophie Schmal, Rhian Gardner



Children & Families

Throughout 2025, our church's children's work has continued to grow and thrive, providing regular opportunities for children and families both within our congregation and the wider local community to connect, learn, and have fun together.

Sunday School has taken place most weeks during the 10:30am family service, offering Christian focused teaching for children. This has remained a key part of our weekly ministry helping children to explore faith. We have also continued to have our All-Age services where the children are encouraged to participate during the service including the readings and prayers, interactive sermons that are age-appropriate and lately inviting the children to stand around the altar during the preparation of communion.

In addition to our regular Sunday activities, several special events have been held over the year. Brick Fest, our Lego-based club, has been particularly successful in reaching families beyond the church. Through advertising in local schools, we have welcomed many new children and parents, creating a relaxed and friendly space for community engagement.

Seasonal celebrations have also played an important role. Our Harvest Party, Light Party, and Christmas Party were all well attended and provided fun, inclusive alternatives for families. These events have helped strengthen relationships and build connections with those who may not regularly attend church.

Our weekly toddler group, held every Tuesday during term time, has continued to be a valuable point of contact for young families. It offers a consistent and welcoming environment where parents and carers can build friendships while children play and learn together.

Overall, these activities have brought in a significant number of children and families from both within the church and the surrounding community. This has been a fantastic outreach opportunity, enabling us to build relationships, share our faith, and serve our community in meaningful ways.

The Revd Jonny Rapson



Bellringers

Ringling for Sunday morning services continues to be well supported by our members and visitors ringling eight or ten bells. We are also able to ring for monthly choral evensong, though that is usually only six.

Our practices are busy, starting with handling lessons for our learners followed by basic skills and then when the majority arrive, moving on to simple methods, interspersed with more advanced methods for our more experienced ringers.

As a result of a notice placed in the local magazine last year, we have had a lot of interest in learning to ring. Unfortunately although at least 13 started lessons, only four remain. Various reasons have been given, "not convenient time", "too busy at the moment", "family circumstances have changed", "probably not my thing". I am particularly grateful to Matthew, Lucy and Chris for regularly turning up at 7pm to teach the learners.

During the year, two of our longstanding ringers felt that ringling was getting too much for them and decided to retire. We were very sorry to lose such dedicated Sunday service ringers. One young ringer, who started in September, has made good progress and is now ringling for Sunday services. We hope our other learners will follow soon.

Our bells continue to be popular with visiting ringers. We hosted two groups from neighbouring areas for general practices. Five peals were successfully rung in 2025 by visiting bands. Four quarters were also rung, three by local bands and the fourth was a lost peal attempt.

We rang for the 80th anniversary of VE day, general ringling for all available members of the band, followed by a successful quarter of Grandsire Triples. We also rang a successful quarter of Cambridge Major on the day of the church fete.

I was reminded early in the year that Alan Ainsworth would be 90 on 2nd October 2025. Alan was tower captain here for over 30 years and was responsible for the installation of our beautiful eight bells in 1983 and augmentation to twelve in 1993. So, I set about arranging to ring in celebration. I contacted several people who had rung peals with him in the past. I finally managed to arrange two quarter peal bands, one on his actual birthday and a second one on the Saturday morning. Several people had to drop out at the last minute, so bands were rearranged. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful on the Thursday, but got the quarter on the Saturday. I had arranged snacks and bubbles for both attempts, so we toasted Alan on both occasions.

We rang for eight weddings and four funerals during the year, and I was pleased that we were able to get bands to ring for both services on Christmas Eve (crib service in the afternoon and midnight service) as well as several carol services and Christmas morning

I would like to thank Reverend Jonny and the PCC for allowing us to ring the bells. I would also like to personally thank all our ringers for their support and dedication

Jan Galloway

Music at All Saints'

Our small choir of seven, representing all four voices, continues to ably support our morning and monthly Choral Evensong services. Their commitment to and interest in the latter is especially appreciated as congregational support is disappointingly low.

I am very grateful to all choir members for their continuing loyalty, enthusiasm and good humour. I also much appreciate the support and encouragement we receive from all our clergy.

Many thanks also to Gerard Anderson for organ cover once a month and to Dorothy Potter for always being willing to help on the admin side.

New choir members are always welcome. If you are interested and would like to know more, please be in touch with me.

Ruth Murphy
Organist and Choirmaster



Music at St Mary's



We have had a memorable year with so much in the way of growth and development in these past twelve months. The core mission of the music at St Mary's is to enhance the Worship for all those who attend services. This can only happen thanks to the skill, dedication, and commitment of the wonderful choir.

With sincere gratitude to all those in the choir who attend with such regularity, enthusiasm, good will, it is an absolute pleasure to work together and see how we can add such meaning to the services. Once again, we have seen a number of significant articles which tell of the downward trajectory of church choirs. It has been brilliant to welcome an increasing number of new members into the choir across all four vocal parts. We certainly are bucking the trend!

Many of you will know that we introduced the chorister scheme, and it is evidential that our youngest singers' confidence grows apace. Their continued integration, musical growth and conduct is fabulous to see develop. We need to remember that these young people are the future of the Church and so the investment of resources is critical to ensure choral music is passed to the younger generation. We have an excellent team of chaperones, Anne, Jane, Lisa and Shima. Apart from the vital role they play in supporting the safety and wellbeing of the choristers, their organisation, flexibility, communication, and willingness to help has been very gratefully received. They are a central part of the chorister framework and continue to be a significant help to me during rehearsals, services and either side of the same!

Planning has been initiated as we work towards raising funds for the restoration of the organ. First built in 1906, and without a comprehensive renovation in that time, we need to ensure that we continue to have an instrument which can support the rapidly growing congregation and choir. All those who have attended St Mary's since 1906 will have heard the organ, something we want to continue for the next five-score years and more.

Huge thanks as always to Adrian, Andrew, and Ruth for playing on Sundays and other services from time to time. We have also welcomed Ian, who has joined the choir, who has also played. Being able to call on them is wonderful, especially at a time when organists are in short supply.

Finally, my sincere thanks go to the clergy team who support, challenge and encourage me in my work. I am very much looking forward to the next twelve months, which will be hugely exciting as we unfold our plans and grow the music at St Mary's.

Edward McCall

All Saints' Flower Team

Easter is only a few weeks away as I write this report. Our hard working flower team has had a busy and happy year decorating the church for festivals, the fortnightly pedestal by the aLear and a lot more!

For last Easter as usual we filled the church with spring flowers and lilies sponsored in memory of friends and relatives who have died. Judi Herbert collects the names and then Jane McNeilly records them on a board in the church porch. We are planning a jam jar spring flower arranging event on April 2nd this year, hoping to bring children and adults into the church to help us fill the windowsills with colour, while enjoying coffee and cake. Perhaps we might even find a new member for our team.

In May we were able to enjoy Gail Wolfendale's plant swap which she organises in the church yard. In 2025 it was held on a Sunday just after the service.

In October we had a very successful Flower Festival combined with decorating the church for our Harvest Festival. Entitled 'God's Harvest in Art', we celebrated the works of artists from around the world with displays giving the essence of a famous painting in flowers and fruit. The impact of all these 20 installations was enjoyed by our guests while having afternoon tea and cake. It was a very joyful event: the church buzzed with conversation and raised £779.37 for church funds. We calculated that during the week about 130 helpers and visitors came to the church. There was an article in the Coleshill Winter newsletter giving more detail and Andrew Davis the editor even sourced pictures of the originals to explain our ideas. We must have advertised the event well as one lady came by train and bus to see our event and St Mary's harvest displays from Croydon!

For Christingle and Christmas 2025 the team created small trees out of evergreen branches in red pots on each window sill. We made them look like Christmas trees with miniature lights, white fir cones and red bows on them. We had night lights too to create extra twinkle.

Our annual January flower fund coffee morning at which we raised money for the church flowers, Maggie's Cancer Care in Oxford (£300) and the Thames Valley Air Ambulance. (£300) We raised £1,120. We think over 60 visitors and helpers attended. Thank you to everyone who gave so generously with their donations for the bring and buy, raffle and cakes. Any items left from the Bring and Buy were taken by Jan Bacon to the Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care shop.

Our team, I realise, not only create beautiful flower displays but seem to make large numbers of delicious cakes! Thank you all for your creativity, time, generosity and enthusiasm.

Rosemary Valentine

St Mary's Flower Team

The team was greatly saddened by the death of Jo Coldham in December. Jo led the team for many years and did so much to teach and encourage others, becoming a friend to us all. Her kindness and dedication will be greatly missed and, as we go on without her, we now realise the magnitude of her service. Coming just before Christmas her death made decorating the church for Christmas very bittersweet. As she requested pink flowers for her funeral we put a tinge of pink in all the Christmas arrangements as a way of remembering her.

On Friday 23rd January the flower team got together to share ideas and techniques for the pedestal arrangements we provide each week. The team created about 15 arrangements in a variety of styles to suit the various mechanics and locations of the church. The glorious displays clearly reflected Jo's legacy.

The Flower team has continued to create arrangements for regular weekly services and special occasions including weddings, funerals and the major church festivals.

Whilst we are fortunate to have a number of experienced arrangers we are keen to share our love of flowers and our skills to give training to anyone who is interested in joining the team. I am pleased to say that three new members, who recently attended workshops, have just joined us. A flexible rota system means that each person is only needed three or four times in a year.

The cost of flowers continues to rise. In common with many other products this increase has been caused by several factors including higher energy and transport costs. We welcome donations at any time.

On Mothering Sunday bunches of flowers were prepared for the children to give to their mothers and other ladies in the church.

Once again members of the congregation donated flowers in remembrance of loved ones to decorate the church for Easter and this is much appreciated.

Various church groups were again invited to decorate a window sill to symbolise Harvest Thanksgiving. Many thanks to those involved.

This year the annual autumn lunch party was held in the Church Rooms for the first time. It was an enjoyable event and gave members, new and old, a chance to chat and share the delicious food they brought.

Jane Partridge

St Mary's Refreshments

I took over organising this after Janet Clayfield retired last year after an amazing 25 years of service.

Numbers staying for refreshments after the service have noticeably risen since last autumn. This is so good to see as it enables more members of the congregation to stay and socialise and means we can also welcome those who are new to St Mary's. It's been lovely to see some baptism families staying too.

To meet increased demand, I have trialled having three Coffee Team members on duty each Sunday. Two set up beforehand and serve the coffee and tea and the third person is the helper, who brings fresh supplies of hot water and tea and makes a start on the washing up. This has really helped so will now be a permanent feature.

I have been attempting to change to Freetrade supplies. This is now in place for tea bags but is a work in progress for Fair Trade instant coffee.

Our coffee team volunteers now number 29, but as always, more are always welcome, particularly with move to three members on duty each Sunday. It was good to have more volunteers when I appealed earlier this year! If you feel that you may be able to help out, please contact me after the service or phone me on 01494 728478.

Elizabeth Barnard

St Mary's Sides Team

The Sides team is a friendly group of efficient, happy and enthusiastic members of the congregation. Being on the Sides team is a great way to get involved and to get to know people at St Mary's. We cover all services including special services and support the Verger role for weddings and funerals. Everyone on the Sides team works well together in a caring and supportive manner, with each typically on duty two or three times a quarter. The team has the important role of welcoming people to the Church. The feedback received shows how well this is received and appreciated. Thank you to all those involved for being such an excellent team and if others would like to join us please speak to Howard Hughes.

Howard Hughes

Coleshill Infant School



We are pleased to see the days getting longer and the first signs of Spring! Our Reception children have been wrapping up warm and attending Forest School weekly in our amazing Forest School area. This term, both Year 1 and Year 2 will have the opportunity to do Forest School as well. We always encourage the children to see the beauty of our surroundings and we are certainly very lucky in that regard being located in the stunning Chilterns.

We have had a busy term so far with lots of exciting events for the pupils including our Spirituality week with several visitors from different religions coming to talk to the children. We celebrated World Book Day on Thursday 5th March and the children and staff came into school in their pyjamas with their favourite book so they could cosy up and read.

The children have enjoyed some inter-school sports festivals, such as the gymnastics, football and multi-skills which enrich the children's experience at school. We also had an excellent whole school trip to the Roald Dahl gallery and museum, where we enjoyed workshops on The Enormous Crocodile and a Gallery Science adventure and we will be visiting Kew Gardens in June.

This year, we took part in a number day, focusing on numeracy and raising money for the a Breast cancer charity, our Reception teacher, Mrs Dalston, is doing a sponsored event and our families donated towards sponsoring her for this worthy cause. Children came into school in number-themed mufti and completed lots of number-based activities, making maths fun and engaging.

Our "Quack Snacks" duck feeding station is still going strong at the school. Duck food is available to purchase for 50p from the school porch which will be dropped into an honesty box. All proceeds go to the school.

During Lent, we encourage the children to think about how to behave towards others, to have good manners and to be particularly kind and caring towards one another. We had the Mothering Sunday service at All Saints Church in Coleshill in March when the children performed a poem and our end of term service at 11am on Friday 27th March.

Looking further ahead to hopefully warmer weather, our annual May Fayre will be held in the school garden, weather permitting, on Saturday 16th May. Please join us and come and support the school if you are free!

Sarah Hewat
Head Teacher

St Mary's Primary School



It's been a year of change on the Governing Body, with Jacqueline Rouse stepping down as Chair but remaining on the Board as Inclusion Governor, and Chris Monnington stepping down as Vice Chair and Chair of Finance, Premises and Personnel (FPP) Committee, and as Governor. Frances Ford, Nicky Norman and Shanta Gillot have both also stepped down.

Tony Fraser and Stephen Bell have stepped up to become Co-Chairs, with Tony becoming interim Chair of FPP. Edward McCall continues to chair the Teaching, Learning, Pupil & Community Committee (TLPC).

New appointees welcomed to the Governing Body include Mrs Huma Haig, Mrs Suellen Dooley (a new Church appointment), Mrs Mary Foreman and Mrs Sandra Burn. Details can be found in the table below. Martin Pounce and Edward McCall were both re-appointed in 2025.

Governing Body Structure

The Parish continues to have strong links with St Mary's School, with the Governing Body continuing to have a strong representation appointed by the PCC or the Diocese of Oxford: 6 out of the 12 Governors. Despite the change in appointments during the last academic year, there continues to be many years of combined experience, and those new Governors come to the body with some very valuable experience.

Current Governors are:

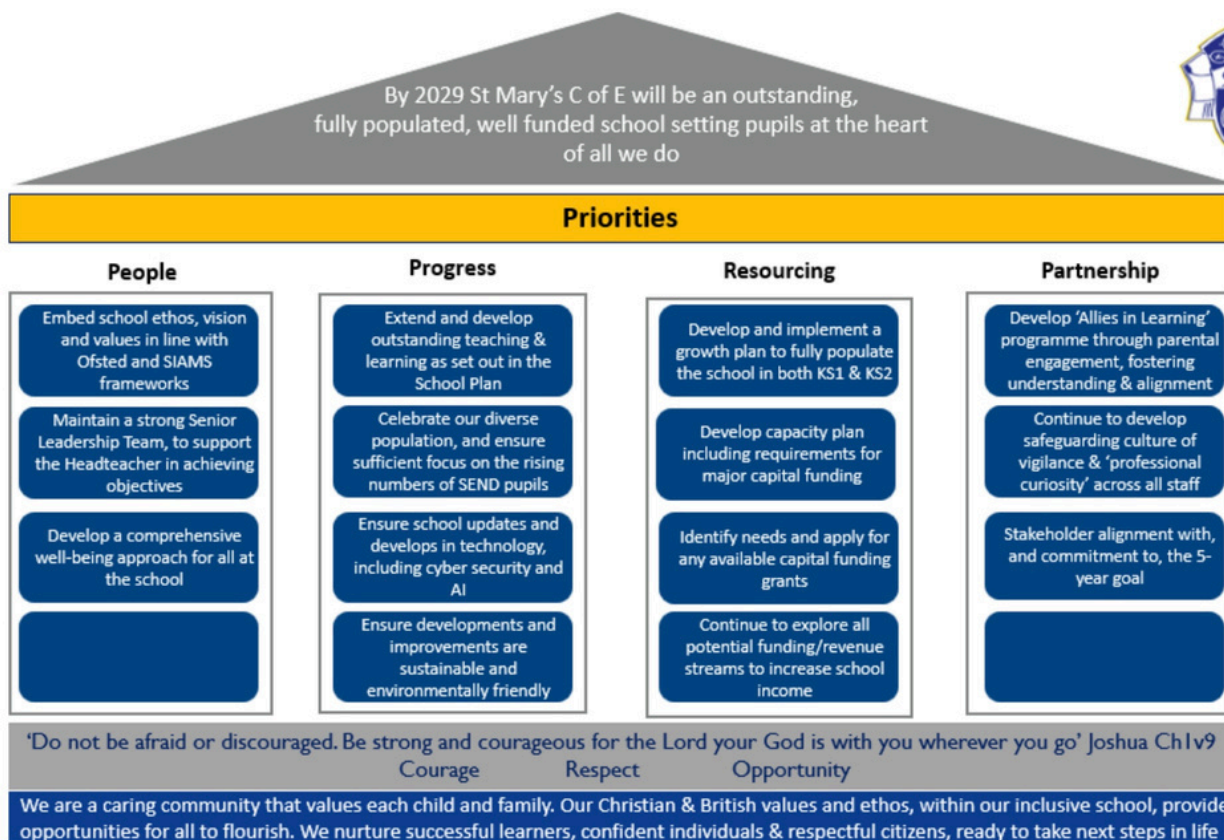
Rev. Jonny Rapson - Ex-Officio Governor - Ex-Officio
Tony Fraser - Co-Chair - Appointed by Diocese
Stephen Bell - Co-Chair - Parent Governor
Jacqueline Rouse - Governor - Appointed by PCC
Edward McCall - Governor - Appointed by PCC
Julie Hills - Head Teacher - Ex-Officio
Martin Pounce - Governor - Appointed by Diocese
Steve Johnson - Associate-Governor - Appointed by PCC
Nasim Clarke - Governor - Parent Governor
Mary Foreman - Governor - Staff Governor
Sandra Burn - Governor - Co-Opted Governor
Huma Haig - Governor - Local Authority Governor
Suellen Dooley - Governor - Appointed by PCC

Committees

The two main Committees continue to meet once a term:

- The Teaching, Learning, Pupil and Community Committee
- The Finance, Personnel and Premises Committee

These committees continue to drive clarity and focus on the key school performance elements of learning outcomes, financial performance and well-being of both staff and pupils. Through these committee meetings the Headteacher is held to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and the FPP oversees the financial performance of the school making sure its money is appropriately spent. The outputs of these meetings are then communicated to the wider Governing Body at the twice termly Full Governing Body Meetings. Working groups are also formed to focus on specific projects, which then report back to the Governing Body. In 2025 working groups were convened to develop the Governors' long-term strategy and the key actions required to implement it. The overview is included below, with the focus on school performance and people, as well as recognition of the challenges faced with declining birth rates and pupil numbers, and the importance of capitalising on the superb community around the school.



The school continues to drive strong results through all year groups. This is despite facing continuing challenges as the number of Pupil Premium and SEND pupils increases, leading to the need for a variety of different approaches to teaching. A new programme called 'Adaptive Teaching' has been put in place to deal with this most effectively.

Adaptive Teaching requires continuous assessment of the strengths and needs of learners, and then adapting teaching accordingly to help all learners to meet expectations. It provides opportunities for all pupils to experience success by:

- Adapting lessons, whilst maintaining high expectations for all, so that all pupils have the opportunity to meet expectations.
- Balancing input of new content so that pupils master important concepts.
- Making effective use of adult support

This new approach has been a cornerstone of inclusive learning and both attainment and progress have continued to be extremely positive.

Alongside its good academic progress and attainment generally the school continues to offer a wide range of sports utilizing our Sports Premium. The school continues to take part in interschool competitions in various sports, with much success. Extra-curricular clubs and pupil enrichment activities are a very impressive part of daily school life. Fifteen 'after-school' clubs provide care and sporting development, while a staggering 76 enrichment activities have been offered and enjoyed across the year!

The quality of the above programmes, along with the leadership and behaviour aspects of the school were recognised in a truly excellent Ofsted report in June 2025. Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Leadership and Early Years provision were all rated Good, with Personal Development rated as Outstanding! Some example quotes from the report include:

- 'St Mary's CofE Primary is a school where inclusivity shines through.'
- 'Last year, the school's published outcomes in key stage 2 were well above the national average, particularly in reading and mathematics.'
- 'The school's personal development provision is exceptional. It expertly crafts experiences and enrichment opportunities.'
- 'Teaching pupils to read is a top priority. Children learn phonics right from the start of Reception using a well-structured programme. Expert staff deliver this programme with complete diligence'

The school continues to face challenges with regards to the restricted budget so the Governing Body is working closely with the school to look at ways of increasing funds for the school, through The Parent Voluntary fund and the Friends of St Mary's, who continue to be very active in fund raising for the school.

However, the critical funding stream comes from pupil numbers and these have fallen in Key Stage 1. This is a common problem across Buckinghamshire and is due in the largest part to the fall in birth rates and the available pool of new starters. Conversely, places in Key Stage 2 are over-subscribed due to the influx to the area of families who want to access the Grammar School system. The Governing Body's Strategic Plan (seen earlier in the report) has focused on this as a core pillar of success. A marketing plan and activities are being developed which aim to create awareness of the school's considerable benefits and to target families accordingly. Wrap-around care has been identified as a valuable offering, and the school have recently received funding from the Local Authority for a new classroom to expand the existing pre- and after-school club.

The Governing Body would like to say a huge 'thank you' to our Headteacher, Julie Hills, who will be leaving the school at Easter. We also recognise that Julie's 21½ years of dedicated, determined, and outstanding leadership has taken the school from strength to strength to its current successful position, as recognised in the Ofsted report.

The challenge of finding a worthy successor was a responsibility keenly felt by all members of the Governing Body! A second recruitment process was required in November 2025, after the first attempt in June had failed to come up with a suitable candidate. Through the whole process we received valuable support from both the Local Authority and the Diocese, and we are delighted to welcome Mrs Stephanie Enas as our new Headteacher, starting on the 13th April. We look forward to supporting her as she leads the school into a new era, building on the current successes enjoyed by the school.

Tony Fraser and Steve Bell
Co-Chairs of Governors