

2026



10.00am Morning service and extended junior church groups
Bubbles, Flames and Ignite will have an extended session until
11.45am.

10.45am Coffee break

11.00am Annual Meeting

11.45am Break to re-set chairs and pick up children

12.05pm International church lunch - everyone is invited to stay

12.45pm Activities

1.30pm Finish and clear up

All timings are approximate - but this is what we're aiming for!

Go deeper with God
Grow closer to each other
Reach further with the love of Jesus



Annual meeting agenda:

1. Looking back and giving thanks (Dan's review of the year, pages 2-4)
2. Formally required reports and other reports (pages 4-14)
3. Election of church wardens
4. Election of PCC members
5. Election of Deanery Synod members
6. Update on Restore & Renew
7. Financial report (pages 9-11)
8. Appointment of independent examiner
9. Questions
10. Apologies for absence
11. Minutes of last year's meeting (pages 15-19)
12. Prayer

Dan's review of 2025

It is easy to focus on the human aspects of Restore & Renew as the major feature of 2025. But what was the Lord doing through all of that time and effort?

I have been so encouraged to see people's enthusiasm to use God-given gifts in ways we haven't previously given them opportunity to – especially on the buildings vision group and in fundraising. Similarly, when we launched the £10 challenge, it was wonderful to see people's God-given creativity being used in ways we don't normally get to see – I think of people's creative contributions at the craft fair we held. That is a sign of growing in discipleship.

And I've been encouraged by the way that the congregation has responded generously in giving (and pledging) money to Restore & Renew – not simply because it means we're making good progress towards our financial targets, but because it's a sign that God has been working in people's hearts to release such generosity. I remember the first gift day we had as I called people to come and present their offerings at the front whilst we sang "I will offer up my life". I had no idea whether one person or many would respond. By the time we finished, the basket was piled high with envelopes and I had tears in my eyes as I lifted it before the Lord and echoed David's prayer from 1 Chronicles 29: "Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Everything we have comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand."

Our Restore & Renew prayer has been that Restore & Renew would help us to:

- Go deeper with God: it has, as it's grown our faith and increased our gifts.
- Grow closer to each other: it has, as we've formed new teams and helped each other with fundraising challenges and grown in appreciation for each other's gifts and skills.
- Reach further with the love of Jesus: it has, as we engaged with people in the Park's summer fair and as people in our local community and schools have wanted to contribute to the fundraising.

So as vicar, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed in some way, however large or small, to Restore & Renew. But more than that, I want to thank the Lord for giving us each time and talents and treasures with which to serve him – and for moving our hearts to use them in so many different ways in 2025.

But 2025 wasn't just about Restore & Renew!

After several years of running Christmas on the Green, we partnered with Life Church to run Easter on the Green. In the end, we held the event in the church building because of the weather – and we had a full building of local families exploring the Easter story.

The following month, we held a joint Pentecost in the Park service with St James Road Methodist Church – which combined our experience of doing outdoor church over recent years with their can-do attitude to produce something far greater than either church could have managed by themselves. It was also good to partner with the Methodist Church in running Alpha again.

Over recent months, there has been talk nationally of a ‘quiet revival’. Some people dispute the stats and figures – but I think we have seen anecdotal evidence of it, too. We have seen more people turning up at church ‘out of the blue’ – ie not because they’ve been invited by friends or family, but simply because they feel compelled to come. What a joy it’s been to listen to some of their stories and help them see that it’s God who’s at work in their lives!

Partly as a result of that, after several years of fairly static numbers on a Sunday morning, I think our numbers have started to rise. Praise God for what he’s doing – and pray that he continues that work! “I [Paul] planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow” (1 Corinthians 3.6).

As well as welcoming new people, we said some fond but sad goodbyes to some key members of our church family – Ian & Cherida Mockridge, Julz & Pete Evans, Jen & Paul Lambert. We miss them all, but know that the Lord will use them in their new church settings. Paul’s ordination was a great occasion, but his departure means that our staff team is further depleted.

In 2025, the Lord also called some of our great saints home – more than in recent years. May Betty Whettingsteel, Patricia Chibisa, Denis Green, Gina Cornford, Stuart Goddard, Marjorie Thorrington, Emma Osman and Jan Bates rest in peace and rise in glory. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Psalm 116:15).

One person had a word that although we were losing some mighty oaks, this would leave room for lots of new seedlings to grow. Who are the seedlings that you can encourage to grow by your words, your example and your prayers?

Of course, there isn’t room to speak about everything that has happened in the life of the church. Let me just mention one more thing, because the preaching series that we did in the Autumn from Genesis 25-35 resonated with so many people. Different preachers variously suggested the series be named Family Fortunes, Parenthood or MiddleEastEnders. Whatever we called it, the message was clear: God doesn’t wait for us or our families to be perfect. God doesn’t mind how messed-up, miserable, mean-spirited or mad our family is. No-one is beyond his grace. His goodness covers over our grime. His promises and patience tower over our lives.

That's been just as true in our church family life as in our blood family lives. "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3.20-21).

Dan Clark

2025 Church Reports

Church Wardens' Report

So here we are in 2026 and the building work on the Community Hall has started!! Thank you to Nicky and Dave for their hours of extra work and to others who have looked at plans/discussed various options/fund raised/given generously financially and of their time. Thank you to you all.

The Building Vision Group are now looking at plans for improving 133 (the church office). Please do pray for that process and also for the continued fundraising and grant applications. We still need some more funding to complete the projects we would like to so we can Reach Further with the Love of Jesus.

We, Susie and Tracy work well together and our different skillsets make a good team. God's provision is so evident in Susie as warden because she brings just the right experience to our roles.

Last year we explained that we were trying to move to a more devolved leadership style. This is to release Dan so he can be freer to develop those areas of ministry that get squeezed out in a busy parish like ours, like teaching and training. The evidence of this devolved leadership is that both of us have new roles as Church Wardens. Tracy is the 'Ministry Warden' and Susie is the 'Governance Warden'. The PCC agreed with this new structure noting that sometimes things are only for a season. Other examples of our more devolved leadership style are the various groups working on the buildings' projects, the Pastoral Oversight group, the Grow Closer group and the Go Deeper group.

We are both standing for election as wardens for another year as there is lots to do and we feel that we are mid-way through some of these projects, so continuity is important. We are spending time working out the best way to utilise our staffing capacity at the moment, in keeping with the three priority mission areas that the PCC has determined; youth, children and families, and older people. We had already timetabled this into our year's planning before Angel left her role.

We would like to thank our staff for their hard work over the last year. Theresa holds so much together in our church life, so we'd like to say a big thank you to her. Josh is being more involved in Junior Church making sure our wonderful volunteers are supported. Angel was a blessing to us, and we pray she finds just the right role moving forward.

There are a number of staff who have part time roles, and we are very grateful for all they do in a paid and unpaid way.

Dan works incredibly hard for us all and is so good at spotting new people and talking to them. Please do talk to people you don't know at church as well as old friends. We want to open our community to newcomers who often feel at sea when they first come. The idea of us being a welcoming church and the process people go through until they feel they belong is one that the Grow Closer Welcome and Belonging group are looking at now. Please do share your thoughts and ideas with us. We would like to organise small things we can invite people to and have small ways we can ask them to join in helping, to aid this process of belonging.

As we move forward another year and we are trying new services and will have remodelled buildings please pray we point to God in all we do.

Tracy King & Nick Smith

Deanery Synod Report (formally required)

The Deanery makes up the collection of the Anglican churches in the City of Southampton, seeking to discern God's vision for the City as we work together to enable 'His Kingdom Come...' Each Parish in the Deanery elects a number of representatives dictated by the number of people on its electoral roll. St James' by the Park had four elected reps, Rosie Brooks, Esther Clift, Tara Watson and me. We will have three after this year's APCM. Simon Clift and Keith Watson are also members of Deanery Synod because of their positions on General and Diocesan Synod respectively. One of the roles of Deanery Synod reps is to elect lay members to those "higher" Synods.

Simon Robertson (Bitterne Park) is Area Dean, Dan having resigned as Joint Area Dean during the year. Karen Lington (Christ Church, Freemantle with Millbrook) was appointed Assistant Area Dean.

Each Synod has, as a main item, a topic which is relevant to all churches in the Area, news from around the deanery, including clergy comings and goings, and a time of worship. There is usually a report on the deliberations of Diocesan Synod (Diocesan Synod papers are available on the Diocesan website Resources From Previous Meetings of Diocesan Synod - Diocese of Winchester (anglican.org)). Administrative matters, approval of minutes etc. are kept to a minimum. Meetings are not restricted to Synod members and anyone is welcome to attend.

There were three ordinary meetings of Deanery Synod in 2025. At the March meeting Synod welcomed Bishop Rhiannon to explore the bid for central Church of England funding to enhance the reach and impact of our mission within Southampton, under the banner "Serving Southampton". There was a follow-up meeting in April, specifically to

progress the vision. It was encouraging to have many non-Synod members also joining those sessions and share the enthusiasm there already is across our Parishes to bring the light of God's love into the lives of those we live alongside in the City.

The June meeting had a focus on finance, with the Diocesan team sharing what goes into the Diocesan budget and how our Common Mission Fund contributions are used to fund clergy in our Parishes. At the October meeting Archdeacon Richard shared the importance of looking after clergy wellbeing and some of the steps that are being taken to improve support for the clergy, as well as opening up a discussion about how PCCs can play a vital role in caring for their clergy so that their clergy are fit and well and able to lead.

The Deanery Standing Committee also spent time during the year looking at how, as a Deanery, we might work more collaboratively together (whether the Serving Southampton bid is successful or not) and the Standing Committee agreed that we move Synod on from primarily being a place of information exchange to a gathering that is focused on empowering mission across the City. This year's APCMs will elect Deanery Representatives to serve for the next three years and the Standing Committee hope that as they do so, they will have in mind those who would be the best voices from their Parish to play a part in shaping and delivering our shared mission in Southampton.

David Wagstaff

Electoral Roll (formally required)

There were 163 members in 2025. The changes in 2026 are as follows:

No longer members: 5; new members: 16

Therefore, the total number of members enrolled for 2026 is 174

Theresa Bowen

Environment

2025 saw a continuation of a range of positive actions for the environment from small groups and individuals. We have continued to develop the theme of Creation Care in our Worship and Teaching, with regular environmental prayers.

The Shirley Community Litter Picking Group continues do wonderful work. In 2025/6 they welcomed 25 different volunteers, including 6 children, with an average of 10 volunteers per session. Overall, 111 sacks of rubbish were removed from the streets of the parish. They have lots of conversations with members of the community and have supported teenagers using this as the service element of their Duke of Edinburgh awards. This activity is supported by Southampton City council through the removal of the collected rubbish and the supply of black sacks!

The Repair Café is hosted by one of our small groups on Church premises on the first Saturday of odd numbered months. In 2025 there was a very strong demand with many

visitors and successful repairs. In March 2026 the Repair Café moved to the main Church Building as work on the Church Hall had started. This didn't affect the operation, with even more visitors and a record number of repairs undertaken. The small group provides coffee and cakes; and this facilitates many positive conversations.

This same cell has also encouraged recycling in the church by collecting aluminium foil and Tetra Paks. This is in addition to the collection of electrical items for recycling through the WEEE waste scheme. Unfortunately, the collection of pens and felt tips has had to stop as there is no longer a recycling outlet for these.

Another small group organised a 'Plant Share' as part of The Big Green Week, growing a variety of plants to share with the congregation (and passers-by). The aim of this was to encourage people to grow things in their gardens to provide flowers for pollinators as well as food. This was very popular, and lots of horticultural advice was shared. The remaining plants were donated to two primary schools for their gardens, the coloured popping corn proving very popular.

The opportunity was taken to hold Wonder Walks on the 5th Sunday of the month in November and March, on Southampton Common and in St James' Park respectively. These gave our children the opportunity to connect with nature and discover some of the wonderful range of plants in God's creation as well as having lots of fun.

According to the Energy Footprint Tool that we complete for the Church of England, our net CO₂e emissions in 2024 and 2025 were 22.4 and 21.4 tonnes respectively, compared with 21.9 tonnes in 2023. The data shows that the main church building is in the top 20% of emitters across buildings within the Church of England. The redevelopment of the church hall will potentially reduce our total footprint by 20%.

Carbon offsetting should be reserved for the final step after an individual or organisation has taken all possible steps to reduce its carbon footprint. Given the delays on building modifications at St James, the PCC has approved using a carbon offset scheme. This scheme has been set up by Enable Busoga in association with Transcending Hope Uganda (THU). During 2025, THU expanded the programme to a number of new sites in Busoga with over 15,000 trees under management at the end of the year, We donated to this to offset the carbon we used.

St James has yet to reassess where it is on its environmental journey using the new Eco Church questionnaire released in the Autumn of 2024. This is designed to encourage churches to embed environmental actions within all that they do, as well as working towards reducing their carbon emissions. This provides us with a path to work towards obtaining a Silver Eco Church Award, which is long overdue

Victor Humphrey

Fabric and Building (formally required)

The following is a list of the work that has been undertaken in 2025, the work that is in progress and work that needs to be done

Past

- Regular servicing has taken place of gas, electrical and fire safety equipment, the church clock and lightning conducting system. They were all carried out by specialist engineers. PAT testing was also carried out.
- Weekly in-house testing of smoke/heating alarms carried out along with a general fire safety checks of the buildings.
- The balcony window shades and loose wooden battens were secured in place.
- Smoke and heat alarms were installed in church.
- New fire exit box signs were installed in church.
- Fire safety in the church was reviewed, especially in the balcony areas; the advice given was implemented.
- The base to absorb the impact of the clock weights if they ever fell was removed and a new foam base was installed. A barrier was secured across the area.
- The church ceiling lightbulbs were replaced as needed.
- The boiler room emergency water pump was tested once a month.

Present

- Graffiti is being removed from the church side wall. It's proving to be tougher than we thought.
- New moveable lighting was installed in church to help accommodate the groups using it while the hall is out of action.
- We're still trying to sort out the flat roof repair on the church.
- Permission is being sought to replace and add to the outside noticeboards and the screens in church.
- Work has been undertaken in the church boiler room to replace metal coupling, a gas pipe, a water pressure valve and the expansion vessel. New emergency cut-off switches have also been installed.

Future

- We're planning to install exterior lights for the sides of the church to aid path users at night.
- The church paths need to be frequently re-gravelled to help minimise flooding.
- Plaster needs to be repaired in the stairwell wall on the Bellemoor road side.
- The missing/broken metal air vents on church side walls need to be replaced.
- The church front door base is loose, so needs repairing.
- The metal light fixture needs to be cleaned and restored.

- A handrail for church stage steps is needed. We can't find exactly what we need so one will be built from scratch.
- The entrance porch area will be tidied up to include a new storage unit.

Steve Condell

Finance (Formally required)

There were two main changes affecting the finances in 2025. Firstly, our Restore & Renew project to renovate our church buildings was launched. Secondly, we have changed the way we report on small funds for specific purposes – these have now been set up as restricted or designated funds as appropriate. The money from the sale of St John's and the money raised for Restore & Renew are also held in restricted funds.

The church's total income for 2025 was £748,133 - of this, £281,112 was for our general fund and £467,021 was for restricted funds (funds for specific purposes). Total expenditure was £385,068 - of this, £270,124 was from our general funds and £114,944 was from restricted funds. After transfers between the funds this resulted in a net surplus for the year of £17,242 for unrestricted funds and £345,823 for restricted funds, with an overall net surplus of £363,065.

The figures for 2024 are shown below for comparison:

	2025		2024	
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £
Income	281,112	467,021	265,837	23,637
Expenditure	(270,124)	(114,944)	(267,805)	-
Transfers	6,254	(6,254)	-	-
Net surplus/(deficit)	17,242	345,823	(1,968)	23,637
Net surplus/(deficit) on all funds	363,065		21,669	

The balance sheet, which gives a snapshot of the finances at 31 December 2025, shows that the overall funds of the church, including our fixed assets, at the end of 2025 was £1,071,524. Of this, £146,942 was free cash reserves and £820,312 was restricted funds.

Income

The income for our general fund increased by £15,275 compared to 2024.

Total donations for the general fund remained stable at £202,905. Gift aid claimed for the general fund increased to £56,008 (from £44,652 in 2024). This increase was mainly due to a change in reporting: in the past gift aid income included gift aid on gifts given in the final quarter of the previous year and on gifts given in the first three quarters of the current year, but in future will include only gift aid on gifts given in all four quarters of the current year. The transition to the new form of reporting results in gift aid on gifts given in five quarters being included for 2025, temporarily inflating the gift aid income.

The response to our Restore & Renew project has been wonderful, with an income of £431,844 during the year: this was made up of £321,325 in donations and gift aid, £100,000 in grants and £10,519 from fundraising events.

A further £15,700 in gifts and gift aid and £19,477 in interest were received during the year for other restricted funds.

Expenditure

Expenditure from the general fund in the year was £270,124, an increase of £2,319 (1%) compared to the previous year but lower than the predicted expenditure which was set in the annual budget at £284,261.

The main areas of cost were:	2025 £	2024 £
Contribution to Diocesan Common Mission Fund	86,897	79,508
Lay staff salaries	102,333	100,675
Buildings (maintenance, improvements, insurance and utilities)	37,239	38,505

The payment of £86,897 to the Common Mission Fund was as requested by the Diocese, and represented an increase of £7,389 (9%) from 2024.

Annual salary costs rose by £1,658 due to a cost of living increase awarded in April 2025, offset by an increase in the National Insurance employment allowance provided by the UK government.

Annual expenditure on buildings was stable.

We were able to make gifts to a number of mission partners (£3,000 to Scratch, £1,500 to Arocha UK, £4,000 to CMS Mission Hub, £500 to Enable Busoga, and £2,500 to work in Myanmar). In addition, our Christmas appeal raised over £3,800, divided between Communicare, a local charity who aim to enrich the quality of life of lonely and isolated people in Southampton, and the work of CMS Asia providing disaster relief in Sri Lanka.

Expenditure began on our Restore & Renew project during the year, with a total of £108,114 being spent on architect and survey fees.

Summary and outlook

The response to our Restore & Renew project has been magnificent, with people responding enthusiastically both in terms of financial gifts and fundraising efforts. In addition, we have secured two major grants towards the project. This has enabled us to move forward with the renovation of our Parish Hall, which we hope will be completed during 2026.

Our general fund income has remained stable, which is particularly encouraging in the light of the generous giving to our Restore & Renew project.

As we look to the future, our healthy cash reserves allow us to be bold in our plans for our ministry and buildings, whilst continuing to be good stewards of what has been entrusted to us. In the light of this the PCC has agreed a budget deficit of £34,000 for our unrestricted funds for 2026. However, we are mindful that yearly deficits of this size will use up our unrestricted reserves within a few years and are therefore not sustainable long-term. We are hopeful that a growing and vibrant ministry together with prudent use of our resources will enable us to address this.

Marie Gray

Parochial Church Council Report (formally required)

The PCC is made up of people from our church who are elected to the position each year at the annual meeting. They are considered 'trustees' by the Charity Commission. They are responsible (with the vicar) for discerning the vision and direction for St. James' by the Park and making major decisions to help bring that vision to fruition.

The PCC had 8 full meetings in 2025. It also had a morning meeting at Holy Saviour in Bitterne to discuss the building project as they had recently had a major refurbishment carried out. There was a meal together in April to help the new PCC get to know each other. Each meeting started by looking at a bible passage and with a time of prayer led by different members of the PCC. Each meeting ended with a time of prayer.

The following were agenda items at every meeting.

Building works:

- The decision was made to completely refurbish the parish hall; this included the removal of the warden's hut at the front. Snug Architects were appointed to manage this, plans were agreed, planning permission was granted and 5 companies were invited to submit tenders for the work. The PCC voted to appoint MGS Building & Electrical Contractors Ltd as the contactors.

- The PCC also considered the church building and parish office and started thinking about changes that could be made in those buildings.
- A brochure giving details of the plans for the hall, what led to the decision and our hopes for the future for it, was produced and delivered to all the local homes.
- A core group was formed to coordinate the different groups to enable communication between the various elements of the project.
- Discussions were started for a new name for the building and the individual rooms, and also for a new design of a logo for the church.

Safeguarding: Rosie either gave an update on issues that had arisen and that the safeguarding team were working on or she set the PCC a scenario to work through.

Finance:

- Marie gave regular updates about fundraising for the work on the hall, along with progress on grant applications. It was agreed to offer £10 to every family in church with a challenge to increase the amount by undertaking fundraising.
- The following were agreed over the course of the year; the accounts for 2024, a new accounting package and a 3% salary increase for the staff.
- Nick Smith continued to work on the part of the money from the sale of St John's that is tied up in a reverter clause. The hope is that it will eventually be released for us to use.
- The Carefund guidelines were revised to reflect the current needs and usage.
- A draft budget for 2026 was agreed.

Also during 2025:

The group that had been involved in the Grow Course proposed a new, simplified vision: **Go deeper with God. Grow closer to each other. Reach further with the love of Jesus.** They also started working on the values behind the vision. The new vision and values formed the basis for retitling our three key ministry areas; 'Go Deeper', 'Grow Closer' and 'Reach Further' which replaced the previous 'Up', 'In' and 'Out' terminology. There are plans underway to set up groups to oversee these ministry areas, with a governance group added to oversee the areas that the PCC have a legal responsibility for.

The PCC and members of cell groups were asked to complete questionnaires to help identify the areas we should be working on as a church, this was followed up at meetings during the year. The decline in church attendance was also looked at as part of this. After various discussions the PCC agreed to focus on young people, children and families, and older people as our direction of mission.

An initial meeting to launch 'Serving Southampton', an initiative by Bishop Rhiannon to help the Diocese grow in depth and number by starting new expressions of church was

attended by several PCC members. There were further meetings to develop this initiative over the year.

It was agreed to stop the Explore Together service and replace it with an informal All Age service.

Dan spent time considering his workload; things he needed to do, things that could be done by others and things he should stop. As part of this, the wardens' roles were split into a Ministry Warden, Tracy King, and Governance Warden, Susie Hoare which they both felt reflected their gifts.

The Church of England Prayers of Love and Faith continued to be discussed, particularly how the whole issue had been handled locally and nationally.

A review of our staffing structure was planned for 2026, to include full and part time staff.

Theresa Bowen

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Team consists of Rosemary Brooks - Safeguarding Officer, Josh Cook and Suzanne Bochel - Safeguarding Administrator and we meet once a half term.

Thank you for valuing people highly by taking safeguarding seriously. Together, we are working to make St James' by the Park and all our ministries as safe as possible for everyone.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Safe Recruitment, DBS checks and Safeguarding Training are all in place to try and protect our valuable volunteers and is led by the Diocese of Winchester.

The safeguarding team reviews the Safeguarding policy for the church and provides support and guidance to the PCC. We provide support for the extra church activities including the running of Holiday Club, Holiday at Home, Easter Story Live and help with a whole church service focusing on Safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Team has continued to maintain the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard which the Diocese introduced 2 years ago.

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard is split into three levels:

Level 1 - Safer Foundations;

Level 2 - Safer Activities;

Level 3 - Safer Practices.

Last year we completed all 3 levels of the dashboard and are now alerted to policies, activities and practices which need to be reviewed annually.

The Diocese introduced a Safeguarding Hub as part of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. The Safeguarding Hub helps us to follow the Safer Recruitment Process which is used to recruit volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults. It also allows us to have job role details, volunteer information including DBS level, and safeguarding training recorded in one place. The Safeguarding Hub emails volunteers when their DBS or training is about to expire.

The Diocese of Winchester is starting to make templates for things like hall hire agreements available through the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard.

One significant change is that since a data breach with APCS (the organisation that many dioceses use to process their DBS checks) in August 2025 we have not been able to process DBS applications electronically and they are currently all carried out on paper. This increases the workload as volunteers have to complete a paper form and either Theresa, Rosie, Dan or Suzanne have to verify their ID, post the form to the Diocese where it's checked & then sent for processing.

Unfortunately, the Parish doesn't get any notification once someone receives their DBS certificate back. It would be really helpful if volunteers could email safeguarding@stjamesbythepark.org with their DBS certificate number and date of issue once they have received the certificate.

The following have been carried out this year:

- 5 New DBS applications have been made from 24 March 2025 to 10 March 2026
- 5 New DBS applications are waiting to be processed
- 5 DBS applications have been renewed from 24 March 2025 to 10 March 2026
- 16 people have been safely recruited from 24 March 2025 to 10 March 2026
- 31 people have completed or re done safeguarding training courses from 24 March 2025 to 10 March 2026

Once again thank you to everyone for taking Safeguarding seriously.

Rosie Brooks

PARISH OF SHIRLEY, SOUTHAMPTON
MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
MINUTES OF ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 6th April 2025
St. James by the Park Church

OPENING:

The meeting followed on from the Sunday morning service.

PRESENT:

88 people attended the meeting in the building, of these 8 people weren't on the electoral roll. There were also 11 devices logged in online.

1. LOOKING BACK AND GIVING THANKS:

Dan asked those at the meeting to write down something they were grateful for on a slip of paper, to be made into bunting after the meeting.

2. FORMALLY REQUIRED REPORTS

Dan drew attention to the full report, where he had reflected on some of the things he had been encouraged by, along with some of the challenges from the previous year.

He also pointed out the other official reports in the full report, these were for electoral roll, PCC, fabric and buildings, Deanery Synod and an overview of the financial report.

Dan said that he was stepping down as Area Dean and taking up a role in an interdenominational gathering called One Body Southampton.

He pointed out that there was not much mention of mission in the reports. This is because they are legally required reports, which only cover some areas of church life. There are therefore many outward-facing activities which aren't mentioned.

3. ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS:

Dan thanked the Churchwardens who supported him and the church council. Nick Smith is standing down as Warden. Dan paid tribute to his concern for individuals, sharp brain, attention to detail, financial wisdom and graciousness when they disagreed about anything. He will continue with the work on the St John's reverter to its final outcome.

There were 2 nominations for Church Warden:

Tracy King nominated by Marie Gray, seconded by Keith Watson.

Susie Hoare nominated by Lynne Lockwood, seconded by Carol Williams.

Tracy and Susie were duly elected.

4. ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS:

PCC members usually stand for 3 years and they are, in effect, trustees of the charity. There were three people standing down from the PCC; Dave Snape, Dave Arbery and Ugochi who have finished their three-year term. Dan thanked them all for their contributions during their time on PCC.

The following people had indicated their willingness to stand:

Nwachukwu Okoli nominated by Paul Thaxter, seconded by Helen Thaxter

Geoffrey Payne nominated by Michael Meaton, seconded by Susie Hoare

Gavin Silver nominated by Pete Evans, seconded by Jacqui Dowdell

There are 4 vacancies, so all are elected and the PCC has the power to co-opt someone else if they wish.

5. LAUNCHING OUR BUILDING PROJECT

This will be called "Restore and Renew" and will involve all three buildings. The vision is to bless and serve our local community, as well as provide good spaces for ourselves. It's a means of achieving our vision of going deeper with God, closer to each other and reaching further to others with the love of Jesus.

Parish Hall

A video from Dave Arbery explained how the building needs modernisation. Plans show how the building will have a better welcoming area, more meeting space, capacity to accommodate all the children on one site, a better functioning kitchen and solar panels, more insulation and a better heating system to reduce running costs and our carbon footprint. Work should start in the Autumn. We have planning permission although some details are still to be finalised.

Parish Office

A video from Nichola Caveney explained that the Office is a shop window for our Church, where people come to find out about us. It's been neglected and needs renovation. Plans include a better welcoming area, a large room downstairs, better and more accessible storage space, a better working environment for our staff, and double glazing to reduce running costs and carbon footprint.

St James

Nichola also spoke about St James, where plans are least advanced. We need to look at outside maintenance, and internally at how we can best use our space for our congregation and for visitors who come in. Changes to include a better welcome area, extra toilet. There are many improvements we can make without making structural changes.

We don't just want to make the buildings better because they are tired, but to help rather than hinder our mission. We also want the buildings to be more integrated with each other. The work won't all be done at the same time, we'll start with the Parish Hall, then the Office and finally St James.

Costs

Estimates are:

Parish Hall - £700k

Parish Office - £120k

St James - £150k

We already have £475k available from the sale of St John's.

Just as we saw in our Bible passage today that David and the leaders gave first for the building of the temple, members of our PCC have already agreed to give £61k personally between them.

We want to raise £164k by August so that work can start on the Parish Hall in the Autumn.

Then a further £120k by early next year, which would mean that we can start work on the Office as soon as the Hall is finished.

We hope that the remaining money from the St John's sale will be released to us in due course, and this would be used towards the work on St James, leaving another £25k to be raised.

Altogether the estimate is that we need to raise about £309k altogether.

Financing

The money will be raised in three ways - fundraising, grants and giving. Barbara Foley spoke about fundraising on behalf of a group looking at this. Some events have already been planned, for example a quiz night, a sponsored walk, a craft fair and a cake sale at the Ark.

There is also a group looking at possible grants for some of the work. The bulk of the money will come from sacrificial giving from the fellowship, remembering the generosity of past generations for previous renovations and re-orderings.

After Easter everyone will be given a brochure, so that we can consider what we can each give. There'll be a couple of gift days in May and June.

The whole enterprise must be undergirded with prayer as this is a spiritual opportunity for us. There will be a day of prayer and fasting, prayer

walking, monthly prayer after the service, and our own individual and group prayer.

We pray that God will keep our focus on Him - He's the cornerstone.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT (YEAR ENDED 31/12/23).

Marie Gray presented the 2024 accounts. She informed the meeting that the full accounts were available to download from the website and a summary was in the Reports booklet. She also encouraged people to contact her at any time if they had questions.

Income:

Marie went through the different categories of income and thanked everyone who gave to the church faithfully and sacrificially. She also thanked people who gave their time.

She reminded the meeting that gift aid could be claimed back on any donations made if tax had been paid on the money, and also to let her know if circumstances changed and tax was no longer being paid.

Expenditure:

Marie went through the largest areas of expenditure, which were staff salaries which included all full and part time staff, and payments to the Common Mission Fund. She pointed out that this seemed a lot but we also got a lot back through Dan's salary and accommodation, as well as a lot of support and resources from the Diocese.

Money raised at the Christmas appeal this year went to the Peace Centre in the DRC and Caraway.

Income and Expenditure were roughly the same, with a £2k deficit. The PCC had budgeted for a £28k deficit. Income was £10k more than budget, and Expenditure lower, mainly due to postponed building work, a VAT return on listed building work and lower than expected energy costs.

The PCC has set a deficit budget of £25k-£27k for 2025.

Marie ended by thanking everyone for their generosity.

Chris Lockwood proposed that the accounts be accepted, seconded by Tracy King. This was agreed.

7. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:

Marie Gray proposed that we appointed Abraham and Dobell again as our independent examiner for 2025, this was seconded by Shaun Cassidy and agreed by the meeting.

8. QUESTIONS:

Q. Lighting in St James

Dan said that the lighting level in the church was unsatisfactory. Sam Taylor is working on a solution.

Q. Is there a need for a maintenance person for the buildings?

Yes - the buildings do need a lot of maintenance, and we do have a maintenance person.

9. APOLOGIES:

David and Margaret Wagstaff, Amy Curry, Theresa Bowen, Rosie and Rhys Brooks and Doreen Smith.

10. MINUTES OF THE 2024 MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING:

Dan drew people's attention to the minutes of last year's meeting which were within the APCM full report; these were also available on the APCM page on the church website.

No corrections were pointed out so the meeting agreed that the minutes should be accepted. They would be signed by Dan Clark as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

11. PRAYER AND CLOSE OF MEETING:

Those present spent a few minutes praying together in small groups for new members of the PCC, for Restore and Renew and other matters.