

# St Oswald's Sowerby Annual Report 2025

Love God.
Build Community.
Serve Sowerby.

ST OSWALD'S SOWERBY

# Annual report 2025

**Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Sowerby**
**Annual Trustees Report for the year ended 31 December 2025**

Incumbent: Revd David Biggs (Priest-in-Charge)
Assistant Priest: Vacant
Independent Examiner: Mr Barrie Cross, ACA
Bankers: HSBC Independent Financial Advisor: Ellis Bates Group
Church Architect: David Beaumont
Website: www.stoswaldsowerby.org.uk Facebook: www.facebook.com/stoswaldsowerby

## Administrative information

St Oswald's Church is situated in Sowerby in North Yorkshire. It is part of the Diocese of York within the Church of England. The current correspondence address is: The Vicarage, The Close, Sowerby, YO7 1JA. The PCC is a registered charity; number 1135485.

## Members of the Parochial Church Council

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. In 2025 the APCM was on 5 May 2025. During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

| | |
|---|---|
| Churchwardens (*ex officio*): | Pauline Alderson |
| Priest-in-Charge (*ex officio*): | Revd David Biggs |
| Assistant Priest (*ex officio*): | Vacant |
| Reader: | David Brooke |
| Children and Youth Minister: | Rachel Halkyard (resigned Aug 2025) |
| Authorised Lay Ministers: | Helen Irving |
| | Yvonne Bowling |
| Deanery Synod (*ex officio*): | Sue Binns |
| | Jan Applegarth |
| Secretary | David Tucker |

Elected Members from 5th May 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| Retiring 2026 | Helen Irving (Standing Committee) |
| | David Brooke |
| | Jane Jackson (Standing Committee) |
| | Jill Drew |
| | Gayle Hartley |
| Retiring 2027 | Morna Stoakley |
| | Liz Harrison |
| | Ed Buckingham |

| | |
|---|---|
| Retiring 2028 | Andrew McCormack<br>Viv Chapman<br>Simon Birkbeck<br>Graham Merriam (Treasurer — Standing Committee) |
| Co-opted | Ann Harrison (Deputy Warden)<br>Rachel Halkyard (Children and Youth Minister - Standing Committee) (Resigned Aug 25) |

## Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is registered as a separate charity with the Charity Commission.
The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

In normal circumstances the full PCC meets six times a year, or more as needed. The PCC is supported by the Standing Committee, consisting of Churchwardens, Treasurer and Secretary and Children and Youth Worker. In addition, there are working groups which report to PCC. Our Deanery Synod Representatives attend meetings during the year and report back to the PCC.

## Objectives of the PCC

St Oswald's PCC worked with the Priest-In-Charge, the Rev David Biggs, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the management and maintenance of Sowerby Parochial Hall and Annexe. The Church, the Parochial Hall and the Annexe are well-used and valued community assets and a base for our service to members of the congregation and wider outreach to the parish as a whole.

## Our Mission

At St Oswald's our vision is that we seek to Love God, Build Community and Serve Sowerby. Our vision leads our mission to be committed to loving God wholeheartedly in prayer and worship, building a welcoming, supportive, and discipleship-focused community, and all with a heart to serve the people of Sowerby with the compassion and grace of God.

## Priest in Charge's Report

"That they may all be one... so that the world may believe that you have sent me." — John 17:21

During this past year, as a PCC we spent time reflecting on Jesus' prayer in John 17. In this prayer, Jesus lifts his eyes to the Father and prays for his people—that they would know

him, that they would be one, and that through their life together the world would come to believe.

This has helped shape how we understand our vision at St Oswald's. To Love God is to know him more deeply. To Build Community is to grow in unity as his people. To Serve Sowerby is to live in such a way that others may come to know Jesus for themselves.

Over the past year, we have seen encouraging signs of this taking shape in the life of our church.

**Love God**
This year has been marked by a continued deepening in the life of worship at St Oswald's. Alongside steady growth in numbers, there has been a growing richness in how we gather—holding together traditional and contemporary expressions of worship in a way that reflects the breadth of our church family.

We have been served faithfully by our teams of leaders, lay ministers, and clergy, whose creativity and care have helped shape worship that is both accessible and rooted in Scripture. It has been especially encouraging to see people of all ages engaging, with children and young people continuing to be an integral part of our worshipping life.

Alongside our gathered worship, we have also seen people taking intentional steps in their faith. Through the Exploring Faith course, a number of people have had the opportunity to ask questions, grow in understanding, and take steps towards a personal commitment to Christ. This was a particular joy to celebrate in our confirmation service, where candidates publicly affirmed their faith and commitment to follow Jesus. These moments are a clear reminder that God continues to be at work drawing people to himself.

A particularly significant development this year has been the introduction of prayer ministry within our services. This has created space for people to respond to God—to stand with their brothers and sisters in Christ and pray together, to bring their needs before him, and to encounter his grace in a tangible way. In this, we see something of Jesus' prayer being answered—that his people might truly know the Father.

**Build Community**
We give thanks for the continued growth of our church community—not only in number, but in depth of relationship and belonging. St Oswald's is not simply a place to which we come, but a community we belong to, who are learning to live out the unity that Jesus prays for in John 17.

This has been reflected in the planting of a new small group this year, creating space for deeper discipleship, friendship, and shared prayer. Alongside the existing group this is helping us to grow not just larger, but closer supporting one another as we follow Jesus together.

This year has also brought significant changes within our staff team. We said goodbye to Jane, with deep gratitude for her faithful and committed service as administrator, and we were delighted to welcome Sarah into this role. We also said farewell to Rachel as our Children, Youth and Families Minister, giving thanks for all she has invested into the life of the church, especially our children, youth and families.

**Serve Sowerby**

Our calling to serve the wider community of Sowerby continues to grow in its practical and relational shape. The Warm Welcome Soup Lunch has continued to grow, both in numbers and in its impact. It is more than a meal; it is a place of welcome, conversation, and connection. Singing for Joy continues monthly at Orchid House.

Our links with local schools remain a vital part of our ministry. Our servant-hearted teams go in regularly with Open the Book assemblies, helping children engage with the story of Scripture in an accessible and engaging way. Alongside this, we have welcomed schools into church for Harvest and Christmas celebrations. We have also been glad to welcome uniformed groups into the church, providing opportunities for them to explore faith, learn about the building, and connect with the story of the Christian faith. These moments, though often simple, are an important part of our presence in the community.

Alongside this, we continue to serve our community through occasional offices and the many everyday interactions that build trust and relationship. In these ways, we seek to live out Jesus' prayer—that through the life of his people, the world might come to believe.

**Looking Ahead**

As we look to the year ahead, we do so with gratitude and hope. We see signs of God at work among us—in deepening worship, growing community, and increasing engagement with those beyond the church. I am excited about our Church day at home in March 2026 as we look to what God has for us in the coming years.

Jesus' prayer in John 17 remains my prayer: that we would know God more deeply, grow in unity together, and live lives that point others to him.

With my heartfelt thanks to all who serve so faithfully in the life of St Oswald's, together let us keep on striving to serve the Lord joyfully for His glory, so that many more may know the love that God has for them. Amen.

Revd David

## Children, Youth and Families Ministry

There is much to be thankful for in our Children, Youth and Families ministry, and we want to begin by recognising the many people who give their time and energy so faithfully to this part of our shared life. We are especially thankful to Rachel Halkyard who led this ministry

through to Aug 2025, and the many people who enabled this ministry to continue during the time when this post was vacant after Rachel left.

On Sunday mornings, we offer a range of ways for children to engage with faith in ways that suit their age and stage. Godly Play runs on the 1st and 2nd Sundays, giving children a reflective, creative space to explore Scripture and wonder about God. We remain grateful for our ecumenical partnership with Sowerby Methodists who we share this ministry with. Our Worship for All services on 3rd Sundays bring the whole church family together — children and adults worshipping side by side in a way that feels accessible and genuinely intergenerational, with a number of the children and young people playing in the music group for this service. On 4th Sundays, Kids Club provides something a little more informal and energetic, with teaching, activities, and plenty of fun. We are so grateful for all the ways that our children and young people serve in the life of the church, from playing in the worship group, running the AV system, helping at Messy Church, and generally getting stuck in to the life of the church. Thank you for all that you do!

Sunday evenings during term time see our Youth Group gather — sharing food, building friendships, and exploring faith in a relaxed and open environment. It's been encouraging to watch relationships deepen and young people engage with the big questions in a space where they feel safe to do so.

Through the week, Little Wonders (toddler group) continues to welcome families with young children every week. It's a place where real relationships are built, often at a significant and sometimes stretching season of family life. We're grateful for our partnership with the Salvation Army, and Sowerby Methodists, which strengthens this work and reflects a shared heart for serving local families. We have continued to host Nurture a group run by the local churches providing post-natal support for new parents. Nurture rotates around local churches each week.

Our school ministry remains one of the most significant parts of what we do. Open the Book assemblies and other school engagement mean we're regularly in front of large numbers of children, building trusted relationships with local schools and bringing the stories of Scripture to life. Messy Church continues to offer families a creative, informal way into faith, and our summer social events have given families space to connect and feel genuinely part of the St Oswald's community.

Several families attended the Diocese of York Family Camp in the summer, providing a valuable opportunity to grow in faith together and connect with the wider church.

In August the youth group completed a youth pilgrimage which was organised by the St Oswald's youth leaders. This involved walking between our five parishes, stopping at each church for times of reflection and prayer. The pilgrimage included an overnight stay at Kilburn Village Hall with BBQ and Campfire hosted by Terri and Keith Lewis. This was a significant moment in the life of the group, creating space for deeper conversation, shared experience, a focus on Jesus at the centre. A true time of pilgrimage was created for everyone who was involved. It was encouraging to see the young people engage so openly, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Many people gave their best to enable this pilgrimage to happen, and this was seen in the wonderful time that was created, where we had a taste of the Kingdom of God here in North Yorkshire.

At the end of August, we said goodbye to Rachel, our Children, Youth and Families Minister. We are deeply grateful for everything she poured into this ministry — not least the way she finished so well, leading the youth pilgrimage around the local parishes. We wish her every blessing in what comes next.

The final quarter of the year has been a time of honest reflection. Following Rachel's departure, a CANDY working group was formed to take stock and help shape the path forward. We partnered with Missional Generation, a Christian charity, to run a listening exercise — gathering the thoughts of volunteers and leaders about where the ministry is strong, where there are challenges, and what people are hoping for.

What emerged was encouraging. There is real strength, particularly in our reach into schools and families. At the same time, the process helped surface a clear desire for better-defined discipleship pathways and a more shared sense of vision. Across the conversations, one thing was consistent: people want children and young people to encounter Jesus, to feel welcomed and valued, and to grow in faith as part of the wider church family. This exercise will feed into future recruitment to the Children, Youth and Families role.

As we look ahead, we carry gratitude for everything that has been built, and we continue to pray for wisdom as we work out how to nurture the next generation well — deepening discipleship, growing our welcome, and building something sustainable for the long term.

## Giving, Mission and Community

We continued to support Jigsaw Kids Ministries in the Philippines through regular gifts to CMS (to support their mission partner Tim Lee) and to Jigsaw directly. We have enjoyed welcoming Tim and Kate Lee to share how Jigsaw has continued its ministry to underprivileged and street children in Metro Manila and their plans to further develop their ministries. We are pleased to actively support their project to provide practical gifts of healthcare items and sewing materials.

Warm Welcome Lunches continue to take place on Friday lunchtimes from 12 noon in the Parochial Hall. These are intended to provide a place for people to come where it is warm and welcoming and to have a simple lunch. The lunches are free. A rota of helpers is organised by Pauline Alderson. Special thanks are due to Penny Merriam and Sandra Howells who cook the soups and source the ingredients. We are grateful for the generosity of those who contribute financially.

We regularly support Thirsk Community Works (CW) in their service to the wider community. Our harvest gifts and occasional offerings on special services (e.g. Christmas) have been given to them. We also give to CW and Herriot Hospice Homecare from the generous donations of those who attend the Friday lunches. We have a box in church available for non-perishable food donations towards the CW food bank.

## Pastoral work

Our pastoral care ministry remains a vital expression of our life together at St Oswald's, ensuring that those unable to attend church remain connected, supported, and known.

A key focus is our regular ministry in local care homes, providing a bridge between the church and residents. We visit Orchid House, Ruby Lodge, and Meadowfields, offering short services of Holy Communion, prayer, and conversation (around 35 minutes). These visits centre on active listening and the offering of the Sacraments to those who request them. There is a growing appreciation for the familiar liturgy of the Church of England, bringing reassurance and continuity. We also include simple interactive elements—seasonal readings and, where appropriate, familiar music—to encourage engagement.

We are grateful for the warm welcome from staff and encouraged by increasing numbers of residents joining group sessions. Alongside this, individual pastoral conversations allow us to support those facing transition or bereavement. We also seek to encourage staff, recognising the emotional weight they carry.

Visits are also made to support individuals who live in The Limes and others living in their own homes who are no longer able to attend church. Holy Communion is taken to each monthly, as well as informal visits to maintain friendship and to share news of the church family.

The PCC decided in 2024 that there should be an extension of the scheme adopted during Covid for willing participants in the congregation to be contacted occasionally by a nominated person within the church (usually by phone). The intention was always to be a "light touch" and aimed particularly at ensuring that people don't 'fall between the cracks' when ill or away or need prayer. It is not intended to be a substitute for the normal friendships that exist or to replace appropriate contact with the church leaders, but as a supplement to the normal pastoral care that already exists. Most of the then congregation seemed pleased to be included, and a large number of people agreed to be the contact point (usually for 4—5 people each). As a scheme it is hard to be sure just how effective it has been. It requires at least bi-annual updates to take account of the changing congregation. Whilst there has certainly been some very positive feedback, it requires further work to make it as effective as possible.

Looking ahead, we aim to maintain the consistency and simplicity of this ministry, trusting that these regular, faithful acts of care continue to reflect Christ's love among us.

## Small Groups

The Bible Study Group at Orchid House continued to meet throughout 2025 led largely by David Brooke and David Bacon. The meetings were generally weekly on a Thursday in term-time and covered a number of topics. We were delighted that over that period the group grew considerably in size (20+); so much so that a decision was made to start a new group at the Wood's home at Long Street in the autumn with a few members of the original group. Ted Bearup has kindly taken on the leadership of the group at Orchid House whilst David Brooke leads at Long Street. Whilst we were sad to split the group, it had proved to be helpful in ensuring that the individual bible studies were manageable and allow for yet more people to join. We are really pleased that in particular a number of the new members of the congregation have joined one of the two groups and there are hopes to start a 3rd day time group.

## Hospitality

It is a real privilege to offer refreshments after Sunday morning worship; especially in a growing church. Each week we seem to need more cups, pots of coffee and tea - wonderful! However, from time to time we could do with more help in the kitchen, especially washing up. Many people help when the need arises and we are very grateful to all those who have helped over the past twelve months. If you feel able to make a regular commitment to join this ministry, or help out at really busy times, we would very much appreciate your contribution, men and women are valued equally. Please speak to anyone behind the tea and coffee pots or Liz Harrison. At present we're having great fun coping with the alterations to the kitchen, we hope to have everything finished shortly. Why not join us now?

## Prayer Circle

The church Prayer Circle has been called upon 11 times during 2025. We were formed 20 years ago with 24 people. We are now 51, who support anyone who needs extra support with prayer when struck by illness, bereavement, hospitalisation etc. This is all done on email.

## Brass Cleaning

The brasses in church are cleaned each month by two volunteers. There is a rota for this pinned up by the Treasury where there is also a list of brasses to be cleaned. We have six pairs of volunteers which means that each couple are only called on twice a year. Thank you to those who give their time.

## Parish and Community Events

We have continued to hold various parish and community events throughout the year. Alongside this a number of groups use St Oswald's to host concerts and other events.

Throughout the summer, summer socials were once again organised as a way to build community over the quieter summer months.

The regular Warm Welcome soup lunch has continued, and has continued to grow. Thank you to all the volunteers who make it possible.

'Coffee, Cakes and Crafts' was held in the Parochial Hall in November 2025, another opportunity for engagement with our local community.

A public service on Remembrance Sunday, 10 November, took place at the war memorial and the church was beautifully decorated with flowers and the outside walls with knitted and crocheted poppies.

We were able to host a full programme of Easter and Christmas services celebrating the good news of Jesus with our community.

Many thanks to Barbara Thornton and her team for continuing to provide flower arrangements and to Kath Reynard for tending the outdoor planters.

## Farming Chaplaincy

Yvonne Bowling continued her work as an assistant chaplain working alongside Rev Dianne Gamble to provide valued support to the farming community at the Auction Mart located in the parish.

## Mothers Union

We were lucky to welcome a number of guests, who were able to talk about a wide variety of subjects. These included Tools with a mission, Korea, Horticulture, Working in Africa, Women of the Nativity and the role of the Archdeaconry Vice President.

In February Rev. David enrolled two new members and also welcomed three members who had transferred from other branches. In March we had our annual lunch together with guests and enjoyed a good meal and fellowship at the Garden Centre Thirsk , In June Rev Sandra re - Licenced the three officers of the branch and in July our annual outing was to All Saints Church, Kirby Hill where we received a wonderful welcome and met members of their Mothers Union who provided us with a magnificent afternoon tea.

We continue to support a number of good causes through our giving both abroad and in this country, and remain a Christian organisation
connected in prayer.

## Ecumenical relations

St Oswald's values the covenant with the Methodist Church. A joint Christmas card with the Methodist Church was distributed using the delivery team. The children and youth team have continued to work ecumenically especially around the provision of Godly Play and Open the Book. We are looking towards finding more areas where we can share in worship with our ecumenical colleagues. A regular meetings of Ministers was re-established in late 2025.

## Safeguarding

Having taken on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer in June I am still trying to understand some of the procedures and nuances of obtaining DBS checks, training etc. It is not always as simple as expected. A number of DBS applications have been queried by 31:8 as to specific roles, frequency etc. This often delays the application and causes a certain amount of head scratching. Information available as to what level of check is not always comprehensive enough, so there's a certain amount of to-ing and fro-ing, phone calls to 31:8 etc. I'm confident that as time goes on it will become easier.

I am most grateful to Mandy Wood and Gayle Hartley for their help and support.

Sue Thurman is in process of doing her safeguarding training to the appropriate level and as soon as this is complete, I hope she will be able to be an added PSO recruiter so that the burden of work can be shared.

Nigel Chapman

**Deanery Synod**

Deanery Synod has met through the year, bringing together clergy and lay representatives for worship, encouragement and shared learning. A significant focus has been the ongoing consultation around the deanery reorganisation. Synod has provided regular updates on the process, including engagement with PCCs and congregations, and has encouraged responses at every stage. This has now progressed to submission to the Church Commissioners and is expected to come into effect in early 2026, marking an important step forward as we seek a more sustainable and collaborative future for our churches .

Alongside this, Synod has continued to support the life and mission of our churches through the sharing of good news stories, input on areas such as finance, digital resources and racial justice, and a focus on mission and discipleship, including the theme of everyday chaplaincy. It has also provided opportunities to reflect on how we can better support church officers and strengthen ministry across the deanery. Overall, Synod continues to be a valuable space for connection, encouragement and shaping our shared life together.

## Financial review

2025 has been another encouraging year for the finances with the accounts showing a surplus of £33,033. This includes a legacy of £20,000 from the late Margaret Ridsdale. In addition, the amount spent on CandY salary was some £9,000 lower reflecting the absence of a CandY worker for some 6 months of the year. We have still managed to spend £7,726 on Fabric - the cost of the new noticeboard and the store and Dorcas office in the South Transept - and an increase of £2,582 in the churchyard on felling dead or falling trees. None of this would have been possible without the gratifying consistent increase in regular Giving from members of the congregation and an uplift in fees received for occasional services. The Parochial Hall surplus was much reduced this year owing to the loss of two regular users. In the round, the remainder of our overheads remain consistent. We have £20,000 held in 6 month and 12 month Bonds to take advantage of interest earned and our investment portfolio has increased by some 9% and given us 3% in dividends

## Reserves Policy

It is the PCC's intention to spend those Reserves that are Restricted on their defined purposes, in due course. Unrestricted Reserves include an amount that is Designated for the Parochial Hall and the PCC aims to safeguard these for an ongoing plan of refurbishment. The remainder of Unrestricted Reserves represent approximately three months' income which the PCC feels is the minimum that it should aim to hold for normal levels of activity.

## The Church building, fabric, ornaments and furnishings.

1. General condition of the building.

The condition of the building is as described in the last Quinquennial Report conducted by Beaumont Brown Architects (dated March 2020). The building is in a satisfactory condition and the nature of the recommended works is relatively minor in scope and extent. The buildings support group continues to undertake minor repair works. A new Quinquennial Report (QI) is expected in Q2 2026.

2. Buildings and Facilities Support group

The support group has been established to focus on the condition of the building, its facilities and surrounds. This group reports to the PCC. We have held several working parties throughout 2025 to include the cleaning out of gutters, down-pipes and drains. Particular work has happened to remove overgrowth from the churchyard and footpaths.

3. Goods and Ornaments

All goods and ornaments are unchanged.

4. Tree works.

In late 2024 a storm destabilized a Cypress Tree in the middle of the churchyard. We obtained permission for its removal, and it was removed at the start of 2025

5. Routine maintenance

The usual tasks of maintenance and servicing have continued throughout 2025. These included general cleaning, organ and piano tuning, servicing of church clock, boiler checks, fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical appliances.

6. Notice Board

A new noticeboard has been installed.

7. Minor Internal Reorder

A faculty was granted for a minor reordering of the inside of the church, with a new office (Dorcas Room) and store being created in the south transept. Permission was also granted for a reordering of the kitchen, office and lobby space to make room for a second toilet (due to be completed in 2026), and further to that permission was granted (subject to planning) for external path works to create level access to all doors of the church.

## Thanks

Everything you have read in these pages is the fruit of people who love God, who serve Sowerby, and who are committed to growing community together. To every one of you thank you.

Thank you to all who help us love God well: those who lead worship, preach and pray, play music, run the sound and screens, set up before the service and tidy away after, and those

who faithfully support families at the most significant moments of their lives at baptisms, weddings, and funerals. You keep our eyes fixed on the one who is worthy of all we have and all we are.

Thank you to all who serve Sowerby: those who go out into schools, care homes, the auction mart, and the streets of our parish, and those who open our doors and welcome others in. In ways large and small, you are making the love of Jesus visible in this community.

Thank you to all who invest in growing community: in small groups, over soup lunches, in the kitchen after church, at youth group, at Little Wonders, and in the hundred quiet ways including the care of our building and its surroundings that make St Oswald's feel like a family and a home. You are building something that lasts.

And if your name or your ministry hasn't been mentioned please know that it hasn't been forgotten. Every act of faithfulness, however quiet or unseen, is known to God, and it matters more than you may realise.

We serve because we have first been served. Every act of love, welcome, and generosity here is a reflection of the grace shown to us in Jesus Christ from whom every good thing flows. So our thanks rises, ultimately, to him.

May we keep on loving God, serving Sowerby, and growing community together until many more come to know the love he has for them.

Approved by the PCC on 16th March 2026, and signed on their behalf.

| | |
|---|---|
| Pauline Alderson | Rev David Biggs |
| Churchwarden | Priest-in-charge |

**Love God.**
**Build Community.**
**Serve Sowerby.**



# Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Church, Sowerby

## Accounts

## For the year ended

## 31 December 2025

Registered Charity Number 1135485

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**Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Oswald Sowerby**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 2 to 7.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity 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 Trustee'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 2011 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

(1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or

(2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(3) the accounts do 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.

Barrie Cross ACA
The Barker Partnership
Chartered Accountants
17 Central Buildings
Market Place
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 1HD

Date:

**Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Sowerby**
**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31 December 2025**

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | 2025 Total £ | 2024 Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Incoming and endowments from:** | | | | |
| **Voluntary Income** | | | | |
| Giving through Gift Aid | 53,880 | - | 53,880 | 48,884 |
| Tax Refunds | 18,098 | - | 18,098 | 16,239 |
| Other planned Giving | 11,688 | - | 11,688 | 7,987 |
| Collection Plate | 2,250 | - | 2,250 | 1,775 |
| Occasional & Other Services | 3,749 | 3,609 | 7,358 | 6,226 |
| **Donations** | | | | |
| General | 18,530 | - | 18,530 | 16,551 |
| Donations - General Electronic | 1,198 | - | 1,198 | 1,373 |
| Donations into CandY account | 5,949 | - | 5,949 | 6,510 |
| Donations from other Parishes re CandY | 3,200 | - | 3,200 | 6,700 |
| Legacy Received | 20,000 | - | 20,000 | 12,000 |
| Wall box & Bookstall | 120 | - | 120 | 35 |
| Photocopying | 57 | - | 57 | 32 |
| | **138,719** | **3,609** | **142,328** | **124,312** |
| **Other** | | | | |
| **Fees Received** | | | | |
| PCC | 12,425 | - | 12,425 | 7,924 |
| Organist & Choir | 1,610 | - | 1,610 | 1,190 |
| Bell Ringers | 325 | - | 325 | 300 |
| YDBF | 6,406 | - | 6,406 | 4,010 |
| **Income from Events** | | | | |
| Sunday Coffee | 402 | - | 402 | 440 |
| Fund Raising & Sale of Furniture | 1,356 | - | 1,356 | 1,177 |
| Hire of Church | 1,160 | - | 1,160 | 1,468 |
| CandY Activity Income & Gift Aid | 1,858 | - | 1,858 | 2,641 |
| **Recurring Grants** | | | | |
| Wayleave & Rent | 139 | - | 139 | 129 |
| Sowerby Parish Council | 1,200 | - | 1,200 | 1,200 |
| | **26,881** | **-** | **26,881** | **20,479** |
| **Other trading activities** | | | | |
| Parochial Hall Income (note 13) | 16,086 | - | 16,086 | 21,572 |
| Parochial Hall Earnings from 100 Club | - | - | - | 1,140 |
| Parochial Hall Donations Received | 2,374 | - | 2,374 | 870 |
| Soup Lunch Donations | - | 4,667 | 4,667 | 4,342 |
| | **18,460** | **4,667** | **23,127** | **27,924** |
| **Investments** | | | | |
| Dividends (Gross) & Bank Interest | 1,786 | - | 1,786 | 1,626 |
| | **1,786** | **-** | **1,786** | **1,626** |
| **Total Incoming Resources** | **185,846** | **8,276** | **194,122** | **174,341** |
| **Expenditure on** | | | | |
| **Charitable activities (see note 3)** | **156,298** | **8,809** | **165,107** | **174,497** |
| **Net income/(expenditure) before gains/(losses) on investments** | **29,548 -** | **533** | **29,015 -** | **156** |
| **Net gains/(losses) on investments** | **4,017** | **-** | **4,017** | **1,081** |
| **Net movement of Funds** | **33,566 -** | **533** | **33,033** | **925** |
| **Balances b/fwd 1 January 2025** | **55,884** | **3,459** | **59,343** | **58,418** |
| **Balances c/fwd 31 December 2025** | **89,449** | **2,926** | **92,375** | **59,343** |

Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Sowerby

| Note 3 | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | 2025 Total £ | 2024 Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Charitable activities** | | | | |
| **Freewill Offering** | **66,648** | - | **66,648** | **64,980** |
| **Salaries, Honoraria and YDBF** | | | | |
| YDBF | 6,406 | - | 6,406 | 4,010 |
| CandY Salaries and on-costs | 12,785 | - | 12,785 | 21,158 |
| Admin Salary | 6,287 | | 6,287 | 6,632 |
| Organist and Choir - inc Occ. Services | 2,625 | - | 2,625 | 2,130 |
| Bellringers - Occ. Services | 270 | - | 270 | 270 |
| | **28,373** | **-** | **28,373** | **34,200** |
| **Expenses of Clergy and CandY Staff** | | | | |
| Vicarage Costs | 878 | - | 878 | 886 |
| Mileage Allowance | 173 | - | 173 | 376 |
| Expense for CandY work | 572 | 150 | 722 | 2,558 |
| Gifts | 258 | - | 258 | 85 |
| Mission Outreach | 428 | - | 428 | 9 |
| Training & Resources | 1,603 | - | 1,603 | 1,360 |
| | **3,912** | **150** | **4,062** | **5,274** |
| **Church Running Costs** | | | | |
| Cleaning | 1,792 | - | 1,792 | 1,646 |
| Insurance | 2,532 | - | 2,532 | 2,451 |
| Candles and Service Costs | 377 | - | 377 | 288 |
| Repairs | 2,013 | - | 2,013 | 4,771 |
| Organ | - | - | - | 116 |
| Churchyard | 5,020 | - | 5,020 | 2,448 |
| | **11,735** | **-** | **11,735** | **11,720** |
| **Church Utilities** | | | | |
| Gas | 7,594 | - | 7,594 | 6,626 |
| Water Rates | 588 | - | 588 | 372 |
| Electricity | 1,176 | - | 1,176 | 997 |
| | **9,359** | **-** | **9,359** | **7,995** |
| **Church Administration** | | | | |
| Computer, Phone, Broadband & Web | 1,058 | - | 1,058 | 833 |
| Professional Fees | 858 | - | 858 | 834 |
| Brokerage and Commission Fees | 426 | - | 426 | 395 |
| Bank Charges | 187 | | 187 | 227 |
| Licences and Subscriptions | 1,210 | - | 1,210 | 1,155 |
| Postage and Stationery | 191 | - | 191 | 249 |
| Costs of Coffee | 492 | - | 492 | 169 |
| Copier Costs | 2,536 | - | 2,536 | 2,377 |
| | **6,960** | **-** | **6,960** | **6,239** |
| **Donations to Charities** | | | | |
| Overseas Mission - from own Funds | 3,800 | - | 3,800 | 3,800 |
| To local Charities from Soup Lunches | | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,600 |
| Other - special and funeral collections | - | 3,609 | 3,609 | 4,235 |
| | **3,800** | **4,609** | **8,409** | **9,635** |
| **Costs of generating funds** | | | | |
| Parochial Hall (note 13) | | | | |
| Operating costs | 17,186 | - | 17,186 | 17,979 |
| Exceptional expenditure | 600 | - | 600 | 4,134 |
| Soup Lunch Costs | - | 4,050 | 4,050 | 4,305 |
| | **17,786** | **4,050** | **21,836** | **26,418** |
| **Fabric Costs** | | | | |
| Architect's Fees | - | - | - | 5,310 |
| Fabric Costs | 7,726 | - | 7,726 | 2,726 |
| | **7,726** | **-** | **7,726** | **8,036** |
| **Total charitable activities** | **156,298** | **8,809** | **165,107** | **174,497** |

**Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Sowerby**
**Balance Sheet**
**as at 31 December 2025**

| | Note | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ |
| **Fixed Assets** | 1 | **1,223** | **1,628** |
| **Current Assets** | | | |
| Investments | 4 | 38,220 | 33,167 |
| Debtors | 6 | 3,840 | 4,685 |
| Bank Accounts | 7 | 29,558 | 21,668 |
| 6 & 12 Month Bonds | 8 | 20,000 | - |
| Cash Balances | | 200 | 200 |
| | | **91,818** | **59,720** |
| **Creditors** | | | |
| Sundry Creditors | | - | 1,005 |
| Churches Together funds held by St Oswald's | | 666 | - |
| YDBF Admin Grant Receipt in Advance | | - | 1,000 |
| | 9 | **666** | **2,005** |
| **Net Current Assets** | | **92,375** | **59,343** |
| **Represented by:** | | | |
| Unrestricted Funds | 10 | 89,449 | 55,884 |
| Restricted Funds | 11 | 2,926 | 3,459 |
| **Net Funds** | | **92,375** | **59,343** |

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 16 March 2026
and signed on its behalf by

Rev David Biggs
Priest-in-charge

Pauline Alderson
Churchwarden

**Parochial Church Council of St Oswald's Sowerby**
**Notes to the Financial Statements**
**for the year ended 31 December 2025**

## 1 Accounting Policies

### 1.1 Accounting Convention

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102 – (Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.
The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets which are shown at market value.

### 1.2 Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.
The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body or those that are informal gatherings of church members.

### 1.3 Incoming Resources

**Voluntary income and capital sources**
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC. Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received. Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when received. Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for when received. Funds raised by events are accounted for gross. Sales of books and magazines are accounted for gross.
**Other income**
Income from the Parochial Hall is recognised when due.
**Income from bank investments**
Bank interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue and appear gross.

### 1.4 Resources expended

The diocesan parish share is accounted for when it is paid. The PCC has paid its full share within the year.

### 1.5 Balance Sheet – Fixed Assets

**Consecrated property and moveable church furnishings**
Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by S10(2a) of the Charities Act 2011.
Moveable church furnishings held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. For inalienable property acquired prior to 2000 there is insufficient cost information available and therefore such assets are not valued in the accounts.
Expenditure incurred in the year on consecrated or beneficed buildings, individual items under £1000 or on the repair of movable church items acquired before 1 January 2000 is written off.

**Other Fixtures and Fittings**
Depreciation is provided at 10% of cost on Hall Furniture and Equipment which is calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its useful life. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1000 or less will be written off as the asset is acquired.

## 2 Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| This is stated after charging: | | |
| Depreciation and other amounts written off tangible fixed assets | **405** | **405** |
| Reporting accountant's fees | **250** | **250** |

**4 Investments**

During 2009 the Church became entitled to the Arthur Dreyheller Thompson Trust Fund following the death of the residuary life tenant. The investments are quoted in the accounts at market value as at 31st December 2024. The use of this fund is unrestricted.

**5 Employment Costs**

Included in employment costs are salaries paid to PCC members in their roles as the Charity's Children and Youth Workers. No employee or PCC member received emoluments of more that £60,000. (2022: None)

**6 Debtors**

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Hall Hire | 1,803 | 3,011 |
| Funeral fees unpaid at year end | 2,037 | 0 |
| Gift Aid on large donations | 0 | 1,375 |
| Due from Benefice parishes & others for administrative costs & copying | 0 | 299 |
| | **3,840** | **4,685** |

**7 Bank Accounts**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Church | 1,696 | 7,201 |
| Parochial Hall | 840 | 792 |
| Deposit | 23,320 | 12,380 |
| "Sowerby CandY" (Note 12) | 3,702 | 1,295 |
| | **29,558** | **21,668** |

**8 6 & 12 Month bonds**

Two fixed rate bonds, each of £10,000, have been taken out with HSBC maturing on 19 June 2026 at 2.91% and 21 December 2026 at 3.06%.

**9 Creditors: Falling due within one year and more**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Sundry Creditors and Receipts in Advance | 0 | 2,006 |
| Money held on behalf of Churches Together | 666 | 0 |
| | **666** | **2,006** |

**9 Analysis of Net Assets by Funds**

| | *Unrestricted* | *Restricted* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Fixed Assets | 1,223 | 0 | 1,223 |
| Current Assets | 88,892 | 2,926 | 91,818 |
| Current Liabilities | 666 | 0 | 666 |
| **Fund Balance** | **89,449** | **2,926** | **92,375** |

**10 Unrestricted Funds**

Designated funds are included in unrestricted funds and are for the maintenance and improvement of the Parochial Church Hall. See note 12

**11 Analysis of Restricted Funds**

| | 1/1/2025 | Movement In | Movement Out | 31/12/2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Bells | 898 | 0 | 0 | 898 |
| Charity | 0 | 3,609 | 3,609 | 0 |
| Saints Alive | 750 | 0 | 0 | 750 |
| Mexico 2021 Trip | 988 | 0 | 150 | 838 |
| Soup Lunches | 823 | 4,667 | 5,050 | 440 |
| | **3,459** | **8,276** | **8,809** | **2,926** |

Saints Alive is the residue of money handed over from the old joint Saints Alive account. The Bells account is a long-standing fund from which repairs are taken over time. Mexico 2021 is deposits taken on a proposed youth trip now deferred and held for general youth activity.

12 **Sowerby CandY**

This account is a joint venture between St Oswald's Church and Sowerby Methodist Church. It is a vehicle for raising money to support children's and youth work. The activity is reflected in St Oswald's accounts as a restricted fund for convenience and transparency.

13 **Parochial Hall**

| | 2025<br>£ | 2024<br>£ |
|---|---|---|
| **Income** | | |
| Lettings | 16,086 | 21,572 |
| Earnings from 100 Club | 0 | 1,140 |
| Donations received | 2,374 | 870 |
| **Total Income** | **18,460** | **23,572** |
| **Operating Costs for the year** | | |
| Caretaker & Cleaner | 7,088 | 7,072 |
| Cleaning Materials | 316 | 359 |
| Window Cleaning | 260 | 130 |
| **Utilities** | | |
| Gas | 3,522 | 3,699 |
| Electricity | 940 | 1,107 |
| Annexe Electricity | 434 | 480 |
| Water | 786 | 537 |
| Insurance | 760 | 725 |
| **Repairs & Maintenance** | | |
| Miscellaneous repairs | 945 | 271 |
| 5 year EICR Electrical Certificate | 0 | 1,126 |
| Gas certificate and boiler repairs | 324 | 324 |
| Fire Protection & PAT Testing | 132 | 319 |
| Hobart Dishwasher Annual Service | 245 | 245 |
| Kitchen supplies/equipment | 430 | 263 |
| De-fibrillator pads | 280 | 80 |
| **Administration** | | |
| Hallmaster Booking System Subscription | 265 | 265 |
| Bank Charges | 54 | 104 |
| Bad Debt | 0 | 147 |
| Depreciation of Equipment | 405 | 405 |
| **Total Operating Costs** | **17,186** | **17,658** |
| **Exceptional Expenditure for the year** | | |
| Exterior Painting – Alex Watson | 0 | 3,871 |
| LED lights in rear foyer | 0 | 198 |
| Extra Parking & Chimney removal | 0 | 386 |
| Car Park white lines | 600 | 0 |
| **Total Exceptional Costs** | **600** | **4,435** |
| **Surplus for the year** | **674** | **1,469** |
| **Fund Balance at 1 January 2025** | **12,291** | **10,822** |
| **Residual Fund Balance at 31 December 2025** | **12,965** | **12,291** |

This fund is designated but not restricted.

**Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Oswald Sowerby**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 2 to 7.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity 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 Trustee'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 2011 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

(1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or

(2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(3) the accounts do 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.

Barrie Cross ACA
The Barker Partnership
Chartered Accountants
17 Central Buildings
Market Place
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 1HD

Date: 20/4/26