

The Parochial Church Council
of
the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Bartholomew, Otford
Registered Charity Number
1135073

Also known as St. Bart's, Otford

Vacancy until 18 May 2025
Rev. Kelly Parsons (from 19 May 2025)

The Green
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Kent
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Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year
ended
31 December 2025

Trustees

The Trustees are the members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC). Those members are either ex-officio, elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or co-opted by the PCC in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Trustees are not remunerated.

During the year ended 31 December 2025 the following served as members of the PCC:

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Kelly Parsons from 19 May 2025 Interregnum 1 January to 18 May 2025

Wardens: Mrs Janet Hunt - from April 2018 and re-elected in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

 Mrs. Joan Beacom - from April 2021 and re-elected in 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Members of the Diocesan Synod: Mr. Derek Shilling

Members of the Deanery Synod: Mr. Mark Holmes - PCC Minutes Secretary

 Mrs. Margaret Lidbetter

 Mrs. Janet Hunt

Elected Members:

 Mr. Colin Anderson (2021)

 Mr. Jonathan Batchelor (2024)

 Mr. Christopher Bishop (2025)

 Mrs. Cindy Davies (2025)

 Ms. Dawn Hallam (2017) Licensed Lay Reader

 Miss Naomi Hunt (2021) Parish Safeguarding Officer

 Mrs. Nancy Jönsson (2022)

 Mrs. Mags Southgate (2022) Licensed Lay Reader

 Mrs. Heather Stanley (2018) PCC Treasurer

 Mr. George Young (2024)

Independent Examiner

Mr Tony Young

23 Pepingstraw Close, Offham, West Malling, Kent. ME19 5PB

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent

The CBF Church of England Deposit Fund, One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB

Governing Document

The Parochial Church Council Powers Measure 1956 as amended, and Church Representation Rules.

All members of the PCC are trustees of the charity. Elected members of the PCC are normally appointed for a period of three years and are required under the PCC's own policy to stand down for a minimum of one year following the three-year period. Dawn Hallam was requested by the PCC to remain on the PCC as a Lay Reader. The PCC meets every two months to transact the business of the Church.

The Standing Committee¹ is authorised, subject to the PCC's directions, to conduct the business of the PCC should decisions need to be taken between full meetings of the PCC.

Objects of the Charity²

The PCC has the responsibility of working with the Priest-in-Charge (and previously, during the clerical vacancy, the Area Dean, Rev. Dr. Chris Noble) to uphold the ministry and mission of the Church in the areas of worship, the nurture of faith, service to the village of Otford and Christian witness. This is done through: -

- Sunday and midweek services;
- baptisms, weddings, and funerals;
- youth and children's work;
- teaching adults through weekly home groups and occasional series of talks and study groups;
- pastoral care and involvement in the community; and
- supporting mission partners.

To meet its objectives, and by way of good stewardship of the property for which the Area Dean, Priest in Charge, Churchwardens and PCC are responsible, the PCC maintains the fabric of St Bartholomew's Church (which English Heritage has listed as a Grade 1 building), the adjoining Church Centre and the Church Hall (located in the High Street).

To ensure the objectives are complied with, the PCC meets regularly. There were 6 PCC meetings during 2025 with a high average attendance level. Much of the PCC's work is assisted by committees. Those committees report and make recommendations to the PCC. The main committees are: -

Standing – Has the legal authority to continue the business of the PCC, subject to any directions given by the Council.

Finance – meets on average at two-monthly intervals between PCC meetings. It monitors income and expenditure, reviews budgets and reviews financial controls working closely with the Treasurer.

Fabric – monitors the condition of the Church fabric, Church Hall, churchyard and car park and arranges maintenance and repair work as required.

Fair – plans and organises the St Bartholomew's Fair, normally the principal fund-raising event of the year.

Events Team - plans and organises social and fund-raising events during the year.

Ministry Team, Wardens & Parish Administrator – meets to provide mutual fellowship and support, and the opportunity to continue to look at upcoming Services and rotas.

Mission, Ministry and Growth – communicates the work of Christian agencies supported by St. Bart's through written articles and arranging for speakers to visit (limited speakers in 2025 due to the interregnum for the first five months of the year). It recommends the allocation of available funds to Christian mission and relief organisations, both in the UK and overseas. It updates and reviews the Called to Grow Action Plan and makes recommendations to the PCC for further discussion and action as appropriate.

Electoral Roll

In 2025 there were 127 members on the Electoral Roll.

¹ Members of the Standing Committee are the Vicar, the Churchwardens, the PCC Minutes Secretary, the Treasurer and up to two other members of the PCC or the Vice Chair of PCC and two members of the PCC.

² For Charity Commission purposes the Charity comes within the classification of "Religious Activities" to help the general public, particularly within the parish of Otford, Kent and the surrounding area but also through mission giving further afield. It provides the services listed in this document.

Clerical Vacancy

During 2025 the Clerical Vacancy at St. Bartholomew's was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Kelly Parsons as Priest in Charge with effect from the 19th of May 2025. We were very pleased to welcome Kelly, her husband Michael and other members of her family to the Installation Service and to our Parish and continue to pray for them as they settle into their home and life in Otford.

We would like to record our thanks to all the Visiting Clergy who took services of Holy Communion, Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals during the vacancy, along with our home team of Readers who enabled worship to carry on as usual.

Thank you

I arrived in May to a wonderful welcome at both my installation and my first service the following Sunday. I felt truly blessed and still feel very strongly that God called me to be with you here at St Barts and it feels very much like home.

In his address at my installation, Bishop Simon said, *'God's got this and he's got you and he has the people's lives you are now entering.'* I have felt God's presence so closely this year.

Thank you to all of you who have supported me in my first year and especially to the Church Wardens and PCC for their support and patience as I settled in. Thank you all for listening to me and allowing me a time to settle and the grace to start to understand the shape of my ministry here in this place with you all.

Highlights 2025

Fifth Sundays have developed into a 'try something new' event and they have been well received with really good feedback. From Café Church to Taizé services we have enjoyed a wideness in our worship that reflects the different ways we can worship God together.

Relationships with the local community, including with Otford Primary School, are continuing to build with the hard work of the ministry team. Dawn and I have been into Otford Primary School to celebrate Harvest, and the school came to us for their Christmas carol service. Remembrance and Christingle services provided an opportunity to reach out to those on the fringes of the church family and into the wider community.

Implementing the use of iKnowChurch between myself and Clive (Church Administrator) has streamlined some of our processes and supports the recording of data for occasional offices.

Running the Bible course was exciting, and it was great to see a range of people from different ages and stages of faith engaging with scripture in a different way. The course ran for 10 weeks, and 40 people engaged either in person or over Zoom with the materials.

It was an absolute joy to be invited to join those on the youth weekend away for Saturday. I had some amazing discussions about free will and what it is like to be a priest. I left the day with a number of clothes pegs (inside joke), completely dry (after the water fight) and with a very full heart.

Challenges

The key challenges I see are:

- To focus on succession planning, ensuring that there are people trained and supported to take on roles of responsibility within the church. These include Churchwardens, the potential implementation of deputy churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives and PCC members. To share the workload so that no one person feels overwhelmed.
- To have a congregation that represents the diversity of the community living in Otford.
- To grow a Pastoral Care Team to ensure that all feel loved and supported in times when they need that support most, whether through prayer, visits or more practical support.

- Growing a safe and healthy culture for all that come into our church. Providing opportunities for face-to-face safeguarding training and increasing our awareness that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Reflecting the values of righteousness, peace, wholeness and fullness of life for all.
- To grow both spiritually and numerically. Growing deeper in faith together and exploring the true meaning of discipleship. To remain relevant in our community, providing opportunities to access church in different ways, to be accessible and open to change. To work ecumenically with the other churches in Otford.
- To continue to grow a culture of generosity, where giving is part of our discipleship. To use our funds responsibly to keep the buildings in good working order and fit for purpose, to do mission and outreach within our community and support our mission partners. To be able to support our diocese by contributing to the Common Fund with our full Indicative Offer.

Vision

I believe that it is important for a church to plan and to dream together: to have a vision that we all get behind and work towards. Part of our vision will also link to that of our Diocese; *to change, serve and grow, as we seek first the Kingdom of God with compassion, courage and creativity. Seeking God's kingdom in this way means bringing about a Church where all can flourish and 'have life in all its fullness' as God intends (John 10:10).* That's not a bad place to start.

In 2026 I hope we will run a Vision Day where we can come together and think about where God is leading us. But in the meantime, we continue moving forwards with being a welcoming church that understands what it means to welcome all –

To be a place where people can come at any stage of life and faith and will feel loved and safe.

To be a church that doesn't remain with the walls but reaches out to the community and meets people where they are.

I am looking forward to 2026 and the joys and challenges that it will bring. God is doing some amazing things here in St Barts and in Otford and is inviting us to join in. I cannot wait to see what God has in store for us as we continue to journey together.

In faith,
Rev Kelly Parsons.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR

When planning our activities for the year the PCC consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. Many of the activities and services listed in this report are carried out by volunteers and St Bart's is very grateful for this. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of volunteers, but we believe that it is well over half of the number on the Electoral Roll. Many among the congregation have given time to undertake various jobs within the Church and Churchyard, too many to mention by name but we record our thanks to each and every one of you.

Pastoral Care

We now have just one Pastoral Assistant, Margaret Lidbetter, who is also a trained counsellor, and who serves our church in many situations, from arranging an appointment for Holy Communion at home to the impromptu chat and whatever help is needed. We appreciate being alerted to any situation where we can help. This is a fulfilling role within our church and one that we would very much like to expand as we move into 2026 and beyond.

Cornerstone

In 2024 we were invited to join the Cornerstone project as part of a trial in the Diocese of Rochester. The ministry and mission of Parish Churches is mostly funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it through money, time and talents. When times are tough, financial struggles can seem overwhelming, which is why Cornerstone has been developed, by the National Giving Team, with the aim that it will take each Parish on a journey to understand the giving culture and financial situation of their Parish. It aims to leave the Parish with clear, simple steps to grow giving, both in terms of income and in terms of time and talents.

Liz Mullins, our Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser, introduced us to the platform which uses data taken from our Annual Parish Return along with answers to a questionnaire. This then provides a platform to look at what we do, how we do it and what we could look at doing differently, in terms of use of time and talents as well as finance. This is very much a work in progress: there are various areas to work through, so work will continue on the Cornerstone project into 2026 and beyond.

Christmas Collections

As in 2024 we were pleased to be able to give over £1400 of additional funds to the Sevenoaks Loaves and Fishes project: partly from the generous giving over the Christmas period, but also from our First Christmas Tree Festival held at the beginning of December.

Choir

Throughout 2025, the choir fulfilled its normal schedule of singing three morning and two evening services per month, with the usual special services to mark occasions in the church's year.

I will say it again, as I have said many times before: the choir is ageing and is in urgent need of new recruits. Sadly, there has been little response from any congregation members wishing to help by singing in the choir, so this situation will only become worse. We are fortunate in Otford to retain a choir, still singing at a high standard, when so many churches have lost theirs, but the lack of volunteers with the necessary level of commitment leaves us on precarious ground. Some choir members have had health problems this year, as have I; nevertheless, we were able to continue normal service at almost all times, including our annual Christmas Concert, which we had to forgo in 2024, and our usual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

The choir has continued to perform a wide-ranging repertoire, and during 2025 sang music from England, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria and Russia, from the 16th to the 21st century.

The choir is, as ever, fortunate to have so many dedicated and faithful members, and its membership now stands at 16, following the retirement of one member (Jane Donaldson, after a magnificent 46 years' service) and welcoming Nancy Jönsson to our ranks.

Anyone interested in singing, on a regular basis, the wide range of service repertoire that we have, should contact me or the Church Office.

Kevin Grafton, choirmaster and organist

Music Group

Membership of the music group (band) has remained stable during the year. Although some members have gone to university (and some returned), they always seem keen to take part when they are back for holidays or visiting home. When everyone turns up (approx. 15 people) it can be quite difficult to fit everyone plus instruments on the platform – what a great problem to have!

The instruments in the band are many and varied, and of course we have our singers. We are always happy to welcome new members to the band, particularly with an instrument we don't have so as to give our music arranger, to whom we are extremely grateful for his hard work, an extra challenge!

The band have continued to play at All Together Worship services each month. A particular highlight this year was playing at Rev Kelly's Licensing and Installation service in May. This was a great opportunity to show the breadth of worship styles at St Bartholomew's with choir, organ and worship band leading in the sung worship. Other extra services during the year at which the band played included the Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Christingle, the Palm Sunday ecumenical service on The Green, Café Church, a Taizé service and Sunday Club Nativity service.

Again, special thanks must go to our technical wizard who, with all his knowhow and talent, spends time making it possible for the band to be heard with a balanced sound both in church and via the live stream. We look forward to what this year will bring as we continue to worship with God's people here at St Bart's.

Bell Ringers

An amazing start to 2025 as regards our visiting ringers, with 3rd January being a successful full peal from the ringers, most of whom are in their 70s+. They rang a Sliced Surprise Minor, comprising about 24 different methods. Peals usually take about three hours. Locally we only had one complaint from a gentleman who was cross that he had an interview at that time and was not able to be at home to listen to the bells.

We hosted various visiting ringers throughout the year including hosting the Young Ringers Striking Competition in March. All remarked how much they enjoyed ringing St. Bart's bells.

We are VERY appreciative of the huge support we are given from Fraser and Dee from Kemsing, to run our Thursday evening practices. Over time it has helped us to improve our techniques. They show true commitment. Ringers from Kemsing, Seal and Chevening join us, which makes a vast difference to our practices. In turn we try to support them at Kemsing. Periodically Jen Thomas also gives invaluable support. She is very busy training the Young Ringers.

Despite only having six ringers on a regular basis we've managed to keep going, ringing for most Sunday Services and for specific occasions, namely –

Ringling for VE Day in May
Church Fete in June
An Interment in August
Christmas Services

Revd. Kelly's Licensing & Installation Ceremony
A Wedding and Wedding Blessing in July
Village & St. Bart's Christmas Fair

We are also happy to ring for Funeral/Memorial Services.

CAMEO

CAMEO - come and meet each other - has been serving a need for some of the St. Bartholomew's family for twenty years. It's a sociable support group for those who live on their own. Fifteen members, our capacity, meet in Leonard's Avenue on Mondays. Fortnightly we participate in Bible Study and on the alternate Mondays we have a variety of activities and interests, including visitors to give a talk. We meet throughout the year and benefit from the social interaction and care for each other. CAMEO is proving to be a pastoral asset for our church.

Children and Young People

Sunday Club

Sunday Club meets on Sunday Mornings (except for the 1st Sunday of the month when we have our 'All-Together worship'). We continue to meet as an all-age group with two leaders for each session. The leaders work together to plan the session and can split the group depending on the ages of children attending. We use a scheme from the Scripture Union which provides a variety of age-appropriate activities based round a bible passage, and we find this flexible approach allows us to play to the strengths of both the leaders and the young people attending week by week.

We welcome children of any age. Parents are welcome to come in to settle their children or to stay for the whole session if needed.

There are 7 regular leaders who work on a rota basis and we are blessed to have such a faithful team. We thank them all for sharing their time, their talents, and their faith. We have also benefited from the support of young people who are volunteering as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. We had 32 children on our register, with an attendance of between 5 and 10 most weeks.

As well as following our regular curriculum we do have occasional special sessions – this year that included activities for Remembrance Sunday and work related to our Mission Partners which was part of our Patronal Sunday celebration.

The year ended with our nativity play, 'Come to a Party', using resources specially written for us by one of our leaders. This involved participation by the whole congregation and was a successful end to the year.

EPIC - Every Person in Christ

EPIC is the St Bartholomew's Youth Club for those in school years 5 - 8. Meetings are held on the second Saturday evening of the month in the Church Centre for a range of activities, supper and bible study.

We try to offer a range of activities that meet the social, physical, creative and spiritual needs of the young people. We aim to foster a spirit of co-operation and encourage working together in small groups for problem solving activities and as a whole group for discussion times. There is often a craft activity, as well as plenty of opportunities to let off steam.

We always have a two-course supper together, hopefully with veggies or fruit! Sometimes this is provided by friends or parents: thank you to all those who have taken on this task. Sometimes we order in pizza (always popular) and we also have times when we get the young people involved in the preparation and the washing up. This is always an interesting experience with much being learned! Grace or a prayer is said and there is a bible study linked to one of the activities.

We have three regular leaders and call on others as needed for extra or specific help. We have also had the help of Duke of Edinburgh students. There are 10 young people on the register and typically 6 - 8 attend. Epic offers a wonderful opportunity to meet the needs of this age group and their families and to reach out to families who are not regular church attenders. For the leaders it is exhausting, enriching and enlightening. For the young people we hope it is a chance to meet in a safe space that is not school or home, to have a degree of freedom, to have fun and to have a chance to consider the spiritual aspects of their lives.

Thanks must go to everyone who was involved in running EPIC and for being a constant in the lives of our young people when so much else was changing. This group of young people are open to bringing their friends along and look forward to meeting together. We aim to support a smooth transition of these children from primary to senior school and from EPIC to YPF.

YPF – Young People's Fellowship

YPF is our group for young people in year 9 and above, we meet every Sunday evening in term time and our meetings involve fun, food (lots of chocolate) and friendship. Every year we see some leave to go off to further education and welcome new members to join in the mayhem. Numbers can vary wildly from 6 to 20, especially during exam season and university holidays. You can find us cooking (sometimes successfully), playing silly games (always competitively), searching for Easter eggs (in the furthest reaches of the parish), decorating plant pots (and then getting EPIC to plant

them up). Our young people also take an active part in church life, many of them are involved in the worship band and the tech team wouldn't run without them. We are also quite good at moving and cleaning white plastic tables and chairs used for various Church Events during the year.

Our aim is to create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive community for all the young people associated with our church and walk with them as they mature into faith as adults. It is always a joy to welcome back students during the holiday. It was great at midnight mass this year to have three different distinct but linked groups of ex YPF members about 25 in total sat together in the Lady Chapel to worship together as part of the service. Bonds of friendship and faith can be reignited when our young people get together at these special services.

Youth Weekend

In 2025, we had another successful Youth Weekend at Kench Hill, we took 25 young people away for the weekend. The theme was 'big questions'. The young people had been asked to submit questions about faith, the Bible and Christianity prior to the weekend. Over the course of the weekend, the youngsters attended sessions themed around the 'big questions'. We were delighted that Reverend Kelly was able to join us and lead sessions on the Saturday, in particular she was challenged by some of those questions asked by our older attendees. Whilst activities are structured, there was plenty of time to chill out, relax and get to know one another better. We are looking forward to our next Youth Weekend in July 2026.

Tech team

Our live streaming of regular and occasional services is made possible by a very dedicated core of 2 households and 4 individuals who give up several hours each month to run the video for our services alongside the three regular volunteers who run the sound. Our thanks goes to them for giving up their time and talents over the last year in support of this much appreciated aspect of our church life.

In total 53 services were streamed in 2025 including Nine Lessons and Carols. Our live streams attracted 4 regular viewers at the time of the service and an average of 15 viewings over the week, slightly lower than in previous years.

This year has seen the departure of three valued members of the team and our thanks go to them for all their hard work over the last few years. Thanks also go to Karen for agreeing to run subtitles on the third Sunday of the month. Despite best efforts we were unable to fill the opening on the Second Sunday of the month, and we acknowledge those who have gone above and beyond by offering their support more than once a month to ensure that our live streaming hasn't been affected.

We now need two people to cover a monthly slot and two people to help provide occasional cover when our regulars are unavailable. We'd love to hear from you if you'd like to help full training will be provided, with no obligation if you decide it's not for you.

Social Media

The main task for the ad-hoc social media committee in 2025 was to replace the existing Church website with a fresh modern one. This was required as the decision had been made to move away from the web host that we had been using as it was becoming expensive and the formatting of the web pages was getting a bit dated.

After much work, this aim was achieved in early October, and thanks are particularly due to:

- The writers
- The photographers
- The Wordpress team (who had to learn how to use a complicated piece of software, do the graphic design and actually put the words and pictures into it)

- Our resident IT expert.

Church Fabric

There are 8 members on the Church Fabric Committee, and we met 5 times in 2025. There is much activity by members between meetings. The cyclical maintenance plan is reviewed annually.

Some of the items considered in 2025 were:-

Church

- Permanent installation of new internal CCTV cameras - completed.
- All the items from the Quinquennial report of September 2022 which were recommended for immediate action have now been completed. Longer term items have yet to be considered.
- To address security concerns in the car park, we are considering possible changes to the lighting arrangements and CCTV, and plans are being developed prior to an application to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC).
- South door – minor repairs are planned to lift the door off the metal grid in the doorway.
- AV equipment – storage solutions are being developed.

Church Centre

- Cracks in walls. A report was commissioned from a structural Engineer in 2021 which suggested that the East Wall requires structural ties, and other cracks require flexible filling and decoration. The works were put on hold at that time due to lack of funds but will be considered again in 2026.
- Additional shelving has been installed in both the Centre and the vicarage store.
- Acoustics panels for the ceiling are being investigated and quotes are being sought.
- Roof truss in corridor may require some structural repair and quotes are being sought.

Church Hall

- The kitchen units were all replaced in January 2025 which was a major project undertaken by a group of 10 volunteers over two weekends.
- A maintenance inspection in November 2023 identified some short- and medium-term actions for the external doors and windows. The most urgent window work was undertaken in 2025. The double doors at the front require replacement, and a Planning application is in hand prior to quotes being sought.
- Various works to services, roof, gutters and drains were completed.

Thank you to our committee members for all their hard work and dedication.

Flowers

We all like to see fresh flowers on the two altars in our beautiful Church.

The Flower Rota is on the notice board and if you can place a bunch of flowers in a vase you could be part of the team.

At Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance more elaborate arrangements are called for and our brilliant Team each take an area in the church to decorate.

We thank everyone who helps, including those who make a donation in memory of a loved one for a special occasion.

Events, Church Fair and Christmas Market

2025 opened with a fascinating talk by Joss Ledward on 'Life at the criminal bar', talking about her 25 year career as a barrister and some memorable cases from The Old Bailey.

Fun and fellowship continued with a Pancakes and Quiz night at the beginning of Lent and Easter Wreath making at the end – we are grateful to Denise Thompson for sharing with us her time and expertise.

As always, Joan did a fantastic job organising our soup lunches throughout the year. She has set a high bar and we wish Hilary every success as she takes over the reins.

Our ever-popular pop-ups ran throughout the summer, and we again combined with the other churches in Otford to host a coordinated pop-up in aid of Christian Aid. This was followed by a stall at the Village Fete, the first we have had for a while, and since our new Priest-in-Charge, Kelly, was also licensed in May, it became an action-packed month.

Our own parish BBQ in July was followed by a Village BBQ on the August Bank Holiday, at which the popularity of our tea and cakes stall proved the prowess of our many bakers – thanks to you all.

September opened with a musical extravaganza as some soloists, our band, and Choir combined to provide a feast of musical entertainment before the Holmes Family again set forth to conquer Kent in aid of Ride & Stride. Harvest, as always, came with a quiz.

The year closed on a high as we launched our first ever Christmas Tree Festival, held over a long weekend at the beginning of December. We received incredible support and encouragement from the whole community and the imagination and creativity of some of the tree decorations was amazing. The event proved very popular, bringing some families into the church for the first time and raising over £700 for Loaves & Fishes foodbank.

Excluding the Summer Fair & Christmas Market, the Events team raised £8,600 nett of expenses, from 22 events.

Our annual St Bart's Summer Fair took place on the Green next to the church on 21st June. The Fair is a major community engagement event for our Church and brings many from the village and surrounding area into contact with St Bart's in friendly and fun environment. It was wonderful to have our new Priest in Charge Rev. Kelly available to meet and greet the people of Otford on a wonderful informal basis and start the process of getting to know some of the wider village community.

Our prayers were answered in terms of the weather and we were blessed with a sunny afternoon that helped draw a good crowd. This year the Fair again offered a wide range of stalls and attractions to appeal to all ages, plus in addition we were delighted to have our very own St Barts Band performing through the afternoon very popular with the fairgoers! Overall, a great day, enjoyed by all for which we are so grateful to our Church family and wider community for all their help and support in putting on this popular event.

Christmas Market

In November we joined in with the Otford Village Fayre. We were pleased to welcome many to the Church and Church Centre to peruse the items on offer, the bacon butties went down particularly well. It was a great opportunity to catch up with many friends in the village. We are truly grateful to all who support all our Social and Fund Raising events either by helping, providing items for sale or simply coming along and supporting those on the various stalls.

Soup Lunch

It has been my pleasure and privilege to have been part of the team who have organised Soup Lunch since its inception in 2017. We meet bi-monthly in the church Centre to enjoy some homemade soup, bread, a small dessert and coffee and are entertained /informed by a guest speaker during coffee. Our past speakers have included several of our own congregation who each bring their individual stories and experiences. Our numbers are regularly in the mid-twenties.

Only once has our guest failed to appear - she was unexpectedly in Court and just couldn't get away. I hasten to add that she was the Judge!

A huge thank you to everyone who has helped over the years and a special mention to Robert Hunt who faithfully appears to set the tables and chairs out, helps lay up and clears away afterwards. He is a star!

I leave the team in good heart and confidently hand over to Sam Barnett and Hilary Fothergill who will take Soup Lunch into the future.

Joan Beacom

Warm Welcome

We continue our Warm Welcome initiative every Friday afternoon 2-5pm in the Church Centre. We are a very friendly group who meet for a chat, to knit, sew or work on a jigsaw and of course drink tea and eat cake!

Some quotes from our regulars:

"We are always made very welcome"

"We are frequently challenged by difficult jigsaws"

Come and join us.

Churchyard working party

Churchyard working parties continue to be held usually on the first Saturday of the month between March and November. We are very grateful to all the volunteers of all ages, who help to keep our Churchyard looking clean and tidy. Extra working groups were held during the year in order to have the Churchyard looking clean and tidy. Cake is now regularly offered along with the usual refreshments. We could do with more help; it can be done at any time to suit the individual.

Safeguarding

Naomi Hunt continues to be our Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO).

The PSO and Lead Safeguarding Warden (Janet Hunt) have also been working through the year to identify all of the volunteers within the congregation who should complete Basic Awareness and Foundation training. Safeguarding appears as an agenda item on all PCC and Standing Committee meetings. There were no issues raised with the Diocesan Safeguarding team.

Remembrance Service and participation of community organisations

The Remembrance Sunday service was well attended both in Church and then out on the Green. The uniformed organisations were again able to play their part in the Service and the laying of Wreaths on the Green. The Service in Church was live streamed for those unable to attend in person.

Deanery Synod

Shoreham Deanery Synod brings together representatives from parishes stretching from Otford to Stansted and from Farningham to Shipbourne. St. Bart's is the largest benefice in the Deanery by electoral roll. Parishes elected representatives in 2023 to serve a 3-year term.

The Synod met twice in 2025, chaired by the Rural Dean, Rev. Chris Noble (Rector of Stansted with Fairseat & Vigo). The main element of a typical meeting is a talk by a relevant speaker followed by questions and answers. I am currently the Lay Chair of the Synod, which is not an onerous responsibility!

A special meeting was held on 9 April 2025 at The Cloisters, St. Mary's, Stansted, open to PCC members from across the Deanery, with a visit from the Bishop of Rochester. Bishop Jonathan gave a presentation on the diocesan vision and strategy, *Called Together: change – serve – grow*, adopted by Diocesan Synod in December 2024. The strategy focuses on the Diocese's role in supporting and sustaining parishes as the beating heart of the church. It is a nine-year programme with three key objectives: to grow missional churches with missional leaders and missional disciples. The Bishop explained six practical differences that the strategy hopes to realise: creating a safe and healthy culture for all, becoming younger and more diverse,

growing spiritually and numerically, impacting communities, releasing financial resources for mission, and planting and growing new missional churches.

The Bishop recognised that there were several challenges to address: including numbers of ordinands, decline in attendance, finances and pressure on the sustainability of ministry in rural areas. These challenges were also picked up in questions & answers after his presentation. He explained how the strategy responded to those challenges, with the help of £11m in funding over 7-8 years, secured from the national Church thanks to the strategy. There are four specific streams of work: on missional leadership development, children & young people, missionally healthy churches, and revitalising fragile churches.

The second meeting of 2025 took place on 23 October at St. Bart's. The newly appointed Diocesan Racial Justice Officer was unfortunately unwell and unable to give a talk. So instead, firstly I spoke about my role as the Deanery's lay representative on the Tonbridge Archdeaconry Mission & Pastoral Working Group. The Working Group has delegated legal authority to work with the Archdeacon and Associate Archdeacons and approve proposals to suspend livings (i.e. replace the normal process of appointing an incumbent with the appointment of a Priest-in-Charge by the Bishop for a time-limited period, as has happened in Otford), and to propose reorganisation of parishes. I reported that I had been encouraged how prayerfully, sensitively and pragmatically everyone approached the discussions; and that general discussions were held by rotation about each of the six Deaneries, to understand their challenges and strengths.

Afterwards, Rev. Dr. Peter Hayler (Rector of Shipbourne with Plaxtol) led a discussion on the strand of the Diocesan Strategy about revitalising fragile churches, countering the risk that this could make some parishes unsustainable. He led an exercise in which small groups explored the ways in which our own parishes were fragile. The key themes emerging were shortage of volunteers, finances, the age range of our congregations and the lack of administrators in several parishes.

Mark Holmes

Policy on Reserves

The PCC upholds a policy to maintain general reserves at a level of £35,000. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis. The PCC also maintains a fund for cyclical maintenance and repair. Other funds held and set aside for specific purposes at the close of 2023 are dealt with in the Accounts Section of this report.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

St Bartholomew's Church

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1135073

Set out on pages

14^{to} 26

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:



Date:

21-3-2026

Name:

Tony Young

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

FCMA, FCG

Address:

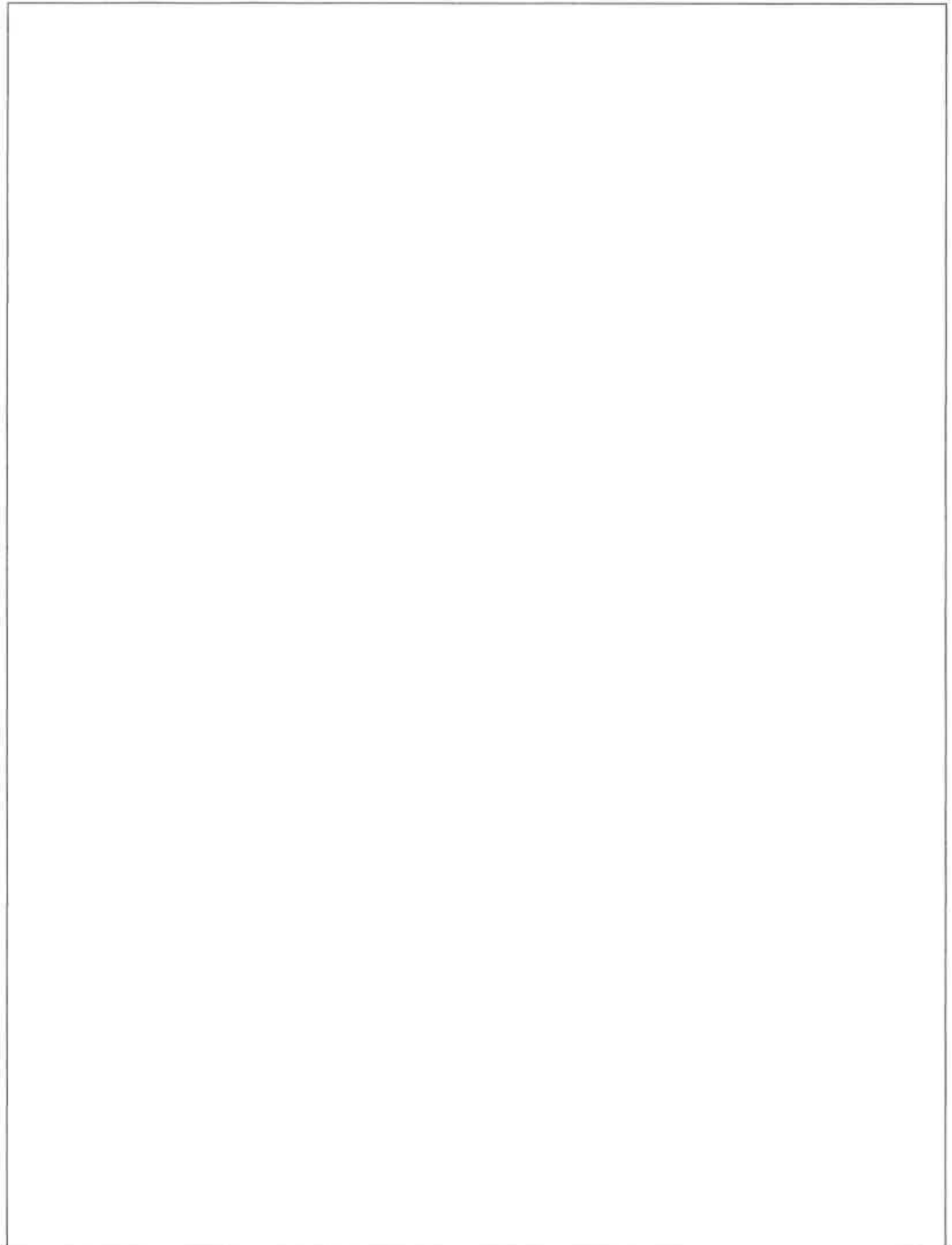
23 Pepingstraw Close, Offham, West Malling, ME19 5PB

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide details of items to be disclosed. The box is currently blank.

Statement of Financial Activities

year	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior total
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	£119,042	£982	£8,037	—	£128,062	£130,709
Income from charitable activities	£4,000	—	£1,352	—	£5,352	£7,436
Other trading activities	£22,143	£21,843	—	—	£43,987	£42,007
Investments	£1,845	£2,137	£728	—	£4,711	£4,643
Other income	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total income	£147,031	£24,963	£10,117	—	£182,112	£184,796
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	£1,992	—	—	—	£1,992	£1,620
Expenditure on charitable activities	£126,710	£39,805	£9,755	—	£176,271	£169,128
Other expenditure	£213	£5	—	—	£218	£229
Total expenditure	£128,916	£39,811	£9,755	—	£178,482	£170,978
Gains / losses on investment assets	(£238)	—	—	—	(£238)	£133
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	£17,876	(£14,847)	£362	—	£3,391	£13,951
Transfers						
Gross transfers between funds - in	£44,667	£59,735	£9,990	—	£114,394	£107,811
Gross transfers between funds - out	(£69,726)	(£35,180)	(£9,487)	—	(£114,394)	(£107,811)
Other recognised gains / losses						
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	(£7,181)	£9,707	£865	—	£3,391	£13,951
Total funds brought forward	£57,868	£49,456	£217,929	—	£325,255	£311,303
Total funds carried forward	£50,686	£59,164	£218,795	—	£328,646	£325,255
Represented by						
Unrestricted						
General fund	£50,686	—	—	—	£50,686	£57,868
Designated						
AV and IT Maintenance	—	—	—	—	—	£383
Church Hall	—	£32,167	—	—	£32,167	£23,329
Cyclical Maintenance	—	£15,576	—	—	£15,576	£15,296
Mission	—	£11,419	—	—	£11,419	£9,196
Parish Offer Fund	—	—	—	—	—	£1,250
Restricted						
Bernard Worssam Fund	—	—	£581	—	£581	£556
Cameras and IT	—	—	—	—	—	£22
Choral Music Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—
Church Hall	—	—	£201,572	—	£201,572	£201,572
Church Hall Maintenance	—	—	£327	—	£327	£587
Church Repair	—	—	—	—	—	—
External Works	—	—	£15,046	—	£15,046	£12,540
Flowers	—	—	£142	—	£142	£100
Jean Kelsey Music Fund	—	—	£594	—	£594	£2,039
Music	—	—	£532	—	£532	£510
Office Computer	—	—	—	—	—	—
Re-ordering Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sequestration Account	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vicarage Decorations	—	—	—	—	—	—

Balance sheet

General Designated Restricted Endowment This year Last

year						
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	—	—	£201,572	—	£201,572	£201,572
Investments	£5,727	—	—	—	£5,727	£5,965
	£5,727	—	£201,572	—	£207,299	£207,537
Current assets						
Debtors	£689	£139	—	—	£829	£559
Cash at bank and in hand	£45,144	£59,024	£17,223	—	£121,393	£118,927
	£45,834	£59,164	£17,223	—	£122,222	£119,487
Liabilities						
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year	£875	—	—	—	£875	£1,770
	£875	—	—	—	£875	£1,770
Net current assets less current liabilities	£44,959	£59,164	£17,223	—	£121,347	£117,717
Total assets less current liabilities	£50,686	£59,164	£218,795	—	£328,646	£325,255
Total net assets less liabilities	£50,686	£59,164	£218,795	—	£328,646	£325,255
Represented by						
Unrestricted						
General fund	£50,686	—	—	—	£50,686	£57,868
Designated						
AV and IT Maintenance	—	—	—	—	—	£383
Parish Offer Fund	—	—	—	—	—	£1,250
Church Hall	—	£32,167	—	—	£32,167	£23,329
Cyclical Maintenance	—	£15,576	—	—	£15,576	£15,296
Mission	—	£11,419	—	—	£11,419	£9,196
Restricted						
Bernard Worssam Fund	—	—	£581	—	£581	£556
Choral Music Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—
Church Hall	—	—	£201,572	—	£201,572	£201,572
Church Repair	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jean Kelsey Music Fund	—	—	£594	—	£594	£2,039
Re-ordering Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cameras and IT	—	—	—	—	—	£22
Office Computer	—	—	—	—	—	—
External Works	—	—	£15,046	—	£15,046	£12,540
Flowers	—	—	£142	—	£142	£100
Church Hall Maintenance	—	—	£327	—	£327	£587
Music	—	—	£532	—	£532	£510
Sequestration Account	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vicarage Decorations	—	—	—	—	—	—
Funds of the church	£50,686	£59,164	£218,795	—	£328,646	£325,255

Statement of assets and liabilities

	This year	Last year
Investments		
258 Shares in CBF Investment Fund		
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£5,727	£5,965
	£5,727	£5,965
Total for Investments	£5,727	£5,965
Tangible assets		
Church Hall		
Church Hall (Restricted) -	£201,572	£201,572
	£201,572	£201,572
Total for Tangible assets	£201,572	£201,572
Cash at bank and in hand		
CAF current account		
Church Hall (Designated) -	£2,722	£6,646
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£664	£4,885
	£3,387	£11,531
CAF Freewill Account		
External Works (Restricted) -	—	£2,500
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£9,862	£1,250
	£9,862	£3,750
CCLA (CBF) deposit account		
AV and IT Maintenance (Designated) -	—	£383
Bernard Worssam Fund (Restricted) -	£581	£556
Cameras and IT (Restricted) -	—	£22
Church Hall Maintenance (Restricted) -	£327	£587
External Works (Restricted) -	£15,046	£10,040
Flowers (Restricted) -	£142	£100
Music (Restricted) -	£532	£510
Parish Offer Fund (Designated) -	—	£1,250
Church Hall (Designated) -	£29,305	£18,303
Cyclical Maintenance (Designated) -	£15,576	£15,296
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£34,481	£45,220
Jean Kelsey Music Fund (Restricted) -	£594	£2,039
Mission (Designated) -	£11,419	£9,196
	£108,006	£103,508
Cash in hand		
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£136	£136
	£136	£136
Total for Cash at bank and in hand	£121,393	£118,927
Debtors		
Accounts Receivable		
Church Hall (Designated) -	£139	—
General fund (Unrestricted) -	£689	£559
	£829	£559
Total for Debtors	£829	£559
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year		
Accounts Payable		
Church Hall (Designated) -	—	(£1,620)
General fund (Unrestricted) -	(£875)	(£150)
Total for Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year	(£875)	(£1,770)
Grand total	£328,646	£325,255

Analysis of income and expenditure

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Designated</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Endowment</u>	<u>This year</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Last year</u>					
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS						
Donations and legacies						
0101 - Gift Aid - Donations	£70,713	—	£50	—	£70,763	£62,413
0110 - Gift Aid - Envelopes	£1,800	—	—	—	£1,800	£1,365
0201 - Other planned giving	£7,605	—	—	—	£7,605	£7,392
0301 - Loose plate collections	£6,507	£982	—	—	£7,490	£7,027
0302 - Wall Safe	£319	—	—	—	£319	£248
0501 - One-off Gift Aid gifts	—	—	£6,300	—	£6,300	£21,100
0510 - Gifts of quoted securities	—	—	—	—	—	—
0550 - Donations appeals etc	£825	—	£80	—	£905	£2,624
0560 - Re-ordering	—	—	—	—	—	—
0601 - Tax recoverable on Gift Aid	£20,150	—	£1,607	—	£21,757	£23,296
0610 - Tax Recovery - GASDS	£1,991	—	—	—	£1,991	£2,085
0701 - Legacies	£6,000	—	—	—	£6,000	—
0801 - Recurring grants	—	—	—	—	—	—
0811 - Non-recurring one-off grants	—	—	—	—	—	—
1270 - Youth work	£2,348	—	—	—	£2,348	£1,960
1280 - Church refreshments	£781	—	—	—	£781	£996
1510 - Book of Remembrance	—	—	—	—	—	£200
Total	£119,042	£982	£8,037	—	£128,062	£130,709
Income from charitable activities						
1101 - Fees for weddings & funerals - PCC	£4,000	—	—	—	£4,000	£4,553
1111 - Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	—	—	£1,352	—	£1,352	£2,883
1121 - Fees weddings & funerals PTO Clergy	—	—	—	—	—	—
1260 - Parish magazine sales	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	£4,000	—	£1,352	—	£5,352	£7,436
Other trading activities						
0901 - Other funds generated	£1,182	—	—	—	£1,182	£1,449
0910 - Church fair	£6,577	—	—	—	£6,577	£7,579
0911 - Made in Oford website	£555	—	—	—	£555	£508
0912 - Ride and stride	£847	—	—	—	£847	£561
0913 - Christmas market	£4,167	—	—	—	£4,167	£4,390
0914 - Events	£8,813	£753	—	—	£9,567	£7,843
1240 - Church hall lettings	—	£21,090	—	—	£21,090	£19,674
1250 - Magazine income - advertising	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	£22,143	£21,843	—	—	£43,987	£42,007
Investments						
1001 - Dividends	£165	—	—	—	£165	£161
1020 - Bank and building society interest	£1,679	£2,137	£728	—	£4,545	£4,481
1241 - Rent from lands or buildings	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	£1,845	£2,137	£728	—	£4,711	£4,643

Other income

0810 - Covid-19 Job Retention Scheme	—	—	—	—	—	—
1310 - Insurance claims	—	—	—	—	—	—
1320 - Surplus - sales of fixed assets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	—
INCOME TOTAL	£147,031	£24,963	£10,117	—	£182,112	£184,796

EXPENDITURE

Raising funds

1730 - Costs of fund raising	£1,992	—	—	—	£1,992	£1,620
Total	£1,992	—	—	—	£1,992	£1,620

Expenditure on charitable activities

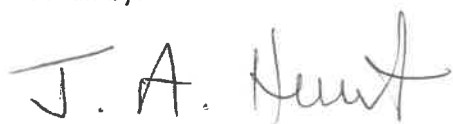
1801 - Mission Giving	—	£22,089	—	—	£22,089	£10,224
1870 - Training	—	—	—	—	—	—
1907 - Mission & Ministry Support	£74,892	£1,250	—	—	£76,143	£72,990
1911 - Fees clergy holding PTO	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001 - Salary of Caretaker	£4,785	—	—	—	£4,785	£4,484
2050 - Salary of parish administrator	£10,253	—	—	—	£10,253	£9,609
2051 - Pension Contributions Office Staff	£2,659	—	—	—	£2,659	£2,492
2101 - Working expenses of incumbent	£808	—	—	—	£808	£175
2110 - Visiting speakers / locums	£50	—	£1,388	—	£1,438	£4,183
2120 - Council tax	£2,725	—	—	—	£2,725	—
2130 - Vicarage house expenses	—	—	£490	—	£490	£412
2140 - Water rates - vicarage	£381	—	—	—	£381	£307
2180 - Youth work	£3,577	—	—	—	£3,577	£3,422
2201 - Fees & subscriptions	£531	—	—	—	£531	£830
2320 - Organ / piano tuning	£722	—	—	—	£722	£2,391
2321 - Organist fees	£3,237	—	—	—	£3,237	£3,463
2322 - Choir expenditure	£52	—	—	—	£52	£11
2340 - Upkeep of services	£942	—	£124	—	£1,067	£421
2341 - Altar Requisites	£323	—	—	—	£323	£254
2345 - Church refreshments	£612	—	—	—	£612	£516
2350 - Upkeep of churchyard	£1,016	—	£341	—	£1,358	£3,023
2360 - Printing, stationery, postage and other	£1,380	—	—	—	£1,380	£1,436
2361 - Computers and office equipment	£160	£424	—	—	£585	£148
2362 - Photocopier maintenance	£547	—	—	—	£547	£516
2365 - Church office - telephone	£175	—	—	—	£175	£357
2366 - Internet & Website	£1,028	—	—	—	£1,028	£896
2370 - Cleaning & sanitary supplies	—	—	—	—	—	£126
2401 - Church running - electric	£3,181	—	—	—	£3,181	£2,936
2410 - Church running - gas	£4,411	—	—	—	£4,411	£4,827
2420 - Church running - water	£216	—	—	—	£216	£184
2422 - Church sound and vision	£27	—	£1,512	—	£1,540	£8,888
2430 - Church running - security	£1,512	—	—	—	£1,512	£1,364
2450 - Church running - insurance	£3,394	—	—	—	£3,394	£3,899
2460 - Church maintenance	£2,365	£2,250	—	—	£4,615	£2,166
2461 - Church maintenance - cyclical	—	£537	—	—	£537	—
2470 - Church - performing rights licence	£735	—	—	—	£735	£714
2501 - Magazine expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—
2520 - Hall running costs - bad debt write off	—	—	—	—	—	—
2530 - Hall running - electricity	—	£2,283	—	—	£2,283	£2,212

2540 - Hall running - gas	—	£2,990	—	—	£2,990	£3,253
2550 - Hall running - insurance	—	£1,151	—	—	£1,151	£1,416
2560 - Hall running - maintenance	—	£5,124	£5,896	—	£11,021	£13,413
2570 - Hall cleaning and materials	—	—	—	—	—	—
2571 - Hall performing rights	—	—	—	—	—	—
2580 - Hall running - water	—	£1,704	—	—	£1,704	£1,154
2590 - Hall running - pest control	—	—	—	—	—	—
2720 - Church interior and exterior decorating	—	—	—	—	—	—
2830 - Hall + interior and exterior decorating	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	£126,710	£39,805	£9,755	—	£176,271	£169,128

Other expenditure

2510 - Hall - Condition Survey & Options Appr.	—	—	—	—	—	—
2601 - Examination/audit fee	—	—	—	—	—	—
2602 - Bank Charges	£213	£5	—	—	£218	£229
2610 - Accountancy software	—	—	—	—	—	—
2910 - Re-ordering work	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	£213	£5	—	—	£218	£229
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£128,916	£39,811	£9,755	—	£178,482	£170,978
GRAND TOTAL	£18,115	(£14,847)	£362	—	£3,630	£13,817

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 25 March 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



J A Hunt

Mrs Janet Hunt (Churchwarden)

Notes to the Financial Statements for year ending to 31 December 2025

The notes on the following pages form part of these accounts.

1. Accounting Policies

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCC, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions.

2. Assets

2.1. Consecrated and benefice property

In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of 'charity' by section 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

2.2. Moveable Church Furnishings

Typically, these are capitalised at cost and depreciated over the useful economic life other than where insufficient cost information is available. In this case the item is not capitalised, but all items are included in the Church's inventory.

2.3. Tangible Fixed Assets for use by the charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

- Land Nil
- Fixtures & Fittings 20 years
- Computers 3 years

No depreciation is provided on buildings as the currently estimated residual value of the properties is not less than their carrying value and the remaining useful life of these assets currently exceeds 50 years, so that any depreciation charges would be immaterial.

An impairment review is carried out each year end and any resultant loss identified included in expenditure for the year.

2.4. Church Hall

The Church Hall is currently the subject of a consultation process to determine its future use. The PCC is currently undertaking minimal maintenance to the Hall until this process is complete, with the result that the fabric of the Hall is continuing to deteriorate.

As part of the consultation process in 2019 the PCC commissioned a condition survey of the Hall, with associated costs for repairs, from an independent firm of surveyors, which estimated total repair costs, at the time, of £385k. A sum of £3.6k has been included within the Church Hall Budget for 2026 to cover maintenance costs needing immediate attention within the short term.

2.5. Investments

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange or whose value derives from that are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at PCC's best estimate of market value.

2.6. Short Term Deposits

These are the cash held on deposit either with the CCLA or at a bank.

The church's assets are held in the following accounts:

CAF Bank – current account (for general income and payments for both church and hall)

CAF Bank - freewill offering account (for all regular donations made by bank transfer)

CCLA – deposit account (interest paying instant access account)

3. Funds

3.1. Unrestricted Funds

These represent the funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC, excluding amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or for spending on a future project and which are therefore not included in its 'free reserves' as disclosed on the trustees' report.

3.2. Restricted Funds

These are funds that must be spent on restricted purposes. Details of the restricted funds held at 31st December 2025 are shown below:

Bernard Worssam Fund
Church Hall (Building)
Church Hall Maintenance
External Works
Flower Fund
Jean Kelsey Music Fund
Music Fund

These Funds are primarily held in the CCLA account and interest is added to the Funds on a quarterly basis.

A Sequestration Account is instigated when a clerical vacancy occurs. Income from statutory fees normally payable to the diocese are retained within this account, along with costs associated with the vacancy such as visiting curate fees. The Sequestration Account was closed in May 2025 at the end of the clerical vacancy. The final deficit of £527 was expensed from unrestricted funds within the 2025 financial year.

Restricted Income in the year was as follows:

External Works	£2,250 donated for churchyard and car park CCTV
Flower Fund	£162 Donations
Church Hall Maintenance	£5,625 Kitchen Refurb & Window Replacement
Sequestration Account	£1,352 Statutory fees

Expenditure in the year from Restricted Funds was as follows:

External Works Fund	£341 enabling work for CCTV
Flower Fund	£124 Altar Flowers
Church Hall Maintenance	£5,896 Kitchen Refurb & Window Replacement
Music Fund	£50 Loan of Music for Band use
Sequestration Account	£1,878 Visiting Clergy & Vicarage costs
Jean Kelsey Music Fund	£1,512 Feedback speakers

3.3. Designated Funds

These are funds that the PCC have designated for a specific purpose. Details of the designated funds held at 31st December 2025 are shown below:

Church Hall (running costs and lettings)
Cyclical Maintenance
Mission Giving

These Funds are primarily held in the CCLA account and interest is added to the Funds on a quarterly basis.

Money transferred to designated Funds during the year was as follows:

Church Hall	£21,090 Hall Lettings
Cyclical Maintenance	£2,400 budgeted Cyclical Maintenance for 2025
Mission Giving	£11,069 Mission uplift from 2024
Mission Giving	£11,050 Mission Giving for 2025
Mission Giving	£1,753 raised from collections & events

Expenditure in the year from Designated Funds was as follows:

AV & IT Maintenance	£424 New laptop
Cyclical Maintenance	£2,787 Quinquennial works
Church Hall	£13,252 Hall Running & Maintenance
Mission Giving	£20,265 Away Giving from 2024
Mission Giving	£1,825 Mission Giving for 2025

3.4. Bellringers Funds

The bellringers hold a separate account into which is paid all donations from visiting ringers, together with various monies deriving from wedding fees, donated by the ringers themselves. The balance of bellringers account at 31st December 2025 was £2027.95. The bellringers accounts for 2025 were independently examined by the Church Treasurer and found to be in line with their stated purposes.

4. **Staff Costs**

During the year the PCC employed an organist and office staff (all part time). Tax and National Insurance payments were made for relevant employees. Total staff costs amounted to £19,887 which includes £836 Employer Pension Contributions. National Insurance Contributions for the year fell below the £2,000 government allowance.

Incumbent costs are covered by the diocese and therefore not included within these accounts.

No members of the PCC are employed; however, a person closely connected to a PCC member is employed within the office staff.

Donations made by PCC members during the year amounted to £35,294.

4.1. Church Workers Pension Fund (CWPF)

St Bartholomew's participates in the Pension Builder Scheme section of CWPF for lay staff. CWPF is administered by the Church of England Pensions Board, which holds the CWPF assets separately from those of the Employer and other participating employers.

CWPF has two sections:

1. the Defined Benefits Scheme
2. the Pension Builder Scheme, which has two subsections;
 - a. a deferred annuity section known as Pension Builder Classic, and,
 - b. a cash balance section known as Pension Builder 2014.

Pension Builder Scheme

Both sections of the Pension Builder Scheme are classed as defined benefit schemes.

Pension Builder Classic provides a pension, accumulated from contributions paid and converted into a deferred annuity during employment based on terms set and reviewed by the Church of England Pensions Board from time to time. Discretionary increases may also be added, depending on investment returns and other factors.

Pension Builder 2014 is a cash balance scheme that provides a lump sum which members use to provide benefits at retirement. Pension contributions are recorded in an account for each member. Discretionary bonuses may be added before retirement, depending on investment returns and other factors. The account, plus any bonuses declared is payable, unreduced, from age 65.

There is no sub-division of assets between employers in each section of the Pension Builder Scheme.

The scheme is considered to be a multi-employer scheme as described in Section 28 of FRS 102. This is because it is not possible to attribute the Pension Builder Scheme's assets and liabilities to specific employers and means that contributions are accounted for as if the Scheme were a defined contribution scheme. The pensions costs charged to the SoFA in the year are the contributions payable (2025: £2,659, 2024: £2,492).

A valuation of the Pension Builder Scheme is carried out once every three years. The most recent valuation was carried out as at 31 December 2022.

For the Pension Builder Classic section, the valuation revealed a surplus of £34.8m on the ongoing assumptions used. At the most recent annual review effective 1 January 2026, the Board chose to grant a discretionary bonus of 10% to both pensions not yet in payment and pensions in payment in respect of service prior to April 1997; and a bonus on pensions in payment in respect of post April 1997 service so that the pension increase was also 10% (where usually it would be calculated based on inflation up to an annual cap of 5% for pensions in

payment in respect of service prior to April 2006 and 2.5% for pensions in payment in respect of service post April 2006). This followed improvements in the funding position over 2025. There is no requirement for deficit payments at the current time.

For the Pension Builder 2014 section, the valuation revealed a surplus of £8.5m on the ongoing assumptions used. There is no requirement for deficit payments at the current time.

The Church of England Pensions Board has agreed that some employers could use assets in the DBS of the CWPF in lieu of contributions to Pension Builder Classic and/or Pension Builder 2014. You will see this information on your DBS statement which will be sent separately.

The next valuation is being carried out as at 31 December 2025.

The legal structure of the scheme is such that if another employer fails, St Bartholomew's could become responsible for paying a share of the failed employer's pension liabilities.

5. Mission Giving

Current policy is for 75% of any unrestricted budget surplus from the 2025 accounts to be added to the 2025 budgeted Mission Giving and for these funds to be distributed following sign-off of the 2025 accounts. As a result, the amount of 2025 budget surplus transferred to Mission amounted to £5,232.

6. Overall Position

The PCC have reviewed anticipated income and expenditure for 2026 and set a balanced budget for the year ahead. Income from the Church Hall lettings will be used to offset an anticipated deficit in unrestricted general funds.